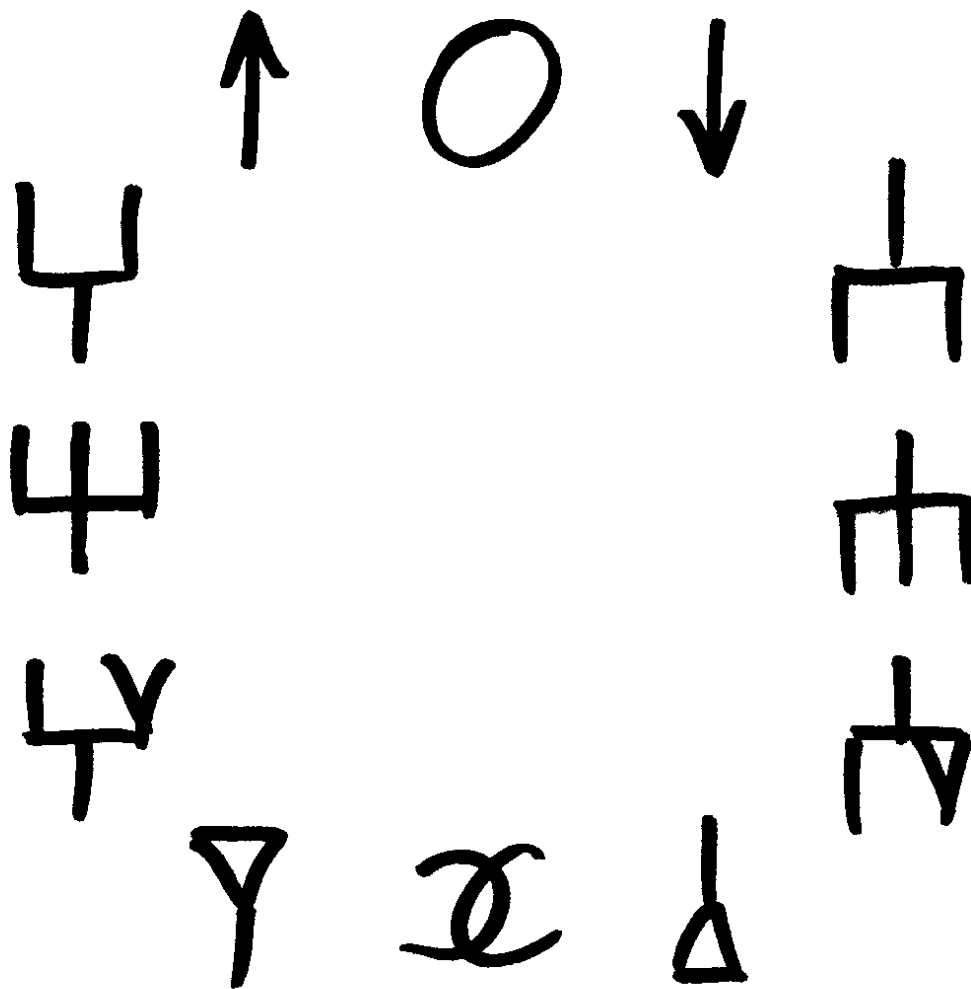


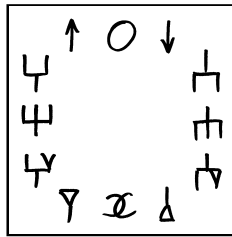
othing

for strings



J. Simon van der Walt

→ OFFSTAGE R

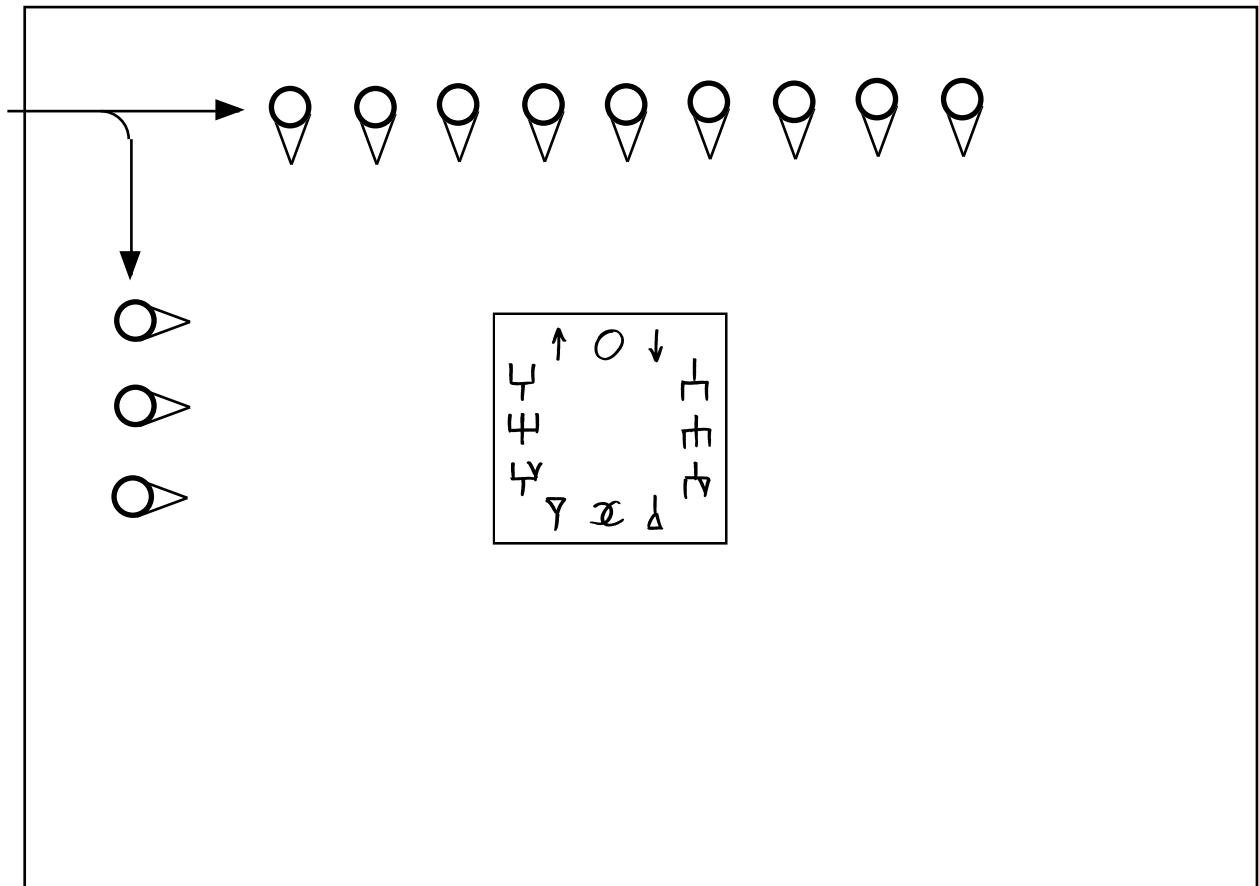


- Stage crew clear all stands, chairs etc as necessary, then set carpet midstage centre, taping down if necessary
- Players wait offstage left
- The cellists may want to take this opportunity to extend their spikes to absurd lengths, as they are going to have to attempt to play standing up...
- ...as is the bassist, who should also take this opportunity to detune the bottom string to Eb

→ OFFSTAGE R

(Tacet)

