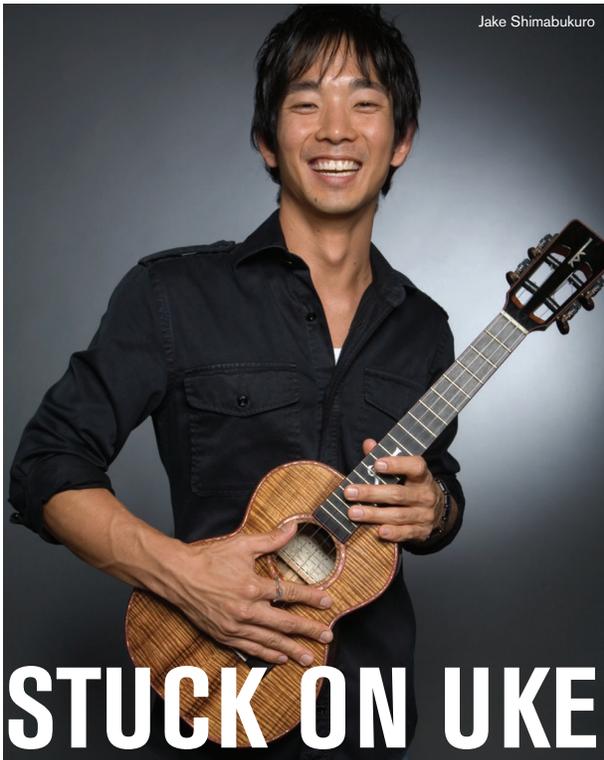


SOUNDCHECK

Brandon Ching



Jake Shimabukuro

STUCK ON UKE

Driven by a new generation of aficionados, the ukulele rises again

“THE UKULELE IS COOL AGAIN,” DECLARES JOHN Schroeter, producer and author of *Between the Strings: The Secret Lives of Guitars*. Inspired by its simplicity and relatively low cost, amateurs and professionals alike have increasingly taken up the instrument in recent years.

Brought to Hawaii by Portuguese immigrants in the 18th century, the ukulele remained off the mainland’s radar until the 1960s—and even then, Tin Pan Alley throwback Tiny Tim nudged it further into novelty territory. Over the next 30 years, uke-loving rockers like George Harrison, Pete Townshend, Eddie Vedder, Elvis Costello and the Magnetic Fields’ Stepin Merritt helped to gradually increase the instrument’s cachet.



Now young acts like Jake Shimabukuro and Brittni Paiva are leading a charge to introduce its charms to a new generation. “What I wanted to do was to show the diversity of the ukulele,” Paiva says of her latest album, *Four Strings: The Fire Within*. The word is spreading over social-networking sites like YouTube, where Shimabukuro can be found covering pop songs like Michael Jackson’s “Thriller” and Harrison’s “While My Guitar Gently Weeps.”

“Think about what David Grisman has done for the mandolin, or what Béla Fleck has done for the banjo,” says Schroeter. “They took their respective instruments out of the traditional bluegrass milieu and launched them into jazz, blues, folk, classical and beyond. This is precisely what the new generation of ukulele players are bringing to their instrument.”

TOP TEN

Post-Beatles songs featuring at least two members of the group on the same track



1. John Lennon

“Instant Karma!” (1970)
Lennon’s third solo single features George Harrison on guitar.

2. George Harrison, “When We Was Fab” (1987)
Ringo Starr plays drums on this wry sendup of Harrison’s former group.

3. Ringo Starr, “Photograph” (1973)
Starr’s chart-topper was co-written by Harrison, who also plays guitar.

4. Paul McCartney, “Take It Away” (1982)
That’s Starr playing drums behind his old friend.

5. John Lennon, “Cold Turkey” (1969)

Lennon’s emotional account of kicking heroin features Starr on drums.

6. Ringo Starr, “It Don’t Come Easy” (1971)
Harrison produced and played guitar on Starr’s first solo hit.

7. George Harrison, “All Those Years Ago” (1981)

McCartney and Starr join in on this tribute to the late Lennon.

8. Paul McCartney, “Beautiful Night” (1997)

Starr plays drums and sings harmony on this ballad gem.

9. John Lennon, “Gimme Some Truth” (1971)

Harrison plays guitar on Lennon’s spirited protest song.

10. Ringo Starr, “You’re Sixteen” (1973)

McCartney contributes a unique solo by imitating a saxophone with his mouth.

‘AS LONG AS IT HAS SOUL TO IT, HIP-HOP CAN LIVE ON!’

-TUPAC SHAKUR

1991

LIVE NOTES

> **NORAH JONES’ 36-CITY** spring U.S. tour is scheduled to begin on March 5 in Tulsa, Okla., and continue through early May.



Norah Jones

> **ON MARCH 22** Wilco will kick off a 16-date U.S. tour dubbed “An Evening With Wilco,” which the band says will feature extended sets exploring songs from each of its seven studio albums.