

Paradox of Simplicity:  
Song Sheets for Participative Music Making in Ukulele Groups

Anne Ku

F4389832

Master of Arts in Music

October 2018

The work in its entirety is written by the author. No part of the dissertation has been submitted before as part of a qualification at the Open University or anywhere else.

**ABSTRACT**

The amateur ukulele club scene is a kind of musical revival of participative music making, reminiscent of the sixties folk music and eighties rock band, with the ukulele as a self-accompanying instrument for singers and non-singers alike. The explosive growth of ukulele clubs and sales raises the question: how does the combination of a simple song sheet with no music symbol or notation and a small, lightweight four-stringed acoustic instrument provide sufficient material for group music making by performers who are not trained to read music or at all in music? For classically trained musicians who require Western notation and its myriad of symbols and terms to communicate and execute a musical work as accurately and completely as possible, the one-page song sheet used in ukulele groups seems a paradox of simplicity. The answers to the research questions arising from this paradox are found after extensive literature review and qualitative research conducted via participant observation, survey, discussion forums, e-mail correspondence, and conversation with creators of song sheets and leaders of ukulele groups.

## 1. Introduction

The ukulele, or ‘ukulele as it is spelled in Hawaii, has travelled a long way, from its Portuguese roots (*machete de braga*) to its adaptation in Hawaii in 1889. Each disruptive technology<sup>1</sup> (radio, television, and Internet) carried the small and light-weight four-stringed guitar shaped object (GSO) even further, from the Hawaiian islands to mainland USA and beyond, from traditional Hawaiian music to other musical genres, spreading the possibilities of this little instrument.

Untrained musicians can learn the basics in an hour<sup>2</sup>, gaining them almost instant entry to ukulele clubs that meet regularly to play, sing and socialise. Ukulele clubs (groups) have exploded in number and size worldwide in the past decade<sup>3</sup>. Over 630 ukulele clubs in 25 countries are listed in ukulele-related websites.<sup>4</sup> Its popularity has spread like wildfire<sup>5</sup>. Last year, sales of ukuleles overtook acoustic guitars<sup>6</sup>.

Why are ukulele sales booming?<sup>7</sup> Is this a fad or fashion? Is it a revival of the Hawaiian musical tradition? Is the spread of ukulele clubs similar to IrTrad, revival of traditional Irish music? Is the instrument a substitute for the acoustic guitar, reviving the 1960’s folk song tradition? Is it replacing the recorder in the classroom?<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A disruptive technology replaces the existing one and makes it obsolete. James Manyika, Michael Chui, Jacques Bughin, Richard Dobbs, Peter Bisson, and Alex Marrs, ‘Disruptive technologies: Advances that will transform life, business, and the global economy’, *McKinsey Global Institute Report* (May 2013) <<https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/digital-mckinsey/our-insights/disruptive-technologies>> [Accessed 1 October 2018].

<sup>2</sup> Since 2017, I have been giving beginning lessons for individuals and groups with the goal of getting them to play with groups after the first hour. A few have succeeded.

<sup>3</sup> Independently of each other, two ukulele websites have been listing ukulele clubs by name, location, and contact since 2011, see Appendix A for analysis.

<sup>4</sup> See Appendix A for author’s count and assessment.

<sup>5</sup> Various newspaper articles in 2017 reported booming ukulele sales (see section in bibliography).

<sup>6</sup> Daniel Ho, Yamaha Guitar Artist, *e-mail correspondence*, (26 July 2018).

<sup>7</sup> “Why are ukulele sales booming”, Concertblog, entry posted 25 July 2018, <<https://concertblog.wordpress.com/2018/07/25/why-are-ukulele-sales-booming/>> [Accessed 27 September 2018].

<sup>8</sup> David Wilkes, ‘Schools ditch unpopular recorders for trendy George Formby-style ukuleles’, *The Daily Mail*, 1 July 2009. <<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/5713291/School-ditches-recorders-for-ukuleles.html>> [Accessed 29 September 2018]

Judy Fladmark, ‘Ukulele sends UK crazy’, *BBC News Magazine*, 19 February 2010.

My online discussions with ukulele enthusiasts through Facebook ukulele groups and offline conversations through my participation in ukulele clubs and festivals reveal why they are so drawn to the ukulele. The instrument's characteristics (small, light, and few strings) are favourable for today's mobile, attention and time-challenged individuals who are too busy to invest in private tuition but want to learn quickly and play instantly. After taking a beginner's course, they can improve their playing by participating in regular meet-ups of local ukulele clubs whose "jam" sessions serve as group practice and whose members share tips and advice with each other. Participants "read" from a song sheet to play the chords and sing the lyrics.

A ukulele song sheet is the barebones<sup>9</sup> of what you need to play and sing along in a group. At the minimum, it contains only letters: just the lyrics and the chord names. At the maximum, it can contain slash chords (for the bass), strumming patterns, tablature and notation for the melody (such as in a lead sheet) and even instrumental riffs, time signature, key signature, vertical bars or forward slashes separating the text to indicate bar lines and measures, introduction chords and riffs, instrumental interlude, ending and outro, and other instructions to play and sing it accurately. In between the two extremes, content and layout vary greatly as there is no consistency or standardisation in ukulele song sheets, compared to guitar tablature, lead sheets, instrumental scores, and other kinds of published sheet music. Chords can also be represented by a series of four digits, each indicating the fret to be pressed on that string<sup>10</sup>. Melodic notes and instrumental riffs can be represented by tablature, Western notation (staff), or a combination of letters and numbers (which string and which fret).

Given the simplicity of the ukulele song sheet, how is it possible to convey the musical material of a song which is more fully represented in the original sheet music? How is the ukulele song sheet a

---

<<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/8523082.stm>> [Accessed 29 September 2018]

<sup>9</sup> "Song sheets: the barebones to guide music making", Concertblog, entry posted 4 September 2018 <<https://concertblog.wordpress.com/2018/09/04/song-sheets-the-barebones-to-guide-music-making/>> [Accessed 27 September 2018].

<sup>10</sup> 0000 means all open strings, no frets are pressed. 2000 means press the G-string on the second fret to create the A minor chord on an ukulele with GCEA tuning.

sufficient and adequate guide for a group of untrained musicians to play and sing together, without losing the essential features of the song?

Sound before symbol: notation was invented to store and communicate what is heard and not vice versa. The vast majority of musicological research concerns notated music, and as such, little is researched on the practice of play by ear (Lilliestam, 1996). Without written notation, do the details of the music get conveyed by ear?

To answer this question, I deliberately and actively participated in the regular meet-ups (jam sessions) of ukulele clubs in London and Boston to observe and experience what goes on. I observed and took notes of how I learned in several situations: 1) songs I knew already: how playing the chords lets me “find the pitch”; 2) songs I did not recognise from reading the title and lyrics but recalled the melody and riffs as soon as we starting playing as a group: listening to others; 3) songs I did not know at all: playing the chords and strumming with others and only joining in the singing when I’ve learned the melody, e.g. second verse; 4) additional step of obtaining vocal and piano scores and learning from playing them on the piano. In informal conversations, I asked other participants in these meet-ups how they learned the songs outside of the regular jam sessions. To my surprise, nearly all learned from playing along with Youtube or Spotify.

To further understand what goes into these song sheets, I contacted the pioneers of ukulele song sheets --- those creators and transcribers who have put up the most number of song sheets and which have been made available for others to use.<sup>11</sup> Through lengthy e-mail correspondence with these song sheet producers in USA, Canada, UK, and Australia, I learned of their motivation and the manner in which they contribute to the ever expanding ukulele repertoire. The song sheet creators employ a variety of methods to produce their ukulele song sheets. They create song sheets from scratch by ear, transcribe from lead sheets, reduce from piano scores, and adapt from guitar tablature. By making them freely available and easily searchable online, some including metadata such as skill level and song

---

<sup>11</sup> Their song sheets consistently appear at the top of search engine rankings.

background, they encourage wide usage and feedback for corrections and improvements. The users test and edit them to suit their voice range and skill level. The song sheets get refined and eventually enter the standard ukulele song repertoire.

Through participant observation, I recorded my experience playing with strangers and hearing the surround sound in a ukulele jam session<sup>12</sup> where we sight read from a ukulele song sheet, sing the melody line that we already know or try to mimic what we hear from the leader and others, and strum our ukuleles to accompany ourselves harmonically and rhythmically.

These findings not only benefit users but also publishers, composers, arrangers, and transcribers to aim for consistent content and format, eventually to reach a convergence and standardisation. To my knowledge, no one has conducted a study of this kind, peering into the song sheet as an item of significance in facilitating music making in ukulele groups, and with that, the song sheet in participatory music making in mixed instrumental groups.

## 2. Motivation

During the six years I lived on the island of Maui, the second largest landmass in the Hawaiian chain, it was impossible not to hear the ukulele. Yet I only acquired one and learned to play it in the last six months of my stay. In the last month, I joined a local ukulele group that met in a wooden church next to the beach to play Hawaiian songs, often as accompaniment to hula dancers. I discovered that I could practise with a group of strangers and get more proficient at fingering chords, switching between chords and learning new songs.

After leaving Maui, I joined ukulele groups in Maui, Boston, London, and Amsterdam in my travels to ensure I continued to practice. Unlike the jam sessions on Maui, very little if any Hawaiian music got played outside of Hawaii. At my first jam session in a pub in West London with the Hanwell

---

<sup>12</sup> “What to expect in a jam session”, Concertblog, entry posted 2 August 2018, <<https://concertblog.wordpress.com/2018/08/02/ukulele-jam-sessions-what-to-expect/>> [Accessed 27 September 2018].

Ukulele Group, I became self-conscious that I did not recognise 95% of the songs. My exposure to British pop songs was limited to the most famous five songs of the Beatles, for I grew up listening to American Top 40 songs broadcasted from the only English-speaking radio station and Japanese and Chinese songs my parents played on records on the island of Okinawa.

The very next evening, I joined the Hanwell group to perform as the warm-up act before the ukulele club leader and founder's blues band in a brewery pub. Being on stage with the full backing of electric bass and percussion reminded me of my teenage rock bands on Okinawa.

Other longer-established ukulele clubs in London met on other nights of the week, also in pubs and used their own songbooks. The sessions nearly all start about 8 pm and end at 11 pm. In contrast to London's pub scene, the group playing sessions in Boston and Cambridge, Massachusetts did not take place in pubs but in more sober venues with fewer participants and shorter duration of group playing to make time for "open mic"<sup>13</sup>.

To replicate the long playing, no "open mic" tradition, I started my own ukulele group in an area of Boston void of any ukulele activity. I compiled thematic song books to attract ukulele players. I gave workshops to complete beginners and encouraged them to join our jam sessions. As club founder and leader, I became an "insider" and gained access to the "leaders" in the ukulele world. I experienced rapid social bonding,<sup>14</sup> health benefits,<sup>15</sup> and psychological benefits<sup>16</sup> of group singing.