ENTRANCE SR

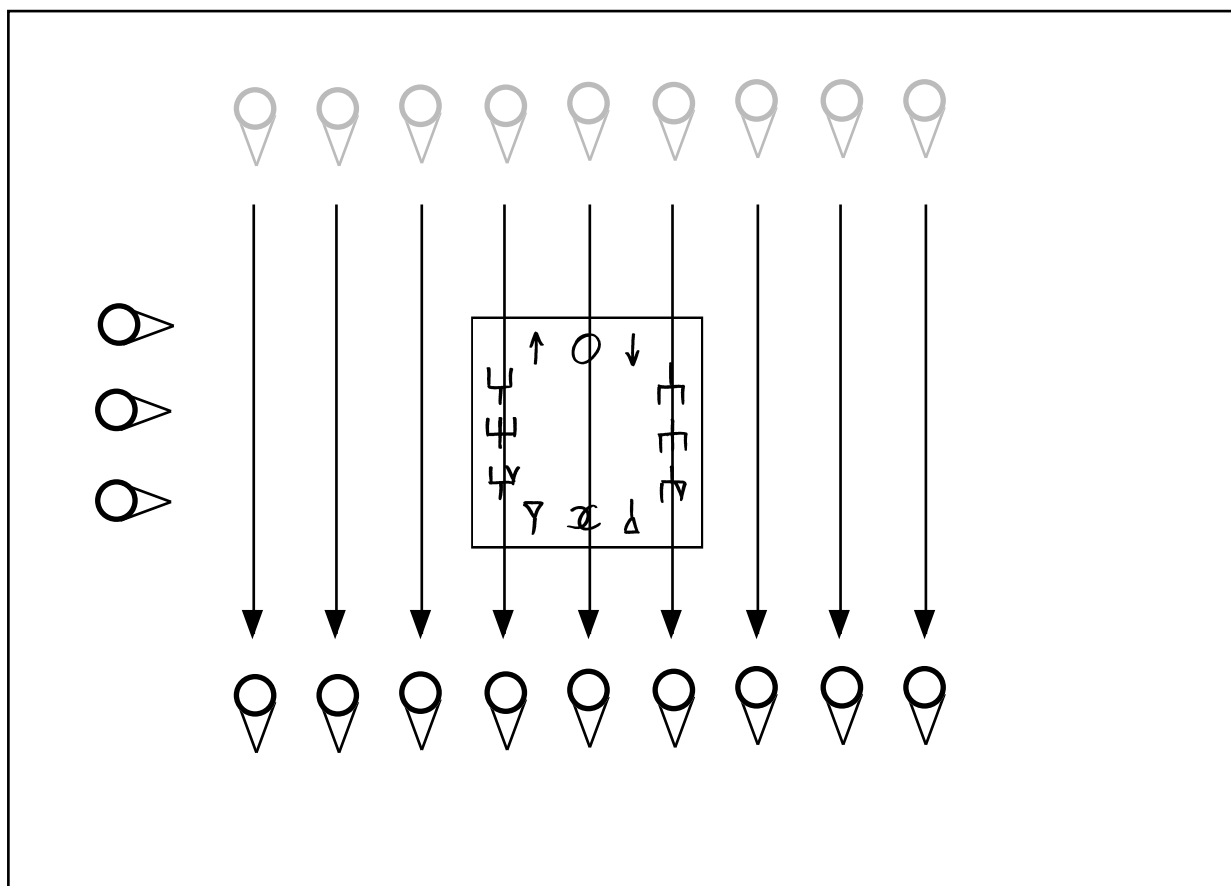


- When ready, players walk smartly on and take positions as above
- Three players stage right are two cellos and CB, in any arrangement; stand silently facing stage left as shown, holding instruments resting on spikes
- Other nine players are two violas and seven violins, in any arrangement. Stand silently, facing forward as shown, instruments under chins ready to play

ENTRANCE SR

(Tacet)

4 MARCH DOWN



- Leader subtly sets tempo, and gives upbeat; vlins and vlas play ff double stop on any notes sul D, A as shown in score. (All players pick own notes)
- As the first chord is played, vlins and vlas step forward one pace, keeping in a straight line, whilst silently counting up to eleven
- As the chord in bar 2 is played (all pick different notes), vlins & vlas again step forward one pace, in a line
- Etc for remaining six bars; in rehearsal, size of paces will have been determined so that vlins and vlas end up downstage of carpet
- Attacca...

4 MARCH DOWN

$\text{♩} = 120$

Violin 1 *mf* sul D, A - any two pitches *sim* - different pitches each time

Violin 2 *mf* sul D, A - any two pitches *sim* - different pitches each time

Violin 3 *mf* sul D, A - any two pitches *sim* - different pitches each time

Violin 4 *mf* sul D, A - any two pitches *sim* - different pitches each time

Violin 5 *mf* sul D, A - any two pitches *sim* - different pitches each time

Violin 6 *mf* sul D, A - any two pitches *sim* - different pitches each time

Violin 7 *mf* sul D, A - any two pitches *sim* - different pitches each time

Viola 1 *mf* sul D, A - any two pitches *sim* - different pitches each time

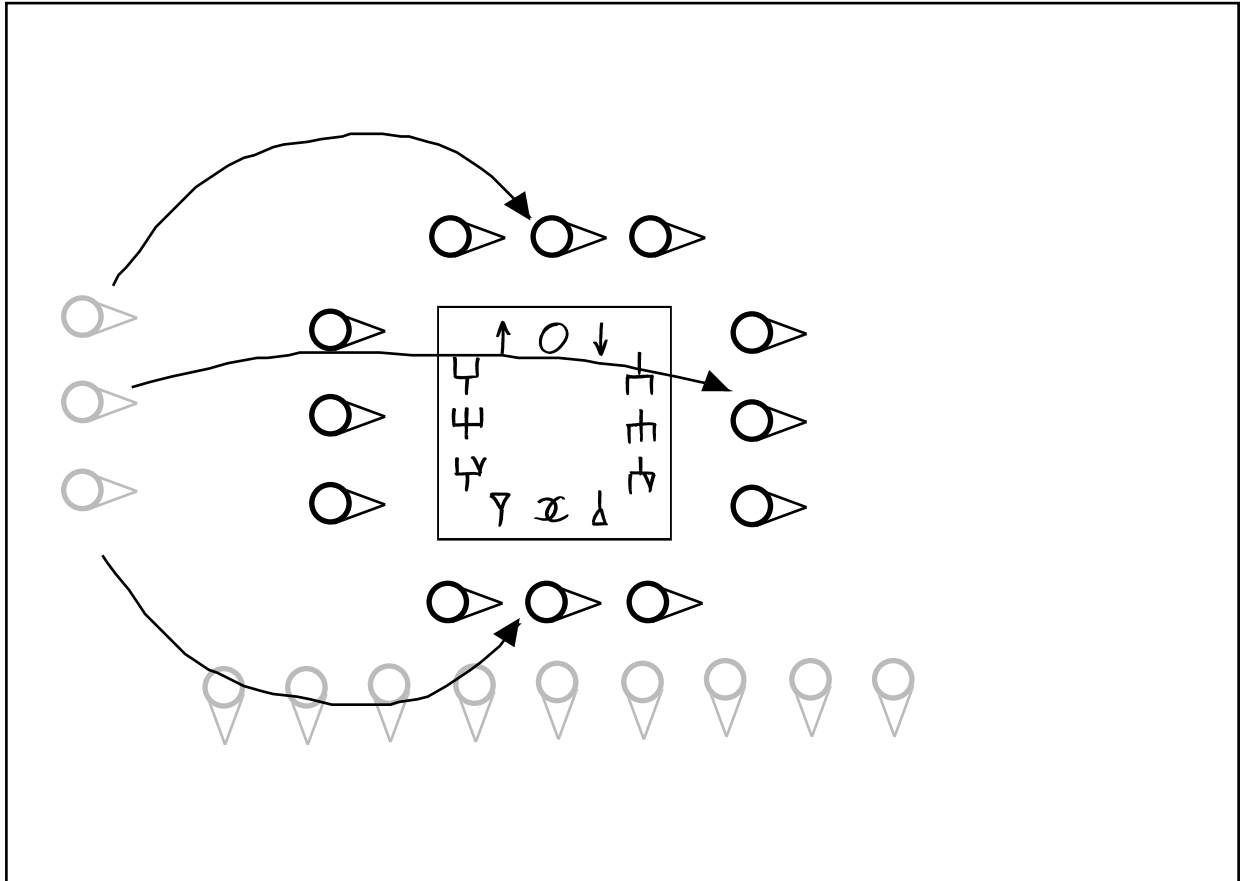
Viola 2 *mf* sul D, A - any two pitches *sim* - different pitches each time

