

John Blanke: the Black musician at the Tudor Court Tickets

British Library, London. Tuesday 04 June 2024

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Tuesday 04 June 2024
Doors Open: 18:30
Starts: 19:00

All John Blanke: the Black musician at the Tudor Court performances

John Blanke: the Black musician at the Tudor Court

Tuesday 4 June 19:00 – 20:00, British Library Piazza Pavilion

An evening dedicated to the life and legacy of the first recorded Black British musician

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Ticket type	Cost <small>(face value)</small>	Quantity
ADMISSION	£10.00 <small>(£10.00)</small>	0
MEMBER	£8.00 <small>(£8.00)</small>	0
CONCESSION	£5.00 <small>(£5.00)</small>	0
<small>*Concession includes students/18-25/registered unemployed</small>		
DISABLED	£5.00 <small>(£5.00)</small>	0
DISABLED CARER	£0.00 <small>(£0.00)</small>	0
SENIOR 60+	£8.00 <small>(£8.00)</small>	0

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More information about John Blanke: the Black musician at the Tudor Court tickets

This is an in-person only event in the Piazza Pavilion

John Blanke was a Black trumpeter in the Tudor courts of Henry VII and Henry VIII. Documented between 1495 and 1512, he stands out as the earliest recorded individual of African heritage in England, with both a distinct image and existing records marking his presence. Blanke's attendance at the Tudor court challenges the narrative that Black people were absent from significant roles in early modern British history. This also makes him one of the first recorded Black musicians in Britain.

Dr Misha Ewen is a Lecturer in Early Modern History at the University of Bristol where she researches colonization and slavery in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English Atlantic world. Before joining Bristol, she was Curator for Inclusive History at Historic Royal Palaces and co-curator of *Untold Lives: A Palace at Work*. She has published widely in academic journals and her first monograph, *The Virginia Venture: American Colonization and English Society, 1580-1660*, was published by University of Pennsylvania Press.

Michael I. Ohajuru is a writer and speaks regularly on the black presence in Renaissance Europe. He is the co-convenor of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies *What's Happening in Black British History* series of workshops and the founder of *Image of the Black in London Galleries* - a series of gallery tours highlighting the overt and covert black presences to be found in national art collections. Michael is also the Project Director of The John Blanke Project.

Olá Akindipe is a Nigerian composer and multi-instrumentalist. Growing up without access to music education, he started to learn music formally at a rather late age, but luckily, he was granted an MTN Foundation scholarship to study at the Musical Society of Nigeria, after which he then won a full scholarship to study in London, at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance. Olá has recently graduated from conservatoire and is currently exploring his own artistic path.

The John Blanke Project is an Art and Archive initiative that re-imagines the life of John Blanke. It is a pioneering attempt to delve into and honour the story of one of earliest documented Black musicians in British history. The project brings together historical investigation with contemporary artistry, aiming to spotlight the pivotal, yet often underrepresented, roles played by Black figures in early modern Britain.

In association with The John Blanke Project.

Image: Stephen B. Whatley, Tribute to John Blanke, (2015), Charcoal on paper, A4

Part of the programme for the British Library exhibition [Beyond the Bassline: 500 Years of Black British Music](#) (26 April – 26 August).

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