My personal fascination with the ukulele arises from the following six areas:

1. awareness of how much quicker it is to learn to play the ukulele and use it to accompany singing than the piano, from my own experience of teaching beginning piano and sight-reading;

<sup>13</sup> Open mic is a performance opportunity for members of the group, usually solo.

<sup>14</sup> Eiluned Pearce, Jacques Launay, Pádraig MacCarron, and Robin I. M. Dunbar, 'Tuning in to others: Exploring relational and collective bonding in singing and non-singing groups over time', *Psychology of Music*, 45(4) (2017), 496–512.

<sup>15</sup> Stephen Clift and Ian Morrison, 'Group singing fosters mental health and wellbeing: findings from the East Kent "singing for health" network project', *Mental Health and Social Inclusion*, 15(2) (2011), 88-97.

<<https://doi.org/10.1108/20428301111140930>> [Accessed 26 September 2018]

<sup>16</sup> Marianne Judd and Julie Ann Pooley, 'The psychological benefits of participating in group singing for members of the general public', *Psychology of Music*, 42(2) (2013), 269-283.

2. desire as a composer and performer to expand my repertoire beyond classical music;
3. nostalgia for playing in rock bands in my youth and wanting to recreate that feeling;
4. desire to make music anywhere, as the piano is not portable or always available,
5. curiosity about alternative ways to learn a musical instrument and engage in music making, and
6. the joy and freedom I feel when playing the ukulele and singing with others<sup>17</sup>.

Universal to all these influences is the relative ease in which the ukulele facilitates vocal accompaniment across music genres, evoking memory, and enabling mobility respectively.

### 3. Research Questions

The central thesis of this paper is a paradox. How does the combination of a simple song sheet with no music symbols or notation and a four-stringed acoustic instrument suffice for group music making by performers who are not trained to read music or at all in music? What else must they know, besides what is written on the paper, to be able to play and sing a song in ukulele groups? What else must be communicated and how? The following questions help elucidate the paradox.

1. How do ukulele players learn and improve their skills?
2. How are all the other details to successfully execute a piece of music communicated to the performers, if they are not written down?

---

<sup>17</sup> Tanya Su-Kyung Lee, 'Music as a Birthright: Chicago's Old Town School of Folk Music and Participatory Music Making in the Twenty-First Century' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2011). <<https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/handle/2142/24105>> [Accessed 26 September 2018].

Lee speaks for many classically trained professional musicians: "My classical education had encouraged me to learn music visually (my natural predisposition) to the detriment of my ear and my aural memory; as it does for many classical musicians, music existed for me first on the page and only subsequently in sound." She speaks for how I feel:

"I found myself able to enjoy playing music without the anxiety that I was doing it wrong, or poorly, or not living up to my potential. It no longer seemed so important to me that although I could play a Chopin ballade on the piano, all I could do on the guitar was bass-strum patterns in a few major keys with little evidence of improvement. I enjoyed the latter so much more fully than the former, primarily because I was doing it with other people. I finally internalized the concept that music does not have to be complex or difficult to be good, but it does have to be something you enjoy doing."

3. Is the ukulele song sheet sufficient for group playing or is the presence of a leader necessary to ensure the group plays in sync?
4. Where does the practice of singing and accompanying oneself on the ukulele in a group fit in the academic literature? Is it a vocal ensemble? How does it compare with choir? How does it compare with rock bands?
5. What are the prerequisites and assumptions in using ukulele song sheets in participative music making?
6. What are the musical skills one develops from participating in ukulele jam sessions?
7. How do the pioneers create or transcribe ukulele song sheets?
8. What motivates them to create song sheets?
9. Why do they make their song sheets available freely?
10. What are the skills one develops from leading ukulele jam sessions?
11. Are there differences between song sheets created for a group and those for an individual?
12. What are the pros and cons of using different formats for ukulele song sheets?
13. How do creators of song sheets decide on the choice of key for the song for group use?
14. What information is necessary to make ukulele song sheets self-explanatory and useful for playing and singing in groups?
15. How important are the following skills in using ukulele song sheets?
  - a. Sight reading<sup>18</sup>
  - b. Sight singing
  - c. Play by ear
  - d. Ear training
  - e. Aural skills
  - f. Listening to each other; mimicry

---

<sup>18</sup> Anne Ku, 'On sightreading', (unpublished thesis, Utrecht Conservatory, 2008).



While not immediately obvious, many of these questions have already been addressed in the literature. The remaining questions need to be asked of the participants themselves.

#### 4. Research Context: the literature

To contextualise the subject of this research, I define the terms and concepts used in my enquiry. In this thesis, I use the term “ukulele group” or “ukulele club” to refer to those ukulele players who meet regularly to make music together in a specific location.<sup>19</sup> I refer to their participants as members, i.e. the individuals who come to the group for the shared purpose. In their regular meet-ups, alternatively called jam sessions, rehearsals, practice sessions, and get-togethers, the members engage in participative music making, where the performer is the audience. The primary attention is on the activity and other participants not the end product that results from doing<sup>20</sup>. They are not playing to a separate audience other than themselves. (If they are, then it is considered presentational music making.) They can be trying out new songs for the first time, revisiting old ones they have not played in awhile, or repeating songs to get proficient for an upcoming gig. For successful participative music making, it must be socially situated and culturally contextualized in community<sup>21</sup>.

The ukulele club scene shares common characteristics with Irish Traditional Music, a.k.a. IrTrad, as both are examples of participatory culture through affiliation.<sup>22</sup> A participatory culture is one with relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing one’s creations, and some type of informal mentorship whereby what is known by the most experienced is passed along to novices. Members believe their contributions matter, and feel some degree of social connection with one another. The 300-year old IrTrad has evolved from a “local”

<sup>19</sup> What ukulele groups and clubs call themselves in “Name for a Band and Brand”, Concertblog, entry posted 20 July 2018, <<https://concertblog.wordpress.com/2018/07/20/name-for-a-band-and-a-brand/>> [Accessed 30 September 2018].

<sup>20</sup> Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), p. 28.

<sup>21</sup> Thomas Turino ‘Four Fields of Music Making and Sustainable Living’, *The World of Music, Music and Sustainability*, 51(1) (2009), 95-117.

<sup>22</sup> H. Jenkins, K. Clinton, R. Purushotma, A. J. Robison, and M. Weigel, *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century* (Chicago: MacArthur Foundation, 2006).

<[https://www.macfound.org/media/article\\_pdfs/JENKINS\\_WHITE\\_PAPER.PDF](https://www.macfound.org/media/article_pdfs/JENKINS_WHITE_PAPER.PDF)> [Accessed 26 September 2018].

traditional music and dance genre to a “glocal” one, i.e. global presence of local groups that meet to make music. 1) They exemplify members of developed societies reconnecting to their cultural roots through music; 2) They have standard core repertoire (established in IrTrad but still evolving in the ukulele scene); 3) Participants must learn and adopt appropriate session etiquette (less obvious for ukulele groups though emerging); 4) There is a huge supply of and demand for music learning resources (tutorials, sheet music, advice, etc). In addition, they employ aural / oral music learning supplemented with observational learning (and a great degree of peer-to-peer, horizontal learning and self-education).

Stemming from an individual’s desire to reconnect with one’s cultural roots through music, both IrTrad and ukulele groups are examples of music revival. A music revival comprises an effort to perform and promote music that is valued as old or historical, but the phenomenon can also be “a recurring, cyclical process that is part of the natural ebb and flow of culture”.<sup>23</sup> A revival can apply to a genre, such as sixties folk music, songs in Hawaiian language; an instrument; or a technology such as the cassette<sup>24</sup>. Music revivals are vital agents of cultural change, for “music serves as a powerful means for restoring and re-engaging individuals with each other, their culture, and their past.”<sup>25</sup>

As adults, we are nostalgic for what feels like “our music” which is determined largely by what we heard in our teenage years, the turning point in our musical preferences<sup>26</sup>. Nostalgia is one of the drivers of music revival. Having heard it once long ago, people want to hear it again<sup>27</sup>. Playing a

<sup>23</sup> Juniper Hill and Caroline Bithell, ‘Chapter 1: An Introduction to Music Revival as Concept, Cultural Process, and Medium of Change,’ in *Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*, ed. by Caroline Bithell and Juniper Hill (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 29.

<sup>24</sup> ‘How is Nostalgia Fueling the Cassette Revival?’ (24 November 2017) <[https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15680183.How\\_is\\_nostalgia\\_fuelling\\_the\\_cassette\\_revival/](https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15680183.How_is_nostalgia_fuelling_the_cassette_revival/)> [Accessed 30 September 2018].

<sup>25</sup> Tamara Livingston, ‘An Expanded Theory for Revivals as Cosmopolitan Participatory Music Making’, in *Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*, ed. by Caroline Bithell and Juniper Hill, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 68-69.

<sup>26</sup> Levitin, Daniel, ‘Why We Like the Music We Like’ in *The Jossey-Bass Reader on the Brain and Learning*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass/Wylie, 2007), p. 375,

<[http://daniellevitin.com/levitinlab/articles/2007-Levitin-Why\\_we\\_like.pdf](http://daniellevitin.com/levitinlab/articles/2007-Levitin-Why_we_like.pdf)> [Accessed 1 October 2018]

<sup>27</sup> Alexis Petridis, ‘Britpop is back! What’s behind the 90s music revival?’ *The Guardian* [online] (6 September 2018)

familiar song may bring back memories and feelings associated with those memories<sup>28</sup>. These are the wider implications of the current growth and spread of participative music making in ukulele groups, in what is the larger phenomenon of community music<sup>29</sup>.

Are the meet-ups of ukulele clubs considered professional or amateur? As far as community development in Great Britain is concerned, the distinction matters<sup>30</sup>. There are distinct polarities between professional and amateur<sup>31</sup>. Finnegan discusses this distinction at length (14 pages), arguing that the distinction is on a spectrum rather than binary: “the concept of amateur music is a relative, partly arbitrary, and sometimes disputed label rather than a settled division.”<sup>32</sup>. A professional musician is someone who makes his or her living from music and has certain standards to meet. Yet, a professional musician could be engaging in amateur music making when performing with an amateur ensemble, unpaid, not for money, but for fun, socialisation, and charity. In this respect, the distinction is relevant to understanding the *raison d’être* of ukulele clubs. Defending participatory music, Everitt challenges the conventional thinking that “a piece of music must be performed to the highest possible standards of excellence” implying the need for formal training of dedicated players and that the rest of the people who engage in participatory music making are only socialising and not producing art<sup>33</sup>.