Cello 1 *mf* sul D, A - any two pitches *sim* - different pitches each time

Cello 2 *mf* sul D, A - any two pitches *sim* - different pitches each time

CB *mf* sul D, A - any two pitches *sim* - different pitches each time

↑ TAKE POSITIONS



- A bit of a mêlée; all players take positions as shown, vlins and vias have material to play whilst moving
- Suggested positions for celli and CB are given; other players take any remaining positions, which should, however, be worked out in rehearsal
- Group falls silent one by one as players find their places; brief silence before proceeding

↑ TAKE POSITIONS

Rapid, disjointed phrases, rather quiet

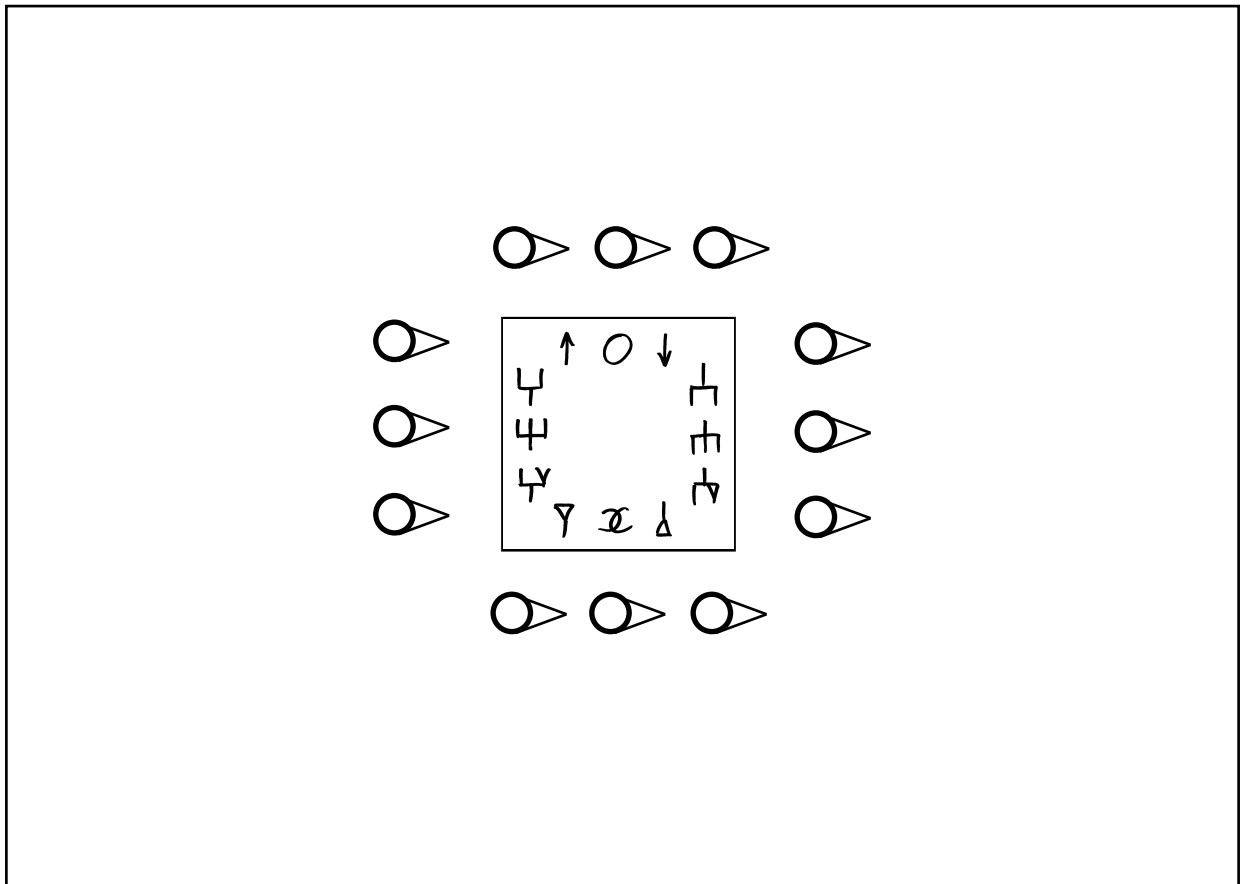
Stop when in position

etc

Vlins & vlas

Celli & CB

⌈ DUNGCHEN



- On cue from player standing at ⌈, all commence playing and singing as shown
- Repeat given note as often as needed, with brief pause in between. Players do not synchronise attacks; first attack slightly staggered
- Any players who are capable of overtone singing should do so; other players sing 'ooo'
- After 45 secs - 1 minute, all fall silent on cue from player at ⌈; this ending should be very slightly ragged

TH DUNGCHEN

Rpt till Q

All sing whilst bowing; lowest comfortable Eb

Voices

'Ooo - - -' (or overtone chanting ad lib)

