

## **Notes for The Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain participation piece.**

"Relentlessly In C" was written as a response to a certain style of "american minimalism", often cited as the beginnings of techno, house music, repetitive beats and club or dance music, among other trends.

In 1969 Terry Riley (<http://terryriley.net/>) released an album containing his own composition (In C) which came to be seen as a key work, and hugely influential. Although it was called "In C" the tonality of the piece changes in a multilayered flow.

In 1989 The Ukulele Orchestra of Great Britain recorded a quite different and simpler work in "homage" to Terry Riley's piece. This was broadcast by BBC Radio in 1989. It has been re-broadcast several times including on BBC 6, on Mon 20 Sep 2010.

Whereas Riley's piece incorporates various tonalities, the ukulele orchestra piece stays "relentlessly in C", and is arguably therefore much more "minimalist" than Riley's piece. The Ukulele Orchestra hopes that nevertheless the performance possibilities of this music offer some amusement and interest to ukulele players and others.

### **Performance notes for "Relentlessly In C"**

All performers play from the same sheet of 19 melodic patterns played in sequence. Any number of instruments can play. (Singers could also take part using vowel or consonant sounds.)

The patterns are to be played consecutively. Each pattern to be repeated at the discretion of the performer before proceeding to the next pattern on the page.

The piece hinges on the unpredictable, improvisatory quality which each performer's choice brings. As the performers work through the patterns, the different combinations make the piece different each time it is performed.

If the performers listen to each other, they will be able to decide when it seems appropriate to repeat a section, to re-repeat a section, or to move to the next section, or indeed, to stay silent for a time.

With sensitivity from all the performers, the performance will proceed with many different combinations of melodic patterns played simultaneously, rather than all the performers rushing on to the next section. Increases and decreases in loudness will probably develop organically. Listen to and be sensitive to these.

Perhaps the patterns will combine and overlap in ways which are not possible to notate, in polyrhythmic combinations, echoing each other.

Try to stay on a pattern for long enough to make interesting combinations with the other patterns being played. The patterns themselves are simple. It is the combination and gradual change which can make the piece interesting. But, don't race ahead, or lag behind too much, or the piece could last too long.

Play the rhythms accurately. Try rehearsing them with others in unison first, before attempting the combination of elements.

If a pattern is too hard for you to play, miss it out.

There are two sections which are not repeated: the introduction and section 11. These sections are thus played once only, unlike all the other sections.

When all the performers are at the stage of repeating section 10, a cue will be given for section 11 to begin, after which the repeating process begins again with section 12.