Numerous scientific studies have established the health benefits of music making, group singing, and music education. It would seem that these studies extend to the sort of self-accompanied singing that takes place in ukulele groups or the aural and sight reading skills required to participate in such music making. Related articles abound in subscription-based publications dedicated to the

---

<<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2018/sep/06/britpop-is-back-whats-behind-the-90s-music-revival>> [Accessed 30 September 2018].

<sup>28</sup> Ira Hyman, ‘Music-Evoked Nostalgia: Why do certain songs send us back?’ *Psychology Today* (6 May 2011) <<https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/mental-mishaps/201105/music-evoked-nostalgia>> [Accessed 30 September 2018].

<sup>29</sup> Kari Veblen, ‘The many ways of community music’, *International Journal of Community Music*, 1:1 (2007), 5-21.

<sup>30</sup> Tim Joss, ‘Community music development in Great Britain’, *International Journal of Community Music*, 3(3) (2010), 321 - 326.

<sup>31</sup> Joss (2010) Table 1, p. 323.

<sup>32</sup> Ruth Finnegan, *The Hidden Musicians: Music-Making in an English Town* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2007), pp. 43 - 55.

<sup>33</sup> Anthony Everitt, *Joining In: An Investigation into Participatory Music* (Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1997).

ukulele, including the US-based Ukulele Magazine, UK-based Uke Magazine, and Australia-based Kamuke.<sup>34</sup>

Music making in ukulele groups falls into a sub-category of vocal instrumental ensemble where the instrumentalists are also the singers; it is group singing with self-accompaniment. Group singing has received much attention for its overall health benefits<sup>35</sup>, senior residents<sup>36</sup>, mental health and well-being<sup>37</sup>, psychological benefits for the general public<sup>38</sup>, and social bonding<sup>39</sup>. The findings include benefits to social health (self-identity and interpersonal relationships), immunosuppression, stress reduction, improved breathing, cognitive stimulation, and socialisation.

That singing can be learned without having to read notes and only through sight (by observing the leader's hand movements for tonal direction) and hearing (by listening to self and others) underlies the principles of Natural Voice Network (NVN), the subject of a book<sup>40</sup> on reclaiming the natural voice and amateur singing in communities. Unlike the participants of the NVN, members of ukulele groups focus more on producing sound (harmony on ukuleles and melody in voices) and less on hearing each other for vocal harmonisation, thereby maintaining the momentum through strumming and unison singing. Vocal harmonisation is optional, and the degree to which members are able to naturally harmonise varies in ukulele groups. In this sense, the physical act of strumming keeps everyone in sync.

Playing the ukulele in a group is akin to playing rhythm guitar in a rock band. Both activities provide harmony and rhythm for the group. The learning practices of ukulele players and rock

<sup>34</sup> Ukulele Music Information <<https://www.ukulelemusicinfo.com/ukulele-magazines/>> [Accessed 30 September 2018].

<sup>35</sup> Rosie Stacy, Katie Brittain, and Sandra Kerr, 'Singing for health: an exploration of the issues', *Health Education*, 102(4) (2002), 156-162. <<https://doi.org/10.1108/09654280210434228>> [Accessed 26 September 2018]

<sup>36</sup> Musetta Chang-Chi Fu, Shih-Yin Lin, Basia Belza and Marianne Unite, 'Insights of Senior Living Residents and Staff on Group-Singing, Activities', *Adaptation & Aging*, 39(3) (2015), 243-261. <DOI: 10.1080/01924788.2015.1063332> [Accessed 26 September 2018].

<sup>37</sup> Clift and Morrison (2011).

<sup>38</sup> Judd and Pooley (2013).

<sup>39</sup> Weinstein et al (2016), Pearce et al (2017).

<sup>40</sup> Caroline Bithell, *A Different Voice, A Different Song: Reclaiming Community through the Natural Voice and World Song* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).

musicians have many similarities, namely 1) without pedagogy; 2) self-taught on the job; 3) play by ear; and 4) peer-directed and group learning. They primarily learn by listening to recordings and copying what is heard, both as individual self-study and through experimentation and rehearsal with a group. Because learning to play the four-string ukulele from scratch is easier and faster than the six-string electric guitar and with far less hassle (no need for amplification and other accessories) and some ukulele group jam sessions often have a bassist and a cajon player, it is an appealing way to rekindle that rock band feeling by learning the instrument and joining an ukulele group.

In her study of learning pathways of baby boomer-aged participants of a rock band program in light of academic research into midlife ageing process, O'Shea found that age creates no barrier to enjoyment or achievements<sup>41</sup>. On the contrary, age makes these older "rock musicians" less inhibited and self-conscious, within a supportive environment.

In terms of learning pathways, the music education literature contains a wealth of articles on music learning as a lifespan endeavor<sup>42</sup>, aural skills<sup>43</sup>, music learning through aural, visual, and kinesthetic modes<sup>44</sup>, and through participatory ensembles<sup>45</sup>. One study of four ukulele groups in the USA supports the notion that "there is no singular experience or ubiquitous practice for community ukulele groups, though some important values (e.g., fun) might be common". However, the ukulele was important, in all four groups, for "accessible music making and putting a smile on everybody's face". What is interesting is that, "socialization and enjoyment seemed to be as important as or

---

<sup>41</sup> Helen O'Shea, "Get back to where you once belonged!" The positive creative impact of a refresher course for "baby-boomer" rock musicians', *Popular Music*, 31(2) (2012), 199-215.

<sup>42</sup> David Myers, Chelcy Bowles, and Will Dabback, 'Chapter Nine: Music Learning as a Lifespan Endeavor', in *Community Music Today*, ed. by Kari K. Veblen, et al. (Plymouth, UK: R&L Education, 2013), pp. 133 - 150.

<sup>43</sup> Dee Hansen and Sarah A. Milligan, 'Aural Skills: At the Juncture of Research in Early Reading and Music Literacy', *Music Educators Journal*, 99(2) (2012), 75-80. <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/23364291>> [Accessed 15 September 2018].

<sup>44</sup> Brent Gault, 'Music learning through all the channels: combining aural, visual, and kinesthetic strategies to develop musical understanding', *General Music Today*, 19 (1) (2005), 7-9.

<sup>45</sup> Matthew D. Thibeault 'Music Education for All through Participatory Ensembles', *Music Educators Journal*, 2(2) (2015), 54 - 61.

perhaps more important than playing the ukulele” which supports the psychological benefits of group singing and music making.<sup>46</sup>

Which skills are needed to be able to play a (new) song on the ukulele? For any musical instrument, “playing by ear and sight reading both occur in the learning of a piece, whereas performance from memory follows later”.<sup>47</sup> For unfamiliar music, playing by ear translates the sounds and movements into performance through mimicry, trial and error. For familiar music, the performer retrieves music and motor programs from memory with cues from the song sheet and other players. Players with prior musical training, such as playing another instrument, playing in a band or singing in choir, will already have these skills and learn to play songs more quickly than someone who does not have the background and training.

## 5. Qualitative Research Methods<sup>48</sup>

Having situated the topic of this study in musicology, ethnomusicology, music therapy, music education, and psychology, I now look at answering the research questions posed earlier. The main methods of enquiry are participant observation, survey, discussion forum, in-depth e-mail correspondence and face-to-face conversation.

The participant observation method of enquiry is most suitable and relevant for this research as it is vital to experience a jam session in a ukulele club. By participating as someone who plays and sings with everyone else rather than as an obvious guest watching from the sideline, I was able to get access as an insider. As such, I was able to ask questions and get answers from willing respondents who consider me as a peer. Once I started my own club in Boston, I was able to learn firsthand the

<sup>46</sup> Robin Giebelhausen and Adam J. Kruse, “‘A smile on everybody’s face’: A multiple case study of community ukulele groups”, *International Journal of Music Education*, 36(3) (2017), 347 - 365.

<sup>47</sup> Philip Kitcher, Andreas C. Lehmann, John A. Sloboda, and Robert H. Woody, *Psychology for Musicians: Understanding and Acquiring the Skills* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

<sup>48</sup> Joseph A. Maxwell, *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*, Second Edition, Applied Social Research Methods Series, Vol. 41 (London: Sage Publications, 2005).

skills needed to lead a club and the associated tasks of selecting songs, finding song sheets, and creating or adapting song sheets.

Designing and administering the 51-question survey allowed me to quickly capture the main questions to pursue more deeply through e-mail correspondence and other channels of communication.

I set up discussion forums in Facebook by posting a question and a blogpost in a relevant Facebook group and monitoring responses. I use this tool to get different perspectives on an issue and to further engage with respondents through private message and e-mail.

Most of the in-depth enquiry was conducted via e-mail and face-to-face conversation with creators of song sheets and ukulele club leaders.

## **6. Primary and Secondary Material**

All cited sources in the previous section are considered secondary material as they provide background to the main subject of this enquiry. Primary material refers to the information generated from asking and engaging with song sheet creators, transcribers and users of ukulele song sheets through e-mail, discussion forums, and conversations online and offline. Notes from my observations as a participant in ukulele groups, festivals, workshops, etc all constitute primary material. The remainder are secondary material, as they are already published but need to be analysed: song sheets; songbooks (compilations of song sheets); websites containing listings of ukulele clubs, links to song sheets, and songbooks.

### **6.1 My Participation**

The vast majority of participants in ukulele groups do not have a background of classical music training and notational sight-reading ability. Most of them are not professional musicians but join the ukulele group to play and sing songs they know. As such, I am an outlier in ukulele groups with a different perspective, for I am a pianist, composer, arranger, and music instructor. While most

members are familiar with the songs chosen in their ukulele groups as they grew up with them, I approach them as a performer and composer desiring to expand my repertoire not as a seeker of nostalgia. For these reasons, I participate in ukulele groups with a different kind of awareness and language to communicate my observation.

My participation in the ukulele scene consists of playing in jam sessions, performing in gigs, attending festivals, giving workshops, creating song sheets, and compiling songbooks. The bulk of my participation is in the regular meet-ups, also known as jam sessions and rehearsals, which total 88 from May 2016 to September 2018, of which I led 20 in the club I started in Boston in January 2018. The jam sessions in London all take place in pubs. Those in Boston are rarely held in a pub because of live music licensing requirements.

The Hanwell Ukulele Group in London has been very active giving public performances for special occasions of which I participated in 20. Most of the performances have been outdoors, including a carnival, at a street party, on the beach, in a park for a festival, on the beach, on a stage near a harbour, outside a pub near a beach, at a street market, and at the corner of busy streets for a half-marathon. Indoor gigs have included a brewery pub, a church, and a restaurant. In Boston, I participated in several outdoor ukulele gigs and jam sessions and led my group in our first gig outside a senior assisted living centre.

I attended two ukulele festivals which included workshops, jam sessions, and performances: Irish Hooley (Dun Laoghaire, 25 - 27 August 2017) and Ukulele Melee (Hamilton, MA 28 April 2018 afternoon).