One bow length

Slight pause at bow change

Violin 1

mp

sim

Violin 2

mp

sim

Violin 3

mp

sim

Violins 4-7

f

sim

Viola 1

f

sim

Viola 2

f

sim

Cello 1

f

sim

Cello 2

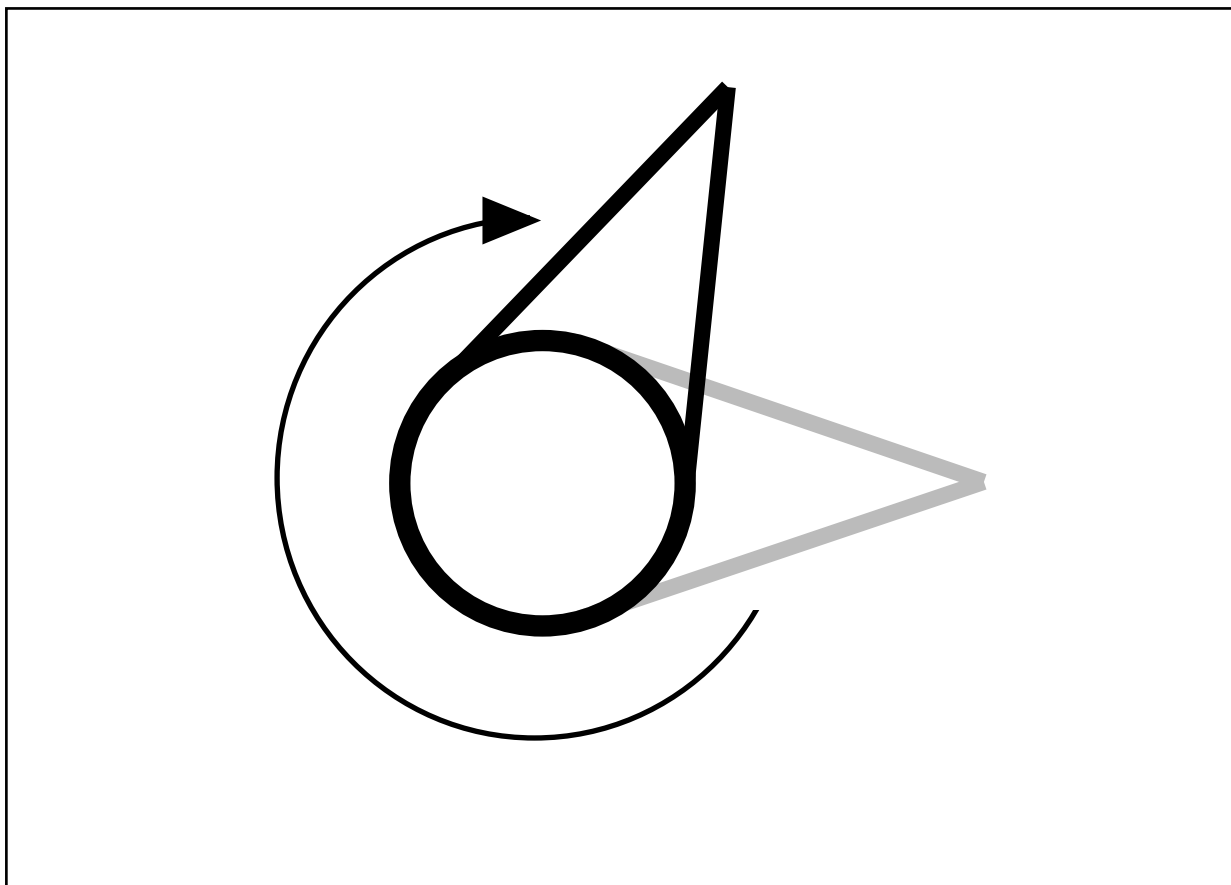
f

sim (Bottom string detuned)

CB

f

LY TURN 1

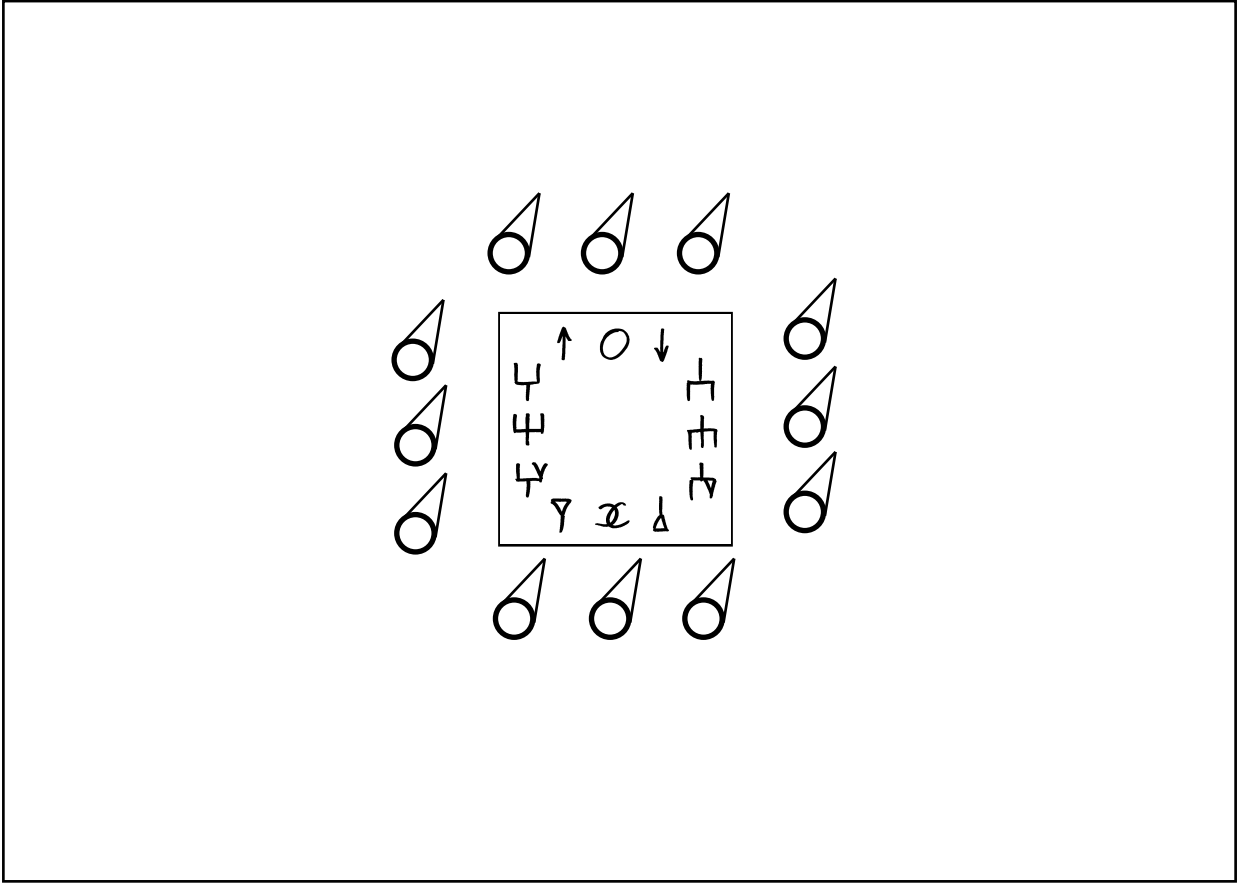


- On cue from the player at \uparrow all simultaneously turn to the right through 300 degrees to end up facing in the same direction as the \downarrow symbol, or, if one imagines the carpet to be a clock, towards one o'clock
- This move should be accomplished in four or five steps, staying on the spot, not too fast
- The cellists and bassist will have to lift their instruments and turn them also. Try to make this look as unclumsy as possible

LY TURN 1

(Tacet)

↓ CRACKLING



- On cue from player at ↓ , all commence crackling sounds, as described
- After 45 secs - 1 minute, all fall silent on cue from player at ↓ ; this ending should be very slightly ragged

