

The Grand Union Orchestra Summer Programme



East London's unique global orchestra presents a range of exciting events throughout July

The Grand Union Orchestra is multicultural, intergenerational and champions education and social cohesion as well as producing highly original music. Under its composer/director Tony Haynes, the orchestra is presenting a diverse series of events in July, and recruiting young musicians for its Summer School.

On Friday 6th and Saturday 7th July, GUO continues its ground-breaking 'Trading Roots' residency at The Vortex Jazz Club in Dalston, in which a range of global musical traditions are explored by outstanding players from around the world, backed by a five-piece Grand Union 'house band'. The Friday performance is built around Chinese traditional and court music from Zhu Xiao Meng on gu zheng (Chinese harp) and Ruijun Hu on Chinese flutes. This is followed by a free open workshop on Saturday morning, where local musicians can meet them and explore how these global traditions can link to jazz and improvisation.

On Saturday 14th July, Grand Union presents a spectacular new show at St John's Church in Bethnal Green, 'What the River Brings', featuring performers from across the whole of East London. The 70th anniversary of the arrival of the Empire Windrush, bringing people from the Caribbean to help rebuild post-war Britain, is a timely opportunity to reflect on migrants past and present, who have done so much to shape UK culture through their music.

From 30th July to 2nd August, the Orchestra will run its 5th annual residential Summer School in Writtle University College and its spacious idyllic surroundings, near Chelmsford in Essex. The course will be led by musicians born and brought up in all the world's major musical traditions. Internationally-fêted performers in their own right, they are also great communicators and charismatic workshop leaders. The course is open to young musicians aged 12 to 21 who wish to learn more about world music techniques first-hand from experts, and develop their creative and improvisational skills. Players of non-European instruments are especially welcome. Full board and lodging are provided, and accommodation in single rooms at a cost of £240; bursaries and a limited number of non-residential places may be available.

Grand Union's principles and practice in its approach to music-making are vividly described in this recent article commissioned by the online journal Arts Professional: <https://www.artsprofessional.co.uk/magazine/article/new-attitudes-music-making>

More details on Grand Union Orchestra's programme of events in July appear below, or visit the GUO website for more general information: <http://grandunion.org.uk>

Friday July 6th, 8.00 pm – Trading Roots
Vortex Jazz Club, 11 Gillett Square, London N16 8AZ
Admission £15 / £12 advance booking, tel: 020 7254 4097
Feat Zhu Xiao Meng (gu zheng – Chinese harp), Ruijun Hu (dizi, xiao – Chinese flutes)
Saturday 7th, 11.00 am – 2.00 pm: open workshop with Zhu (free)

An imaginative programme of monthly Friday night performances, exchanging and combining different musical traditions, featuring outstanding improvising musicians from around the world with a 5-strong Grand Union 'house band'; and open workshops the following morning for local musicians to meet and work with them, which finish with a short public performance.

[Download the full residency flyer here.](#)

Saturday July 14th, 7.30 pm – What the River Brings
St John on Bethnal Green, London E2 9PA
£8 / £5 concessions (with free refreshment) Booking: guo.eventbrite.co.uk

Celebrating the waves of migration that have shaped East London over the centuries, and continue to do so today. With music composed and arranged by Tony Haynes, performed by people from those communities who have settled here – descendants of immigrants, or themselves from distant places, it tells of their experience and the stories of the East End past and present.

Great port cities grow around trade, but they are also centres of human traffic – the endless ebb and flow of migrants who contribute not only to economic prosperity, but also to culture and artistic vitality, above all through their music.

[Full details and video clips here](#) | [download the flyer here](#)

Monday July 30th to Thursday August 2nd
Grand Union annual residential Summer School
Writtle University College, Lordship Rd, Writtle, Chelmsford CM1 3RR

A unique opportunity for young musicians who wish to explore world music, and/or play non-Western instruments. They work alongside, learn from and are inspired by distinguished artists from many different cultures worldwide, experiment with different musical techniques, develop their improvisation skills, meet and team up with like-minded musicians and create their own music.

For details and regular updates, go to Grand Union [Summer School](#) page.