In Boston, I gave a total of 26 ukulele workshops for beginners, of which three were tailored to the elderly residents of a senior assisted living home, eight for teenagers at a local library, and the rest for my club in the common room below my flat, all within walking distance of each other. In London, I taught a 10-year old student, to whom I gave about 10 individual one-hour lessons privately. Elsewhere, I gave countless free one-hour introductory lessons to friends and family.



As club leader, I spend a considerable amount of time choosing songs for our group as well as promoting our meet-ups via social media. I have created a dozen song sheets and compiled 15 songbooks for jam sessions.

Table 1 in Appendix B gives a record of my participation in jam sessions of various ukulele clubs in Maui, Boston, London, and Amsterdam. I attended the most number of jam sessions (43) of Hanwell Ukulele Group (HUG), more than twice as many as the club I started in Boston (20), and also performed (gigged) the most with them (20).

## 6.2 Websites with song sheets and songbooks for the ukulele

The exorbitant number of websites dedicated to providing ukulele transcriptions requires narrowing down to identify the most experienced creators of song sheets. As a ukulele club leader, I choose songs for my group on a weekly basis in different ways: 1) have a song in mind, look for suitable song sheets, if it does not exist, create it; 2) look at song sheets that are available and choose from them; 3) use existing song books (compilations of song sheets). This weekly activity enabled me to narrow down the most useful websites, characterise what they offer and rank them according to preference.

I tabled my preferred sites in a recent blog post<sup>49</sup> which I cited when I approached the owners of these websites, often founders and leaders of ukulele clubs or teachers of ukulele. Situated in Canada, USA, Australia, and the UK, they immediately responded to my query. I thanked them for their hard work and asked how they created their song sheets and why they continue to create and make them available. Their responses are lengthy and full of enthusiasm, for they were sharing their history and passion for the ukulele. These song sheet creators are my primary source, to be tapped later to answer questions like what are the characteristics of songs that will not work well for ukulele; what

---

<sup>49</sup> “Ukulele repertoire: song sheets for amateur music making”, Anne Ku Website, entry posted 23 July 2018, <<http://www.anneku.com/2018/07/23/ukulele-repertoire-song-sheets-for-amateur-music-making/>> [Accessed 27 September 2018].

kinds of songs suit ukulele group playing, and what advice would you give to song sheet creators and transcribers. Appendix C table identifies the main sources of ukulele song sheets.

### **6.3 Leaders of ukulele clubs and instructors who choose songs and find song sheets, and if not, create their own song sheets**

Several websites list the names of ukulele clubs and their websites and contact details. Finding them is easy but getting them to cooperate in answering questions requires some finesse. Rather than blitzing all ukulele club leaders, I used a different approach. I wrote two blog posts, one about the variety of ukulele song sheets and the decisions involved in creating them<sup>50</sup> and another about the ukulele sales boom, linking ukuleles to chocolates<sup>51</sup>. At the bottom of both blog posts, I invited the reader to fill out my survey. In addition, I used both posts (ukulele repertoire and ukulele sales) to contact ukulele club leaders and ukulele teachers (as most often they lead jam sessions) to ask them to answer the survey. To find ukulele teachers, I posted these blog posts on “Ukulele Instructors International” Facebook Page and engaged them in a lively discussion about their *modus operandi*. I learned that ukulele teachers prefer to create their own song sheets for accuracy and consistency.

## **7. Findings: ukulele groups and their song sheets**

From my observations through participation in various ukulele club jam sessions and gigs, surveys of club leaders through Facebook and Google Forms, and conversations with active ukulele players, I identified common characteristics of ukulele groups and ukulele song sheets. While each ukulele club has its own tradition, some preferring to create and adapt song sheets to their own format and others preferring to choose from a songbook, the song sheet is essential for amateur music making.

---

<sup>50</sup> “Ukulele repertoire: song sheets for amateur music making”, Concertblog, entry posted 23 July 2018, <<http://www.anneku.com/2018/07/23/ukulele-repertoire-song-sheets-for-amateur-music-making/>> [Accessed 30 September 2018].

<sup>51</sup> “Why are ukulele sales booming”, Concertblog, entry posted 25 July 2018, <<https://concertblog.wordpress.com/2018/07/25/why-are-ukulele-sales-booming/>> [Accessed 30 September 2018].

Song sheets are required for untrained musicians to play and sing together in a group, unless they have the ability to play by ear and follow along or know how to play the song from memory.

### 7.1 Ukulele groups

Established ukulele groups tend to 1) meet on a regular basis, usually weekly, fortnightly, or once a month; 2) have a specific venue where they can meet regularly; 3) have certain protocols, e.g. warm-up with easy songs, rehearse for next gig, open mic (opportunity to perform in front of others); 4) have an identity, a brand, a logo, a name; 5) have their own songbook which contains song sheets that have been tried and tested; 6) have a microphone for the leader; 7) have complementary instruments to support the group, e.g. electric bass guitar or electric bass ukulele, percussion such as cajon, drum set, tambourines, kazoos, etc; 8) have a website, Youtube channel, Facebook (FB) page, dropbox, and other means to store and share song sheets, songbooks, videos, and communicate events; 9) have regular annual events the group participates in; and 10) have gig opportunities. Each ukulele group can be described by its unique selling points, such as the make-up and mix (described by age range and demographics), venue where they regularly meet, music genre(s), leadership, and general level of buzz (slow and low key, laid back, exciting and fast, etc.)

Groups meet to fulfill their goals, which can be social, instructional (to learn), performance-driven, or a combination. Purely social groups tend to meet in pubs and restaurants, whereas purely instructional groups may prefer quiet rooms such as in educational institutions, churches, libraries, or bookstores. Performance-driven groups meet to rehearse and to perform. Meeting in a venue where the group is seen and heard by others helps to spread word of their existence, publicity to attract new members and gig opportunities. In a public venue, the group's jam session may turn into a performance if bystanders make requests, applaud, and join in the singing. Weather permitting, jamming outdoors in a park naturally attracts passersby.

In the absence of an instructor, ukulele groups can still serve as environments for learning, with peer-to-peer or horizontal learning between the members. Joining a ukulele group is one of the most convenient ways to continue playing, learning new chords, strums, and songs from the meet-ups and from each other. You may ask questions, get tips from each other and sometimes from the leader who may show a specific strum pattern appropriate for a song or easier way of fingering a chord. This informal, unstructured learning is unlike the individual music lessons one takes as a child, whether on an individual and private basis or in school classes.

Often ukulele instructors will form a group to support their teaching. They may follow a class with a jam session or precede a club meet-up with workshops. The groups are set up to allow members to practise together, even after the course has ended. In some cases, students form a group (e.g. Ukulele Union of Boston) to continue practising. These groups may include an open mic session to give opportunity to soloists or small groups to perform in front of a safe and known audience. Some people who are not regular attendees deliberately show up at open mics to play in front of an audience. One member of the long-established “Ukulele Wednesday” group that meets in central London<sup>52</sup> remarked that he noticed visitors flying into London to perform at their monthly open mics.

Performance-driven groups gig regularly, such as the Unlikely Strummers in Plainville, Massachusetts whose fortnightly meet-ups are rehearsals for their upcoming gigs<sup>53</sup>. The BUSK Bonzer Ukulele and Singing Kollektive in Sydney, Australia meets in a community center to rehearse and performs as often as it can<sup>54</sup>.

A group can have all three elements (instructional, social, and gig). At their monthly meet-up, Glastonbury Ukulele Club in Connecticut starts with a beginner’s workshop followed by a group

---

<sup>52</sup> Author conversation with Robin Brown at the group’s one-off jam session at the Old Burlington Arms, Mayfair, London on 6 September 2018.

<sup>53</sup> <<https://unlikelystrummers.weebly.com/>>

<sup>54</sup> <<https://www.meetup.com/Bonzer-Ukulele-and-Singing-Kollektive/>>

rehearsal for their monthly “Big Sing” where they perform to an audience of 200 in the community<sup>55</sup>. Its founder and leader Jim Rosokoff, who calls himself Dr Uke, is a vocalist and ukulele teacher who has created over 2,000 song sheets on his widely used ukulele website<sup>56</sup>.

Geoff Price, the founder and leader of Hanwell Ukulele Group (HUG) in West London, begins each weekly Tuesday evening session with easy songs to warm-up and attract beginners to stay for an hour before the long break. Two volunteers walk around to collect money for a raffle, the proceeds of which support the club<sup>57</sup>. While he will occasionally indicate how to finger difficult chords and divide the group for two-part vocal harmony, his main reason for forming the group five years ago was to have everyone experience participative music making. Over time, members organise gigs for their individual affiliations. Some of these gigs have become annual outdoor affairs in that part of London, like the Kew Street Market, Ealing Beer Festival, Hanwell Hootie, Ealing Half-Marathon, and Hanwell Carnival.

## 7.2 Ukulele song sheets

Survey responses of leaders of ukulele jams, teachers of ukulele workshops, and leaders of ukulele group gigs on questions of repertoire selection reveal their preferences for the kinds of information desired in song sheets. For amateur music making, it is more important for the musical information to fit within one page and be easy to read (large fonts, adequate spacing) than to contain details such as riffs and strum patterns which clutter and cram the page, making it harder to read and longer to navigate.

Creating a song sheet requires reducing a musical work to its bare bones, and what is left out to be learned through listening, consulting sheet music of other instruments, such as the piano, guitar tablature, and ensembles or writing down what one hears. Adapting or revising an existing song sheet

<sup>55</sup> <<https://www.doctoruke.com/gluc.html>>

<sup>56</sup> <<https://www.doctoruke.com>>

<sup>57</sup> <<http://www.hanwellukulele.co.uk>>

is needed to alter a song, transpose it, or customise it. Since writing my blog post about what I learned from finding, creating, and transcribing song sheets myself, I started a conversation with club leaders who also spend a lot of time on this activity<sup>58</sup>. They usually go through several revisions, trying it out themselves and then on their members, before publishing and releasing on their websites for the greater public (the Internet). Even so, song sheets vary greatly in content and layout, in terms of choice of key, chord diagram placement, length of song lyrics (which verses to include), instrumental riffs, etc. Some club leaders prefer to reformat all song sheets to a consistent layout for readability. In the process, they also correct any mistakes or disagreements and customise the content to their liking, such as ending the song with a specific strumming pattern rather than an abrupt single downstroke.