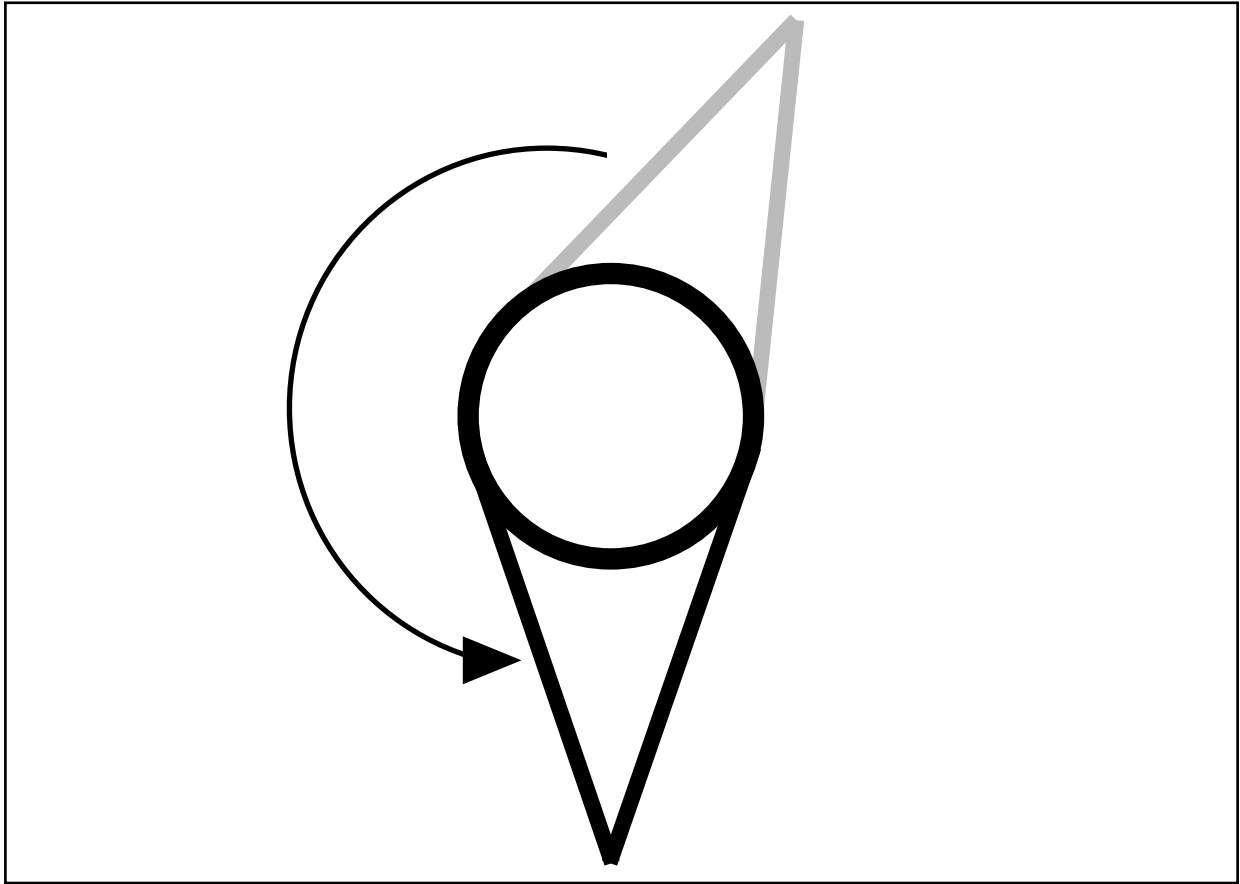
↓ CRACKLING



Tutti

Scratch tone; bow flat on string or strings, extreme pressure, bow sticks and hardly moves at all. Indeterminate pitch; creaking, crackling sound. Each player makes quite sparse sounds; ensemble texture is like a fire crackling.

↓ TURN 2

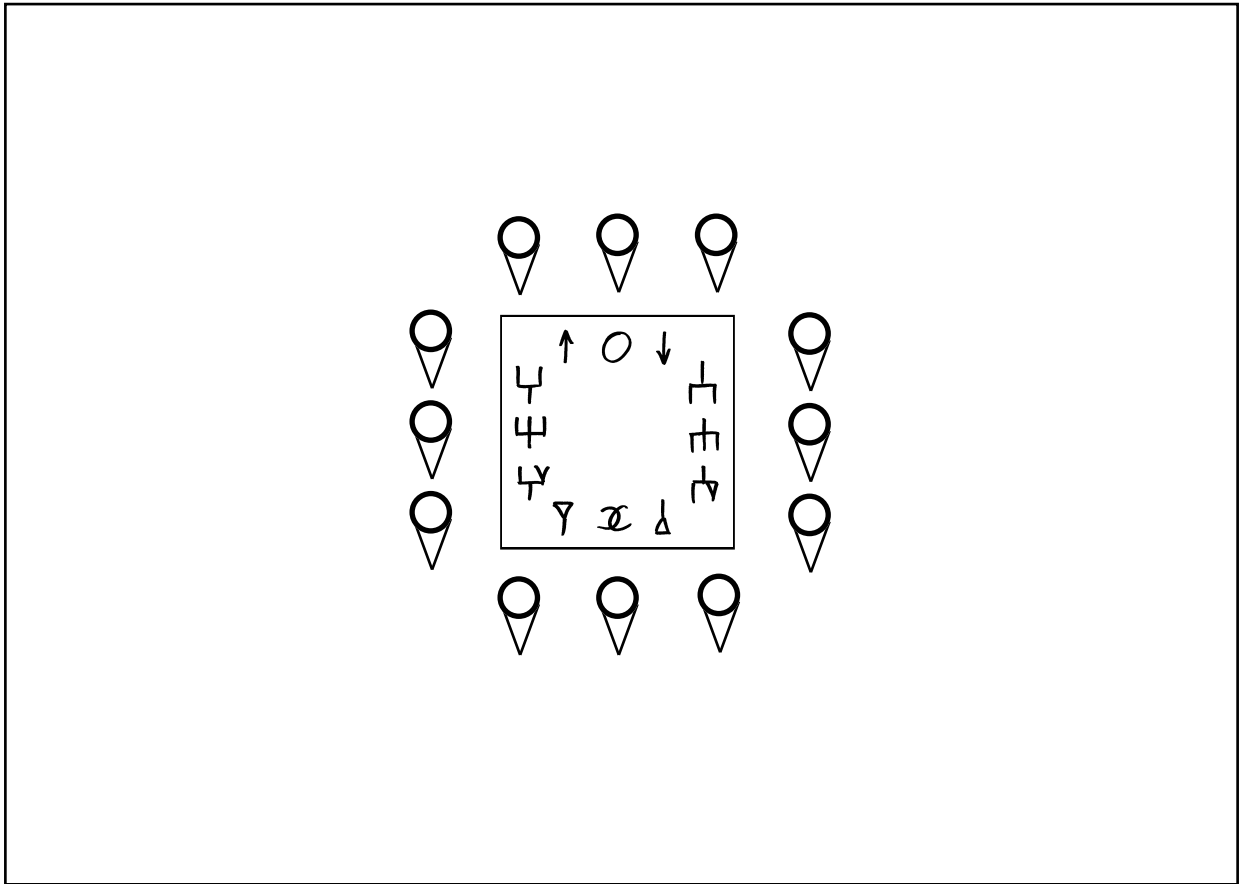


- On cue from the player at ↓ , all simultaneously turn to the left through 220 degrees to end up facing the audience, in a similar way to before

Δ TURN 2

(Tacet)

\mathcal{X} BOUNCES



- On cue from player at \mathcal{X} , all commence playing as scored
- Bouncing/unbouncing gestures not synchronised; play in your own time
- After 45 secs - 1 minute, all fall silent on cue from player at \mathcal{X} ; this ending should be very slightly ragged, finish the gesture you are on

BOUNCES

Rpt till Q

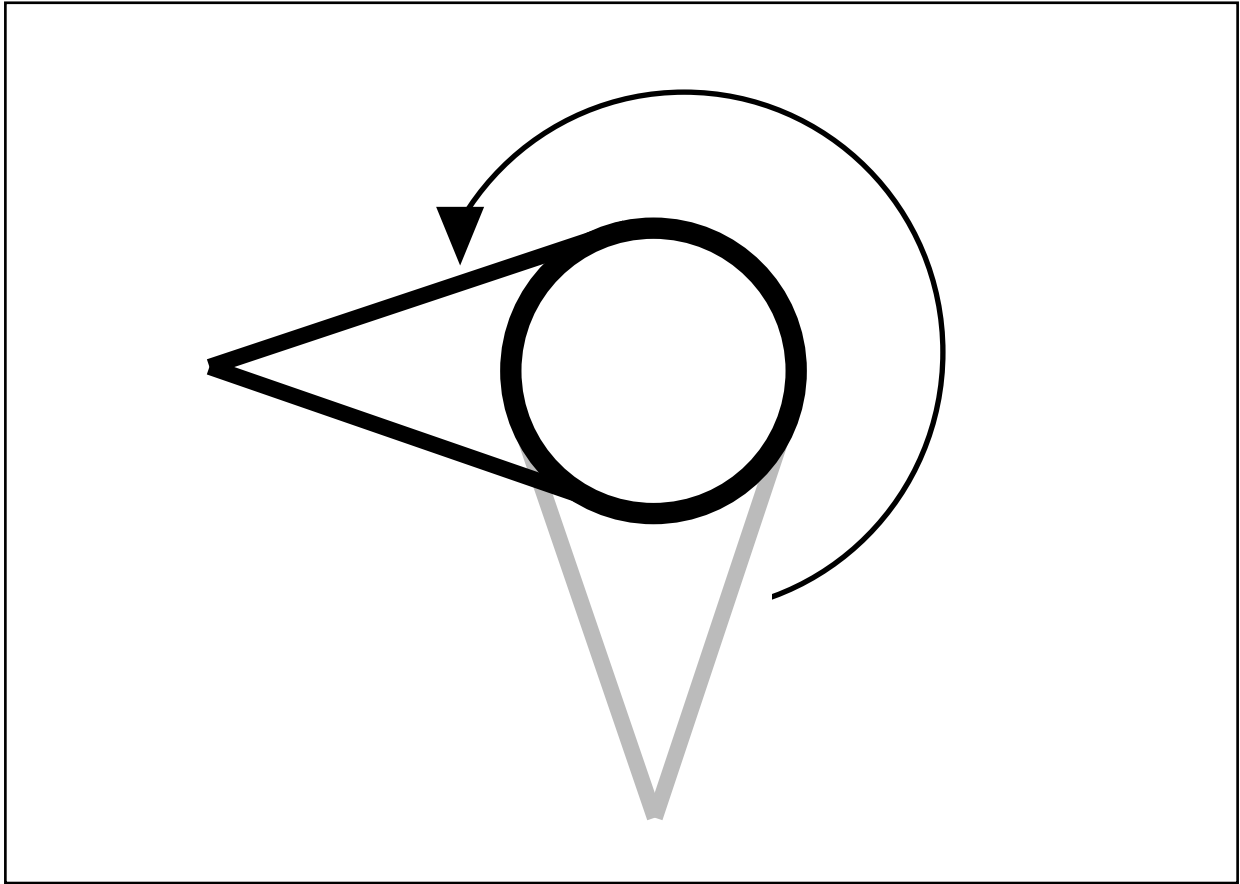
Getting faster, like a superball bouncing ...the reverse

