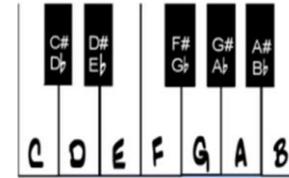


# Spring | Music | Year 9– Minimalism



Notes of the keyboard

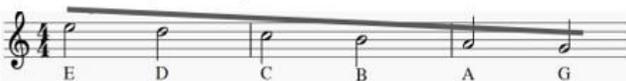


## What is Minimalist music?

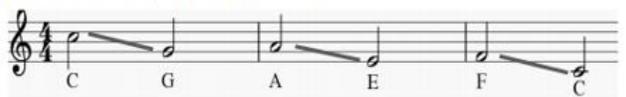
Minimalism is a form of art music that employs limited or minimal musical materials which are repeated. It originated in New York in the 1960s and was initially viewed as a form of experimental music. Famous composers from this period include Steve Reich, Terry Riley, Phillip Glass and La Monte Young.

Melodies have different characters. Some are **conjunct**, some are **disjunct**.

**Conjunct** = move by small steps between notes:



**Disjunct** = move by leaps between notes:



Name	Symbol	Rest	Duration
Semibreve			4 beats
Minim			2 beats
Crotchet			1 beat
Quaver			$\frac{1}{2}$ beat
Semiquaver			$\frac{1}{4}$ beat

Pulse	Regular Beat
Rhythm	Pattern of long and short note values
Ostinato	Repeated pattern
Pitch	High and low
Duration	Length of sound
Tempo	Speed
Dynamics	Volume
Texture	Layers of sounds
Silence	No sound

**Minimalist** music often features:

- layers of **ostinati**
- constantly repeated patterns that gradually change
- layered textures
- **diatonic** harmony

The combined effect can be almost hypnotic.

## B. Augmentation and Diminution – Note Values and Duration

**AUGMENTATION** – the process of **DOUBLING** the note values (**DURATION**) of a theme as a means of variation.



**DIMINUTION** – the process of **HALVING** the note values (**DURATION**) of a theme as a means of variation.

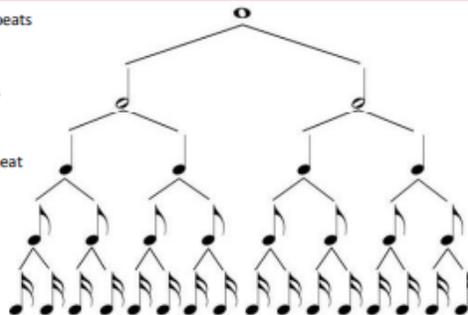
SEMIBREVE = 4 beats

MINIM = 2 beats

CROTCHET = 1 beat

QUAVER =  $\frac{1}{2}$  beat

SEMIQUAVER =  $\frac{1}{4}$  beat



**Gradual transformation**

When a melodic/rhythmic pattern gradually changes

Listen: *Eight Lines*, Steve Reich

**Additive melody**

Change a motif by adding a note one at a time

*Electric Counterpoint*, Steve Reich

**Phase shifting**

2 parts begin together, then move out of time

*Clapping Music*, Steve Reich

**Polyphonic**

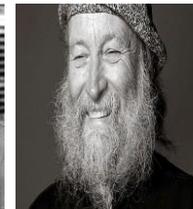
More than one part at the same time

*In C*, Terry Riley

**Phasing**

Where the same part is played on 2 instruments at a steady but not identical tempo

*Two Pianos*, Steve Reich



Composition

Texture

Devices