### 7.3 Ukulele song sheet creators

After using the two songbooks of his predecessors which are collections of song sheets downloaded from different websites with different formats, Nick Howarth, leader of Strummerville which meets every other Wednesday evening in a cafe in Somerville, Massachusetts, updated and expanded the club's repertoire by calling for requests from members and compiling a third songbook<sup>59</sup>. He created all the song sheets in the third book, of which half of the songs are requests from members. He looks at guitar chords and tablature first, as he finds them more accurate than what is published for the ukulele. The criteria he uses to select songs to include in the third songbook of his group is 1) relatively popular songs that most people know; 2) not too complicated for upper-level beginners and intermediate players to sing and play in a group setting. He omits any subtle chord changes/embellishments that he thinks too difficult/cumbersome for an average ukulele player; or, if

---

<sup>58</sup> "Ukulele repertoire: song selection for ukulele groups and clubs", Concertblog, entry posted 17 July 2018, <<https://concertblog.wordpress.com/2018/07/19/ukulele-repertoire-song-selection-for-ukulele-groups-and-clubs/>> [Accessed 27 September 2018].

<sup>59</sup> Nick Howarth, response to online survey and *e-mail correspondence* (28 July 2018). Strummerville uses the Ukulele Union of Boston's meet-up website to schedule their sessions.

the original key of the song was unfavorable for playing on a ukulele or, to a lesser extent, singing, he transposes the music.

Eamonn Canley, a multi-instrumentalist who has participated in various ukulele jam sessions in central London, southern England, and elsewhere, has written and re-written song sheets in the songbook of Littlehampton Ukulele Jam<sup>60</sup>. His definition of inclusiveness is not restricted to existing club members. He advises, “repertoire songs can get overlooked and not played for months or longer. They need to be playable straight off the page, not fumbled through to remember how to play it and then play it again a bit better. Playable straight off the page requires an elegant, recognisable and intelligent format. Songs should be accurate unless this is a special group version with a reason to be so, such that a visitor from another group, another country or whatever can join in what is a universally known pop song and not be buffeted by errors. These songs should be universally inclusive in a uke jam and make visitors universally included.”

The first free ukulele jam session in London started in the basement of the Royal George pub near Great Portland Street in April 2007. “Ukulele Wednesday” which takes place in three locations each Wednesday evening in London, each using their 277-page songbook. The format is consistent, with embedded chord names bold and in parenthesis in line with the lyrics, chord diagrams at the bottom usually unless 1) there is space on the right hand side, 2) diagrams for rarely used or difficult chords to be placed near the lyrics on the right hand side, or 3) there is no space at the bottom for chord diagrams. Lorraine Bow and other founders of Ukulele Wednesdays formed a “committee” who call for song requests, produce song sheets consistent with their formats, try (test) them out before introducing them to the group, and publishing them in their songbook (PDF)<sup>61</sup>.

Another songbook with song sheet format similar to Ukulele Wednesday (UW) is that of Balham Ukulele Society (BUS), running since 2009 in the same room at the same pub in South

---

<sup>60</sup> Eamonn Canley, *e-mail correspondence*, (July 2018).

<sup>61</sup> Lorraine Bow, *e-mail correspondence*, (17 September 2018).

London. The main differences between the two song sheet formats are 1) use of parentheses (former) and brackets (latter) around chord names; 2) chord diagrams at the bottom or right-hand side (former) and always on the right-hand side (latter). Both aim to restrict to one single sheet to avoid page turns and scrolling. While UW makes their songbook easily found on the Web and freely downloadable from their website, BUS does not make it available on its Facebook page but prefers to e-mail their PDF to anyone who requests it. Each year, BUS calls for new requests from its members, adds new songs, throws out ones that do not get sung often, and produces a new songbook for dissemination to its mailing list. Mark Embleton, who took over the leadership from the founder five years ago, finds it easier to create his own song sheets than use a pre-existing song sheet<sup>62</sup>. He looks at sheet music (notation) of the original song, guitar tabs, and listening to the original recording. He tries to stick with the original key as much as possible though sometimes he transposes to avoid tricky keys but not because it is not in his vocal range. If he has to choose, he chooses the key with easier chords. He advocates the embedded chord name format with chord diagrams on the right hand side in order of use, for three reasons 1) space saver, 2) precision, and 3) readability.

Initially, clubs may begin by using song sheets and songbooks of more established clubs and ukulele teachers. At some point, some club leaders prefer to reformat and produce their own songbooks for readability and findability.

Five years ago, London's Hanwell Ukulele Group founder and leader Geoff Price began by making printouts of song sheets he assembled from different sources<sup>63</sup>. Eventually he made them available electronically via a dropbox and projected them onto a big screen when the club grew. He created song sheets to meet member requests and to expand his collection. He noticed that many free ukulele and guitar song sheets on the web have mistakes in them. Over the years, he has standardised to embedding chord names in bold typeface, red font color in the lyric line, with chord diagrams on the

<sup>62</sup> Author participation in BUS' fortnightly jam sessions and conversation with Mark Embleton.

<sup>63</sup> Author's face to face conversation with Geoff Price before a regular Tuesday meet-up at The Green W7 pub in Hanwell, London on 11 September 2018.



side (next to where it is used), with consideration for scrolling and page turns. He said it is easier to start with the lyrics and write down the chords he hears from a recording than try to transcribe and edit from another song sheet. Most ukulele song sheets are awkward for formatting, i.e. he cannot simply copy and paste without losing the format. He prefers to start with lyrics and add chord letters, i.e. from scratch and using his hearing to determine the chords. In terms of choice of chords, he chooses easiest first (key of C, then G, A, D). He tries to avoid the B flat chord whenever possible. He tries to put the song in the key he can sing, which was fine initially as the club was predominantly male. Later he has had to transpose to more comfortable voice ranges for women. He aims for songs everyone is familiar with.

One of the members of the Hanwell Ukulele Group started a new kind of ukulele club in September 2017 because using the ukulele to accompany Yiddish songs had not existed anywhere else in the world. Steve Ogin, a professor of mechanical engineering, has created 20 sheets of Yiddish songs, which he sourced from several songbooks (sheet music)<sup>64</sup>. He lays out chord names in bold and red above the lyrics in two columns, chord diagrams on the right hand side after the song, and his own translation into English. At his monthly rehearsals in a room booked by the Jewish Music Institute at School of Oriental and Asian Studies at University of London, he teaches the members of the London Yiddish Ukulele Group how to pronounce the Yiddish words. Sharing that there was negativity around Yiddish music, but ukulele is for happy, uplifting songs, he said “A minor key doesn’t have to be sad.” It takes him more than eight hours to create a song sheet, with 5 to 10% requiring transposition. He organises occasional open mic events at the Poetry Cafe near Covent Garden and the Jewish Museum to motivate his group to study and perform in public.

---

<sup>64</sup> Author took notes of an “interview” with Steve Ogin after both participating in two sets of a Hanwell Ukulele Group outdoor performance at the Kew Village Market at Kew Bridge Station on 5 August 2018.

Since October 2015, Leonard Kaufer has to-date created more than 600 song sheets for Uke Jams, the ukulele club he founded and leads each week in Lincoln, California<sup>65</sup>. He invests in this time-consuming activity for three reasons: he 1) cannot find anything suitable elsewhere, 2) prefers his own format; and 3) prefers to have it in a key for his voice range. To create what he calls “chord charts”, he prefers to go to the original sheet music and transcribe from there. He puts the chord name above the lyrics to allow spacing for timing, sometimes uses two columns to keep to a single page, with the font size as large as possible for readability. The metadata on his website at [ukejams.com](http://ukejams.com) makes it easy to search and sort the song sheets by title, artist name, year, genre, youtube or tutorial, and number of chords as an indicator of skill level.

Ukulele groups and ukulele orchestras are distinctly different in that members in the former usually read from the same song sheet and play and sing the same music, while members in the latter play different parts and can only hear how the music should sound when they play together. Between the two camps of ukulele groups (social vs instructional) is a third one which combines a social and instructional ukulele group with characteristics of a ukulele orchestra in that players do more than unison singing and playing. The idea of ukestration, a word coined and defined by Mark Jackson<sup>66</sup> and Jane Jelbart, co-authors of two recent books on the subject, is to make a unison group sound more like an orchestra, with different people doing different things in an interesting way and to lead and teach in such that it is sociable and fun and not like a class. They create their own song sheets specifically for this purpose.

#### **7.4 Ukulele song sheet pioneers**

The earliest ukulele enthusiasts, either because they teach or lead ukulele group playing and singing, have created the song sheets and made them easily searchable and accessible on the Web.

---

<sup>65</sup> Notes from online survey (google form) administered in July 2018.

<sup>66</sup> Mark Jackson, response to online survey and *e-mail correspondence*, (July - September 2018).

These pioneers continue to churn out song sheets without expectation of remuneration. These song sheets provide a main source of ukulele repertoire for new ukulele players and ukulele clubs.

In the last two years of searching for song sheets, I have identified six sources on the Web that are my go-to places for the largest number of songs and most easy-to-read layouts. I contacted these pioneers via e-mail or Facebook and enquired about 1) their motivation for creating song sheets; 2) their considerations in creating song sheets; and 3) their reasons for making them freely available. I summarise their answers below, beginning with the three that have chosen to put chord names above lyrics.

For Dr Uke, creating a new song sheet every day is therapy<sup>67</sup>. He listens to a recording and writes down the chords as he hears them, including non-standard chords as used in jazz, an idiom he is well familiar with. He gives two versions for each song: one with chord diagrams and chord names above the lyrics and the other with only the chord names above lyrics. This two version release is deliberate to get beginners to memorise the chord diagrams eventually. Having created over 2,000 song sheets for his students and the members of the Glastonbury Ukulele Club in Connecticut, he notes that the voicing of most original artist recordings is too high for most people.

Based in Fremantle, Australia, Stewart Greenhill has created more than 400 song sheets primarily for teaching purposes and for use in his monthly ukulele sessions which is intended for intermediate players<sup>68</sup>. The metadata surrounding each song provides an indication of skill level, the lower the number, the easier it is: chords, chord transitions, video examples, and play-along examples (lyrics synced to videos). He deliberately chooses to create sheets for songs that have not been covered on other sites and ensures that his collection includes a song for every year to show how the kinds of songs have changed over time. 25% of his songs are Australian to promote local music. On the webpage, at the top of each song sheet is a diagram of all the chords used in the song and lines with

---

<sup>67</sup> Jim Rosokoff, a.k.a. Dr Uke, Facetime video conversation (13 September 2018).

<sup>68</sup> Stewart Greenhill, Facebook iMessenger chats (24 July 2018).

arrowheads showing the chord progression. Every song sheet has chord names and chord diagrams situated above the lyrics. Chorus is coloured in yellow so it stands out. When you press the Download PDF link, you get a one-page two-column format with chord names above lyrics on the left side and chord names and diagrams on the right.