The musical score consists of seven staves, each with a double bar line at the beginning and end. The staves are labeled on the left as follows:

- Violins 1-3 (Treble clef)
- Violins 4-7 (Treble clef)
- Viola 1 (Alto clef)
- Viola 2 (Alto clef)
- Cello 1 (Bass clef)
- Cello 2 (Bass clef)
- Contrabass (Bass clef)

Each staff begins with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The first few notes of each staff are quarter notes, followed by a dense tremolo section. The dynamic marking *ff* (fortissimo) is placed below the first few notes, and *sim* (sustained) is placed below the tremolo section. The performance instruction "Getting faster, like a superball bouncing ...the reverse" is written above the first staff. The instruction "Rpt till Q" is located in the top right corner of the page.

TURN 3

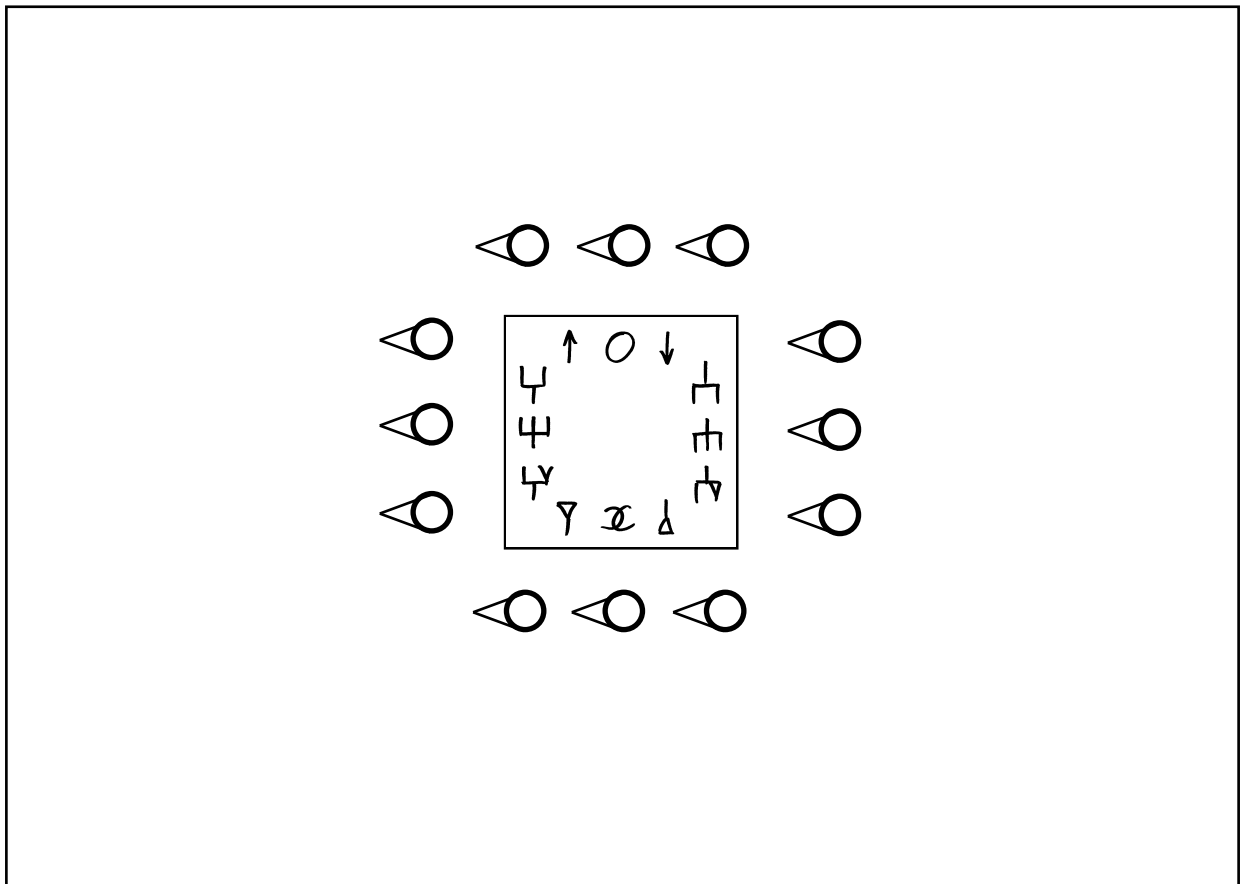


- On cue from the player at \mathcal{X} , all simultaneously turn to the left through 270 degrees to end up facing stage right, in a similar way to before

TURN 3

(Tacet)

