

The Minimalist Jukebox Festival

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Last year, [NPR covered The Minimalist Jukebox Festival](#), a [week-long exploration of the school of minimalist music](#). The NPR story includes a clip of my favorite minimalist work: [Music for 18 Musicians](#), as well as a telling of the classic minimalism knock-knock joke. I remember reading somewhere that the world premiere of *Music for 18 Musicians* was performed by an ensemble of only *seventeen* musicians by doubling up a vocalist with an instrumental line. This was done to reduce the cost of travel. If true, it would make for another one of those “Unfair trivia questions” like “How many years did the Hundred Years’ War last?”

One last story about *18 Musicians* before I let you go. One of the managers in my group needed an audio CD to demonstrate some feature or other, so he came into my office and borrowed my copy of *18 Musicians*, unaware of what lay in store. When he returned the CD afterwards, he told me that when he popped in the CD, he thought it was skipping, since the opening of the piece consists of a single note repeated. That’s what you get when you borrow a CD of minimalism...

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