The third pioneer that also puts chord names above lyrics is San Jose Ukulele Club (SJUC) in the USA. According to the founder Gillian Altieri, the group took six years to come up with the formatting they use now<sup>69</sup>. Above the lyrics, they put chord names, “timing dots” and vertical bar lines to get the group (which average 60 participants) to play the songs correctly and end a song simultaneously. They have about 600 song sheets with consistent SJUC formatting and an additional 100 contributed by members, not necessarily conforming to their standard format. The chord diagrams are displayed at the top of the sheet, to make the song sheet look less busy and cluttered and nudges the player to learn the chord by name rather than relying on a diagram. They have two reasons for putting the chord names above the lyric line: 1) not to break up the lyric line so it is easy to read and allows for proper phrasing and spacing to hold a note; 2) to allow for the chord line to contain the timing dots, measure bars, and other symbols (tacets, holds, rests, downstrums, etc) that help to play the song correctly. If they feel a riff is signature to the song, they include the tablature for it along with accompanying chords above it. They do not try to fit everything on a single page, like other clubs do, though most fill one or two pages. They try to keep the song sheet in the original key that most people know and only change it to make it easier to play. If a song has been transposed from its original key, there will be a (Key of \_\_\_\_ ) after the title.

When asked which song sheets get used most in California, Gillian Altieri replied<sup>70</sup>, “It’s no doubt that the Uke Club of Santa Cruz is the granddaddy of uke clubs in California. Their monthly

---

<sup>69</sup> Gillian Altieri, *e-mail correspondence*, (23 July 2018).

<sup>70</sup> Gillian Altieri, *e-mail correspondence*, (25 September 2018).

meeting regularly draws 100 - 200 people, which is why they still use printed song sheets<sup>71</sup>. Their venue is not amenable to going digital. They have a crew of people to hand out the song sheets. The founder, Andy Andrews, deserves lots of credit for introducing folks around here to the ukulele. They make their song sheets amusing with different fonts, pictures and little stories. Based on comments I've heard, for a fun, easy strum time, use the Santa Cruz song sheets and if you want to improve your playing skills and chord repertoire, the SJUC song sheets, due to their 'rigor' (another comment I've heard) are the ones to play. It might be a regional thing regarding which songbooks uke clubs use. The songbooks I hear most smaller clubs in California use are Jim Beloff's Daily Ukulele and if the club is Hawaiian music-based, He Mele Aloha (the 'Blue Book') is the standard, because they are available in every music store."

At nearly 700 songs, Bytown Ukulele Club's collection is one of the largest on the web. Sue Rogers and her husband have been leading the Canadian group and creating song sheets for them since it started in 2010. From six participants, they now get up to 100 per jam session in the pub. Sue Rogers transcribes song sheets to be as close to a particular artist's version as possible. However, she finds that copyrighted versions do not always reflect the official recordings 100%. She carefully chooses the version of the recording, using Youtube, listening to different artists, watching live versions to see what the artist might do to change up the song occasionally, and watches other artist's covers of the same song. She may listen to a recording 100 times listening for nuances, trying to get all the words down correctly, trying to capture the "feel" of the song by using arrows to add puch. She tries to "hear" the best chords and determine what will work best for the ukulele group. She may post several versions of one song and try to capture the best of all the recordings in the song sheet. She prepares the song sheet so that a leader, who may or may not know the song, can lead a group of 100 people through it successfully, with no prior practice. She pays great attention to chord placement, song playability,

---

<sup>71</sup> As one of the earliest ukulele clubs in the world, Ukulele Club of Santa Cruz was founded in 2001. Volume 1  
<<http://santabarbaraukulele.com/Content/PDF%20Files/Ukulele%20Club%20of%20Santa%20Cruz%20Volume%201.pdf>>

sharp starts and finishes so everyone starts and ends simultaneously. She tries to identify what-she-calls “stoppers” in the sing, i.e. those places where problems may arise. She posts Word and PDF versions of the song sheets<sup>72</sup>.

Originally based in Australia and now in the UK, Jim Carey started creating song sheets for his own use by converting various song sheets and songbooks he collected from online sources, club handouts, etc into a basic Chordpro layout (chord names in square brackets in line with lyrics and chord diagrams on the right hand side)<sup>73</sup>. When the local ukulele club saw what he was doing, they asked to use his collection. With the release onto the Web, it gathered additional supporters, and the “songbook” grew until it became unusable as a Word document. The demand motivated him to choose an online system to store the song sheets. To this end, he downloaded Scriptasaurus, an open source software from ukegeeks.com and made extensive modifications to the software. His website at ozbcoz.com provides different ways to search for a song as well as ample metadata about the song, links to youtube version, and functions to change the chords to a different guitar-shaped instrument, transpose the key, change layout, to view and print, scroll, and edit. He continues to create song sheets and songbooks as a pay back to the community for giving him support when he was learning the ukulele. It has become a hobby.

Australia-based Richard Gibson a.k.a. Richard G found that the ukulele gave him a far more flexible tool than the guitar to accompany his voice and much easier than the guitar to play the songs that have been “stuck in his head”<sup>74</sup>. He joined the Adelaide Ukulele Appreciation Society in 2007, playing three or four nights a week as the ukulele scene took off. The available song sheets those days had three faults which he decided to correct, namely, 1) larger fonts to use on stage; 2) one sheet per song; and 3) right key for his voice range. He began actively converting the song sheets as well as

---

<sup>72</sup> Sue Rogers, *e-mail correspondence* since 24 July 2018.

<sup>73</sup> Jim Carey, *e-mail correspondence* since 23 July 2018.

<sup>74</sup> Richard Gibson, *e-mail correspondence* since 24th July 2018.

creating new sheets for the vast number of songs “stuck in his head”. In 2010, Steve Davis<sup>75</sup>, an IT specialist and clown doctor in Queensland, offered to help Richard on the technical side, hosting his website and making the song sheets searchable. This collaboration makes scorpexe.com one of the largest collections (currently over 1,300) on the Web, searchable and sortable by song title, artist, newest or oldest, key, and number of chords. Each song sheet has a consistent format, beginning with a link to Youtube to play along to, chord names embedded in the lyric line, and chord diagrams displayed on the right.

## 9. Conclusions

Having participated in over a hundred ukulele jams and gigs in Maui, Boston, London, and Amsterdam, created and transcribed song sheets, compiled songbooks, given various ukulele workshops, and hosted online discussion forums on topics related to this thesis, I was able to elicit a wealth of information as an insider on what goes behind the rarely discussed process of creating and transcribing song sheets for ukulele groups from early and experienced song sheet creators (pioneers) and ukulele club leaders in USA, Canada, UK, and Australia. The findings from this enquiry have yielded answers to my initial research questions posed earlier in this thesis.

A simple song sheet with no music symbol or notation and a four-stringed acoustic instrument are sufficient for group music making by performers who are not trained to read music or at all in music for the following reasons: 1) the players are highly motivated to learn and play together because of the rewards of socialisation and the gratification it brings (the feel good factor); 2) they employ and improve various musical skills that fall in the domain of play by ear and aural skills; 3) songs are formulaic and thus predictable (e.g. common chord progressions, song forms); 4) there is recall of familiar songs as well as mimicry of unfamiliar songs sung by others around you. Below are answers to earlier questions.

---

<sup>75</sup> Steve Davis, *e-mail correspondence* since 26 July 2018.

1. Ukulele players learn and improve their skills largely by teaching themselves and learning through peers, by participating in regular meet-ups of their local ukulele groups. There is a wealth of free song sheets and tutorials available online.
2. To successfully execute a piece of music, details that are not written down in a song sheet include starting and ending together, instrumental riffs, and tempo. These are communicated by the leader of the group, sometimes by being the first to play and getting everyone else to join in, designating someone to play the instrumental riffs, and indicating the start and end by appropriate gestures.
3. The presence of a leader is necessary to ensure the group plays in sync, unless most of the group knows the song well or the ones who know it well sing loud enough for others to follow.
4. The practice of singing and accompanying oneself on the ukulele in a group can be likened to a vocalist on rhythm guitar in a rock band. It is different from choir in that the focus is less on blending and harmonising of voices for a good sound as it is on staying together rhythmically and harmonically on the ukulele.
5. The prerequisites and assumptions in using ukulele song sheets in participative music making are that the player 1) already knows the song, the melody, tempo, time signature, rhythm, and general feel of the song; or 2) can follow with a sound recording or a group or a leader. He or she must be able to read chord diagrams to finger the chords he does not know, switch between chords fast enough, and keep pace with the music through strumming.
6. The following are musical skills one can develop from participating in ukulele jam sessions: 1) play by sight reading the song sheet; 2) sing by following the group or someone who knows the song; 3) sing by self-accompaniment; 4) expand chord vocabulary; 5) expand song repertoire; 6) explore genres; 7) play in a group and blend in; 8) keep in sync with steady tempo and rhythm.



7. Pioneers create or transcribe ukulele song sheets by 1) referring to and converting official scores of vocal, piano, guitar chords; 2) referring to guitar tabs; 3) referring to lead sheets and fake books; 4) copying lyrics and repeatedly listening to recordings for chords, chord placement, etc.
8. Pioneers create song sheets for various reasons: 1) own use; 2) teaching; 3) club use; 4) club leadership; 4) demand and support for their work.
9. They make their song sheets freely available 1) as it is an easy way to disseminate to users; 2) to get feedback; 3) to pay back (give back); 4) and hope to avoid copyright and music licensing problems by stating it is for teaching and research purposes.
10. One can develop the following skills from leading ukulele jam sessions: 1) get people's attention; 2) lead; 3) speak in public; 4) communicate; 5) say something funny; 6) make the group inclusive and democratic.
11. There are differences between song sheets created for use by groups and individuals. For groups, it is important to get them to start and end together, not get lost but stay synchronised throughout, be clear, consistent and not confusing. For an individual, it matters less and there is more flexibility for improvisation, tempo change, etc.
12. Which format to use is a matter of preference, and proponents on each side have their reasons to stick to their chosen layouts. Having chord names embedded in the lyric line saves page space, allowing room for chord diagrams, intro riffs, instrumental riffs, repeat of chorus to prevent scrolling back. On the other hand, in-line chord names often break up words which can be confusing for some. Putting chord names above the lyric line allows room for dots and slashes or vertical bars to indicate beat and bar lines but take up line space and may run over one page.
13. When creating song sheets for others to use, the choice of key follows a pecking order : 1) original key unless the chords are too difficult for most people or the vocal range is too high (as

is the case with most pop songs), then 2) transpose to a lower key that contain easier and more frequently used chords; it is always possible to capo it to get to the original key. Some leaders prefer to transpose to a key most suitable for his/her vocal range, as they need to sing the melody line in their key.

14. The following kinds of information are necessary to make ukulele song sheets self-explanatory and useful for playing and singing in groups: count in, first note of melody, introduction, ending or outro, consistent and readable layout. Meta-data such as the number of chords, key signature, time signature, tempo, skill level, and number of chord transitions helps repertoire selection.