4 HARMONICS

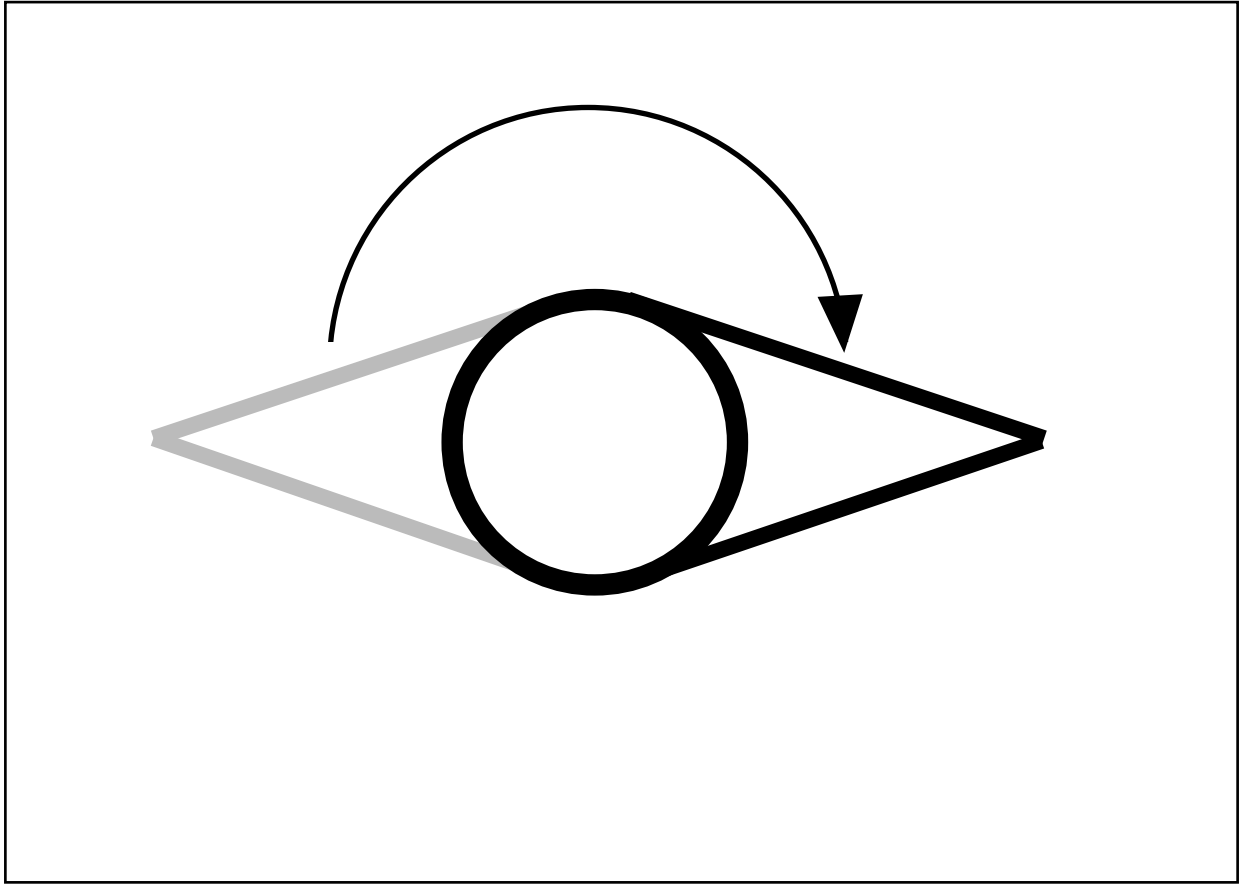


- On cue from player at 4, all commence playing as scored
- As ever, all players play individually, uncoordinated
- After 45 secs - 1 minute, all fall silent on cue from player at 4; this ending should be very slightly ragged

4 HARMONICS

The image displays a musical score for four string instruments: Violins, Violas, Celli, and CB (Contrabass). Each instrument part is written on a five-line staff. The Violins and Violas parts use a treble clef, while the Celli and CB parts use a bass clef. The music is marked with a dynamic of *p* (piano). Each part features a series of notes with open circles above them, indicating natural harmonics. A large, sweeping slur covers the entire sequence of notes in each part. To the right of each staff, the text "etc sim; harmonics sul A ad lib" is written, indicating that the pattern of harmonics can be repeated and played *sul A* (sul ponticello) at the performer's discretion. The notes in each part are: Violins (A4, B4, C#5, D5, E5, F#5, G5, A5), Violas (G3, A3, B3, C4, D4, E4, F#4, G4), Celli (C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3, C4), and CB (B2, C3, D3, E3, F3, G3, A3, B3).

Y TURN 4

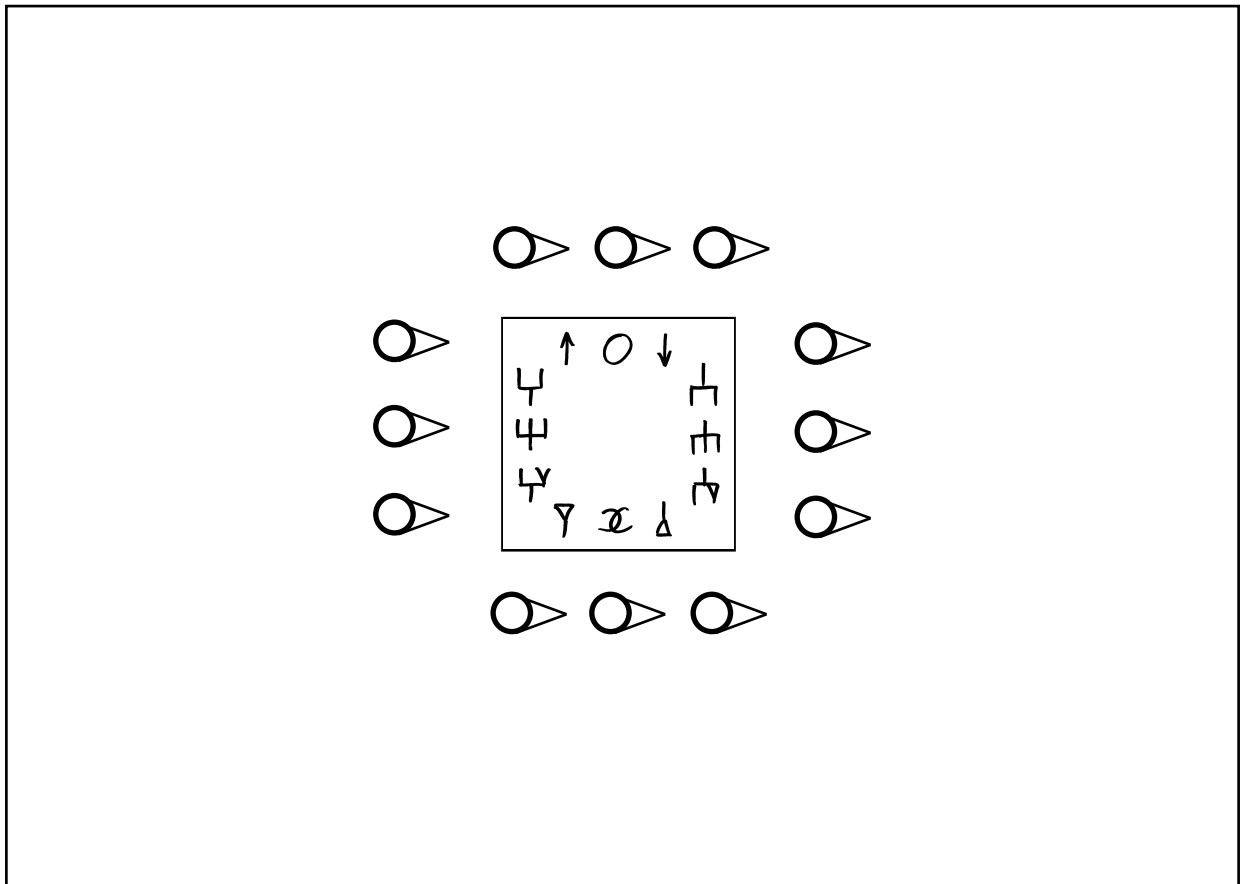


- On cue from the player at H , all simultaneously turn to the right through 180 degrees to end up facing stage left, in a similar way to before

Y TURN 4

(Tacet)

—E DUNGCHEN 2



- On cue from player at \uparrow , all commence playing & singing as scored (same as first 'Dungchen')
- After 45 secs - 1 minute, all fall silent on cue from player at \uparrow ; as ever, this ending should be very slightly ragged