15. Using ukulele song sheets to sing and self-accompany requires certain musical skills. At first glance, it appears as though ukulele players are sight reading but they are really using ukulele song sheets to guide them along harmonically not melodically. The kind of singing done in ukulele groups is not considered sight singing because there are no written notes to translate into sound. Instead, they sing what they hear, whether from their group leader and peers or from their heads. Thus the melody is not obtained from the song sheet. When they are listening to themselves and others at the same time and realising something is off, they are using aural skills, a.k.a. ear training, in which they learn to identify, solely by hearing, pitches, intervals, melody, chords, rhythms, and other basic elements of music. It is possible to play what is written on the song sheet and yet not hear whether they are out of tune and / or out of sync. Being able to play is independent of being able to listen, just as you can nowadays tune your instrument by looking at the dial or colour on the clip-on tuner without discerning difference in pitch.

The ukulele has been called a happy, friendly, and social instrument which connects people through group activities found in ukulele clubs around the world. The song sheet is not only essential,

it also has to be accurate and readable for participative music making. The musical information absent in the song sheet are communicated by ear, observation, and experience.

That the instrument and the song sheet are both deceptively small and simple to use is one attraction for the rise of ukulele groups. Simplicity is not a paradox but the reason.

While this study has focussed mainly on the leaders and creators of song sheets, it is apparent that a more complete picture requires surveying, interviewing, and observing users of ukulele song sheets. By looking at both sides (creation and usage), we can determine how ukulele song sheets might evolve and converge into the standard formatting that exists for lead sheets, guitar tabs, and vocal/piano scores. Consistency and standardisation of content and layout increases readability and utilisation, reducing the desire and need to reformat and reproduce, and improves efficiency.

Participative music making describes a large part of community music, a growing field that is gaining recognition and importance in society. To give access to music making in the community, some libraries are procuring ukuleles, clip-on tuners, and other accessories to lend to its members. Free ukulele workshops and classes that take place in libraries offer music education and music making to a wider community<sup>76</sup>. Ukulele club leaders are effectively community musicians, as they engage their communities with music making.

When asked about copyright and music licensing, ukulele song sheet creators responded with varying degrees of knowledge and concern. Some dismiss it entirely. Others believe that they are protected as long as they do not profit from what they do and explicitly state it is for education and research purposes. These issues are beyond the scope of this thesis but not to be ignored or diminished by any means.

---

<sup>76</sup> Author gave an eight-week course to teenagers at a branch of Boston Public Library which procured ten ukuleles to lend out.

## Appendix A Ukulele Clubs and Groups

As sales of ukuleles are positively correlated with the number of buyers and players, it follows that sales are also positively correlated with the number of ukulele clubs. Using the Internet Wayback Machine website, I counted the number of clubs listed on both sites at different periods in time.

<b>GotAUkulele</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2018</b>		<b>Ukulele Hunt</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2018</b>
UK	21	214	313		UK	71	166	226
USA	12	128	192		USA	75	94	98
Canada	5	25	34		Canada	13	19	20
OZ	3	22	36		OZ	20	42	51
NZ	0	4	17		NZ	6	11	12
France	1	7	10		France	12	14	15

As GotAUkulele and Ukulele Hunt are both UK-based, there is naturally more detail given to clubs in England, Wales, and Scotland, and Northern Ireland, while under-reporting for those in other countries. The two websites do not agree, however. It is not clear if owners of both websites converse and compare to ensure the listings are accurate and up-to-date. A quick check shows that not all ukulele clubs have been listed at inception or at all. Such missing or late listing is largely due to 1) no self-reporting, 2) lack of web presence, or 2) in the club's early stage of start-up. A club like Ukulele Union of Boston (UUoB) for instance started in 2010 but did not get listed until one of its members submitted it for listing in 2018. Since its inception, some of its members started other clubs in other towns in the vicinity, acquired their own identities with their own names (e.g. Strummerville, Watch City) but still use the UUoB social media tools. Similarly, Ukulele Wednesday, now in its eleventh year, has three groups using the same name and song book meeting each Wednesday evening in three locations in London.

To date, no one has an accurate, up-to-date, and complete account of the number of ukulele clubs in existence. Three websites<sup>77</sup> give the most up-to-date listings, yet they do not triangulate. Some of the reasons for the absence of such information are as follows:

1. There is no mandatory requirement to add one's own club to the list or report on behalf of others
2. There is no incentive to report
3. Self-reporting requires knowing the existence of these websites and directories
4. It is not clear what counts as a club. Does it have to have an identity? If so, some clubs are too young to have a name and identity. Does it have to meet regularly? Does it have to have minimum number of participants? Does it have to have a venue or address? Does it have to have a website? Does it have to have an e-mail address?

NOT FOR SALE

---

<sup>77</sup> Got A Ukulele <<https://www.gotaukulele.com/>> ; Ukulele Hunt <<http://ukulelehunt.com/>> ; Flea Market Music Inc. <<https://www.fleamarketmusic.com/directory/>>.

## Appendix B Author's Participation in Ukulele Clubs and as Ukulele Teacher

**Table 1. Participation in jam sessions (meet-ups) of ukulele clubs**

Name	Location	Venue	Venue	Genre	Song sheets, contact	Projector or Individ.	Seating	Set-Up	Frequency	USP	Attendance
808Jam	Maui, Hawaii	Church	Public	Hawaiian	songbooks, website, FB	Individual	Seated rows	Mic, Bass, Slack-key	Weekly eve	Hula dancers	3
HUG	Hanwell, London	Pub	Public	Oldies to New	Dropbox pdfs, FB, website	Projector	Seated & standing rows	Mic, Bass,	Weekly eve	Frequent Gigs	43
BUS	Balham, London	Pub	Public	Oldies to New	Songbook via e-mail, FB, website	Individual	Tables	Mic, Bass, Cajon, Electric guitar	Fortnightly eve	Multi-instrumentalists	6
Ukulele Wednesday	Soho, London	Pub	Public	Not so old, upbeat	Songbook, website, FB	Individual	Tables	none	Weekly eve	Crowded	2
Ukulele Wednesday	Great Portland Street, London	Pub	Public	Not so old, upbeat	Songbook, website, FB	Projector	Tables	Mic, Bass	Weekly eve	Spacious - discontinued	1
Ukulele Wednesday	Vauxhall, London	Pub on docked boat	Public	Not so old, upbeat	Songbook, website, FB	Projector	Seated rows	Mic, Bass, Cajon	Weekly eve	Pub guests join	2
LYUG	SOAS, London	University room	Public	Yiddish	Songbook, FB	Individual	Circle	none	Monthly eve	Open Mic	1
Amsterdam	Central Amsterdam	Hotel	Public	Oldies to New	Songbooks, website, FB	Individual	One long table	none	Weekly eve	Piano in room	1
UUoB mothership	downtown Boston, MA	Photo gallery	Private	Oldies to not-so New	Varies	Individual	Rows facing	Bass	Fortnightly eve	New sheets each time	5
Strummerville	Cambridge, MA	Restaurant	Public	Not so old to New	songbooks, FB	Individual	Tables	none	Fortnightly eve	Eighties	2
Watch City	Waltham, MA	Ice cream parlour	Public	Oldies to not-so new	Varies, FB	Individual	One long table	none	Fortnightly eve	Cosy group	1
Brookline	Brookline, MA	Senior centre	Public	Oldies	Songbook	Individual	One long table	none	Monthly afternoon	Seniors mainly	1
Ukermania	Jamaica Plain, MA	Studio or outdoors	Private	Various	Various	Individual	Chairs in circle	none	Monthly eve	Varies	1
Historic Lower Mills*	Milton / Dorchester, MA	Artist loft common room	Private	Thematic	PDF, website, FB	Individual	Seated or standing	bass	Weekly eve	Thematic	20

## Appendix C Best Online Sources for Ukulele Song Sheets and Songbooks

Name	Main page: how to find songs	Songsheet contents
San Jose Ukulele Club <sup>78</sup>	scroll to find title, key (if more than one version)	Title, artist (year), chord diagrams top of page; chord names above lyrics; dots for beats
Richard G's Songbook <sup>79</sup>	search box or scroll; key / number of chords	Title, composer/artist, Youtube link; chord diagrams on right side; chord names embedded in lyrics
Bytown Ukulele Group <sup>80</sup>	Letter bookmark; scroll down; word doc, pdf, midi versions; over 1,000 songs	Title, artist (year), chord names embedded in lyrics, chord diagrams at bottom of page
Jim's Ukulele Songbook <sup>81</sup>	Categories (uke type; song type); search box; letter bookmark; over 2,000 songs	Title, artist/writer, Youtube link, chord names embedded, chord diagrams on right hand side, scroll. Option to transpose.
Dr Uke Songs <sup>82</sup>	Search box; scroll down; over 2,000 songs	Title (no artist/writer/date), choice of 1st page chord diagrams above lyrics (good for beginners); and 2nd page chord names above lyrics; audio recording (when clicked from main page)
Stewart's Ukulele Songbook <sup>83</sup>	Alphabetical, subtitle (category, artist), origin (country), complexity (C, T, V, S)	Title, artist/composer, chord diagrams top of page, chord diagrams above lyrics, discussion
Hanwell Ukulele Group <sup>84</sup>	Dropbox with different folders (need to dig through but can use search function in web browser)	No standard format as collected from various sources
Uke Jams <sup>85</sup>	Search box. Sort by title, decade / genre, last updated date, youtube or tutorial, number of chords	Title, artist. Chord names above lyrics. Chord diagrams on the right hand side. Chorus is shaded. Sometimes with image of album. Instructions.
Midcoast Jams <sup>86</sup>	By category & then alphabetical order	Title, artist. Chord names above lyrics. Chord diagrams top right. Measure dividers. Large font.
Ukulele Wednesday <sup>87</sup>	Alphabetical order with link to page	Title, artist, chord names embedded in parenthesis, chord diagrams on right or bottom of page.
Balham Ukulele Society <sup>88</sup>	Alphabetical order with link to page. Request latest PDF of songbook and receive by e-mail	Title, artist, chord names embedded in brackets, chord diagrams on right hand side.
Ukulele Hunt <sup>89</sup>	By tab, chords, genre, difficulty	Title, youtube, description, tab, chord diagrams above, usually more than 1 page

<sup>78</sup> <[http://www.sanjoseukeclub.org/song\\_book.html](http://www.sanjoseukeclub.org/song_book.html)>

<sup>79</sup> <<https://scorpexuke.com/songs/>>

<sup>80</sup> <<http://www.bytownukulele.ca/Songs.aspx>>

<sup>81</sup> <<https://ozbcoz.com/Songs/index.php?instr=soprano>>

<sup>82</sup> <<https://www.doctoruke.com/songs.html>>

<sup>83</sup> <<http://stewartgreenhill.com/ukulele/>>

<sup>84</sup> <<http://hanwellukulele.co.uk/index.php/songbooks/>>

<sup>85</sup> <<http://ukejams.com/songs/>>

<sup>86</sup> <<https://www.midcoastukes.org/>>

<sup>87</sup> <<https://ukulelewednesdays.com/songbook/>>

<sup>88</sup> <<https://www.facebook.com/groups/balhamukesoc/>>

<sup>89</sup> <<http://ukulelehunt.com/tab-chords/>>

## Bibliography

### Ukulele Sales

- Gleason, Sinead, 'Have I Told You Ukulele That I Love You?' *The Irish Times*, 19 August 2011. <<https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/music/have-i-told-you-ukulele-that-i-love-you-1.601281>> [Accessed 26 September 2018].
- Lyon, Julia, 'The Booming Business of Ukuleles', *CNN Money*, 17 January 2014. <<https://money.cnn.com/2014/01/17/smallbusiness/ukulele-sales/index.html>> [Accessed 26 September 2018].
- Rose, Eleanor, 'Ukulele sales see "explosive growth" as small instrument's popularity soars', *Evening Standard*, 30 July 2017. <<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/world/ukulele-sales-see-explosive-growth-as-small-instruments-popularity-soars-a3599566.html>> [Accessed 26 September 2018].
- Tatham, Harriet, 'Bad economic times mean booming ukulele sales, say experts', *ABC News*, 18 April 2016. <<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-04-18/boost-in-ukulele-sales/7335296>> [Accessed 26 September 2018].
- 
- Bithell, Caroline, *A Different Voice, A Different Song: Reclaiming Community through the Natural Voice and World Song* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).
- Clift, Stephen and Ian Morrison, 'Group singing fosters mental health and wellbeing: findings from the East Kent "singing for health" network project', *Mental Health and Social Inclusion*, 15(2) (2011), 88-97. <<https://doi.org/10.1108/20428301111140930>> [Accessed 26 September 2018].
- Everitt, Anthony, *Joining In: An Investigation into Participatory Music* (Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, 1997).
- Finnegan, Ruth, *The Hidden Musicians: Music-Making in an English Town* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2007).
- Fu, Musetta Chang-Chi, Shih-Yin Lin, Basia Belza and Marianne Unite, 'Insights of Senior Living Residents and Staff on Group-Singing, Activities', *Adaptation & Aging*, 39(3) (2015), 243-261. <DOI: 10.1080/01924788.2015.1063332> [Accessed 26 September 2018].
- Elliker, Calvin, 'Sheet Music Special Issues: Formats and Functions', *Notes, Second Series*, 53 (1) (1996), pp. 9-17. <<https://www.jstor.org/stable/900279>> [Accessed 29 September 2018]
- Fladmark, Judy, 'Ukulele sends UK crazy', *BBC News Magazine*, 19 February 2010. <<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/8523082.stm>> [Accessed 29 September 2018].
- Gault, Brent, 'Music learning through all the channels: combining aural, visual, and kinesthetic strategies to develop musical understanding', *General Music Today*, 19 (1) (2005), 7-9.



- Giebelhausen, Robin and Adam J. Kruse, “‘A smile on everybody’s face’: A multiple case study of community ukulele groups’, *International Journal of Music Education*, 36(3) (2017), 347 - 365.
- Hansen, Dee and Sarah A. Milligan, ‘Aural Skills: At the Juncture of Research in Early Reading and Music Literacy’, *Music Educators Journal*, 99(2) (2012), 75–80.  
<<https://www.jstor.org/stable/23364291>> [Accessed 15 September 2018].
- Hill, Juniper and Caroline Bithell, ‘Chapter 1: An Introduction to Music Revival as Concept, Cultural Process, and Medium of Change,’ in *Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*, ed. by Caroline Bithell and Juniper Hill (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 3-42.
- ‘How is Nostalgia Fueling the Cassette Revival?’ (24 November 2017) *The Herald* [online]  
<[https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15680183.How\\_is\\_nostalgia\\_fuelling\\_the\\_cassette\\_revival\\_/>](https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/15680183.How_is_nostalgia_fuelling_the_cassette_revival_/>) [Accessed 30 September 2018].
- Hyman, Ira, ‘Music-Evoked Nostalgia: Why do certain songs send us back?’ *Psychology Today* (6 May 2011) <<https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/mental-mishaps/201105/music-evoked-nostalgia>> [Accessed 30 September 2018].
- Jackson, Mark and Jane Jelbart, *The Ukestration Manual: Creating Music-Making Communities with the Ukulele and the Ukestra Method* (Merewether, Australia: Sum of the Parts Music, 2018).
- Jackson, Mark and Jane Jelbart, *The Business of Being a Community Musician* (Merewether, Australia: Sum of the Parts Music, 2018).
- Jenkins, H., K. Clinton, R. Purushotma, A. J. Robison, and M. Weigel, *Confronting the Challenges of Participatory Culture: Media Education for the 21st Century* (Chicago: MacArthur Foundation, 2006).  
<[https://www.macfound.org/media/article\\_pdfs/JENKINS\\_WHITE\\_PAPER.PDF](https://www.macfound.org/media/article_pdfs/JENKINS_WHITE_PAPER.PDF)> [Accessed 26 September 2018].
- Joss, Tim, ‘Community music development in Great Britain’, *International Journal of Community Music*, 3(3) (2010), 321 - 326.
- Judd, Marianne and Julie Ann Pooley, ‘The psychological benefits of participating in group singing for members of the general public’, *Psychology of Music*, 42(2) (2013), 269-283.
- Kagan, Sacha and Volker Kirchberg, ‘Music and sustainability: organizational cultures towards creative resilience – a review’, *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 135(1) (2016), 1487-1502.
- Kaufman Shelemay, Kay, ‘Musical Communities: Rethinking the Collective in Music’, *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 64(2) (Summer 2011), 349 - 483.
- Kitcher, Philip, Andreas C. Lehmann, John A. Sloboda, and Robert H. Woody, *Psychology for Musicians: Understanding and Acquiring the Skills* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

- Ku, Anne, 'On sightreading' (unpublished thesis for piano teaching diploma, Utrecht Conservatory, 2008). <[http://www.anneku.com/works/sightreading\\_thesis\\_original.pdf](http://www.anneku.com/works/sightreading_thesis_original.pdf)> [Accessed 26 September 2018].
- Lee, Tanya Su-Kyung, 'Music as a Birthright: Chicago's Old Town School of Folk Music and Participatory Music Making in the Twenty-First Century' (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2011). <<https://www.ideals.illinois.edu/handle/2142/24105>> [Accessed 26 September 2018]
- Levitin, Daniel, 'Why We Like the Music We Like' in *The Jossey-Bass Reader on the Brain and Learning*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass/Wylie, 2007), 370 - 381. <[http://daniellevitin.com/levitinlab/articles/2007-Levitin-Why\\_we\\_like.pdf](http://daniellevitin.com/levitinlab/articles/2007-Levitin-Why_we_like.pdf)> [Accessed 1 October 2018].
- Lilliestam, Lars, 'On playing by ear', *Popular Music*, 15(2) (1996), 195 - 216.
- Livingston, Tamara, 'An Expanded Theory for Revivals as Cosmopolitan Participatory Music Making', in *Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*, ed. by Caroline Bithell and Juniper Hill, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 60 - 69.
- Maxwell, Joseph A., *Qualitative Research Design: An Interactive Approach*, Second Edition, Applied Social Research Methods Series, Vol. 41 (London: Sage Publications, 2005).
- Myers, David, Chelcy Bowles, and Will Dabback, 'Chapter Nine: Music Learning as a Lifespan Endeavor', in *Community Music Today*, ed. by Kari K. Veblen, et al. (Plymouth, UK: R&L Education, 2013), pp. 133 - 150.
- O'Shea, Helen, "'Get back to where you once belonged!'" The positive creative impact of a refresher course for "baby-boomer" rock musicians', *Popular Music*, 31(2) (2012), 199-215.
- Pearce, Eiluned, Jacques Launay, Pádraig MacCarron, and Robin I. M. Dunbar, 'Tuning in to others: Exploring relational and collective bonding in singing and non-singing groups over time', *Psychology of Music*, 45(4) (2017), 496-512.
- Petridis, Alexis, 'Britpop is back! What's behind the 90s music revival?' *The Guardian* [online] (6 September 2018). <<https://www.theguardian.com/music/2018/sep/06/britpop-is-back-whats-behind-the-90s-music-revival>> [Accessed 30 September 2018].
- Stacy, Rosie, Katie Brittain, and Sandra Kerr, 'Singing for health: an exploration of the issues', *Health Education*, 102(4) (2002), 156-162. <<https://doi.org/10.1108/09654280210434228>> [Accessed 26 September 2018].
- Schippers, Huib and Brydie-Leigh Bartleet, 'The nine domains of community music: exploring the crossroads of formal and informal music education', *International Journal of Music Education (SME)*, 31(4) (2013), pp. 454 - 471.

- Thibeault, Matthew D. 'Music Education for All through Participatory Ensembles', *Music Educators Journal*, 2(2) (2015), 54 - 61.
- Turino, Thomas 'Four Fields of Music Making and Sustainable Living', *The World of Music, Music and Sustainability*, 51(1) (2009), 95-117.
- Turino, Thomas, *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).
- Veblen, Kari 'The many ways of community music', *International Journal of Community Music*, 1:1 (2007), 5-21.
- Waldron, Janice, 'An Alternative Model of Music Learning and "Last Night's Fun1": Participatory Music Making in/as Participatory Culture in Irish Traditional Music', *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education*, 15(3) (June 2016), 86 - 112.
- Waldron, Janice, Roger Mantie, Heidi Partti, and Evan S. Tobias, 'A brave new world: theory to practice in participatory culture and music learning and teaching', *Music Education Research*, 20(3) (2017), 289 - 304. <DOI: 10.1080/14613808.2017.1339027> [Accessed 26 September 2018].
- Weinstein, Daniel, Jacques Launay, Eiluned Pearce, Robin I.M. Dunbar, and Lauren Stewart, 'Singing and social bonding: changes in connectivity and pain threshold as a function of group size', *Evolution and Human Behavior*, 37(2) (2016) 152–158.
- Wilkes, David, 'Schools ditch unpopular recorders for trendy George Formby-style ukuleles', *The Daily Mail*, 1 July 2009.  
<<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationnews/5713291/School-ditches-recorders-for-ukuleles.html>> [Accessed 29 September 2018].
- Williams, Sean, 'Chapter 27: Irish Music Revivals Through Generations of Diaspora', in *Oxford Handbook of Music Revival*, ed. by Caroline Bithell and Juniper Hill, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 598 - 617.