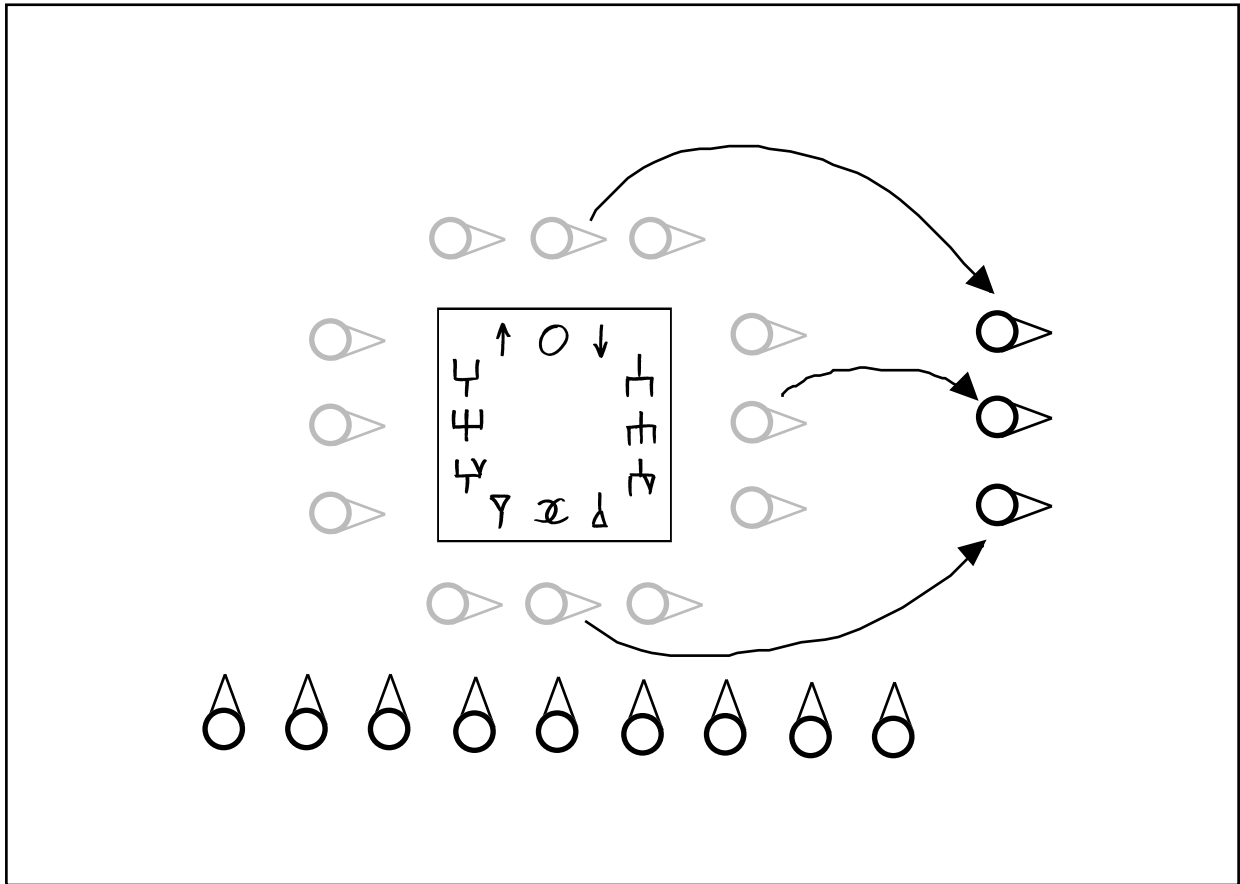
E DUNGCHEN 2

Rpt till Q

All sing whilst bowing; lowest comfortable Eb

The musical score consists of ten staves. The top staff is for 'Voices' and contains the lyrics: 'Ooo - - -' (or overtone chanting ad lib). Below the lyrics, there are two musical staves for the voices, each with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The first staff has a whole note with a dynamic of *mp* and the instruction 'One bow length'. The second staff has a whole note with a dynamic of *mp* and the instruction 'sim'. A comma is placed at the end of the first staff, and the text 'Slight pause at bow change' is written below it. The remaining nine staves are for string instruments: Violin 1, Violin 2, Violin 3, Violins 4-7, Viola 1, Viola 2, Cello 1, Cello 2, and CB (Contrabass). Each string staff has a treble or bass clef and a key signature of one flat. They all play a whole note with a dynamic of *f* and the instruction 'sim'. A comma is placed at the end of each string staff. The CB staff has the instruction 'sim (Bottom string detuned)'. The entire score is enclosed in a large rectangular box.

LEAVE POSITIONS



- Another mêlée; on cue from player at \uparrow , all move to take up positions as shown
- Three players stage left are cellists and bassist, silently facing stage left
- Vlns and vlns again have material to play whilst getting into line facing upstage; it might be sensible to get into the same order as before
- All fall silent more or less together once in position, then carry on after brief pause

↳ LEAVE POSITIONS

Rapid, disjointed phrases, rather quiet

Stop when in position

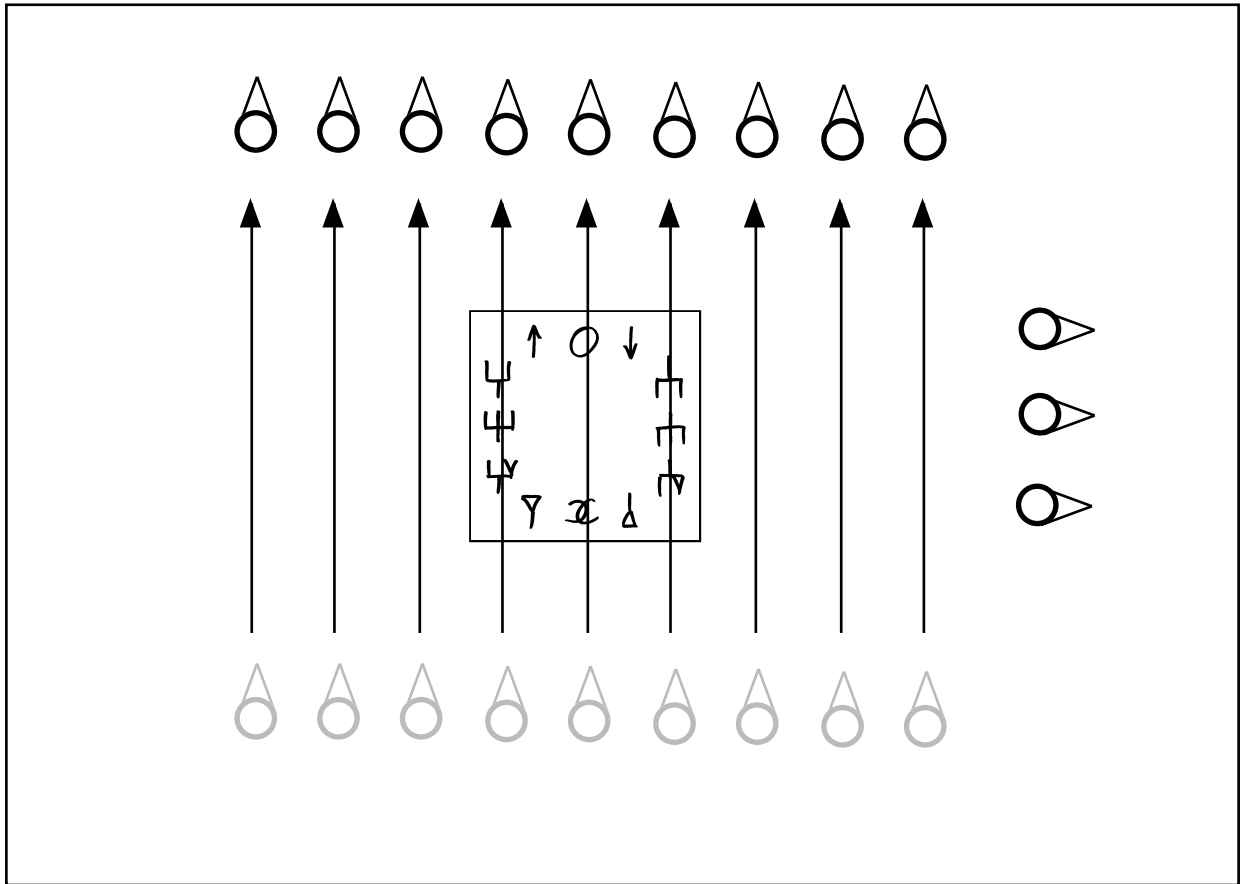
etc

Vlms & vlas

Celli & CB

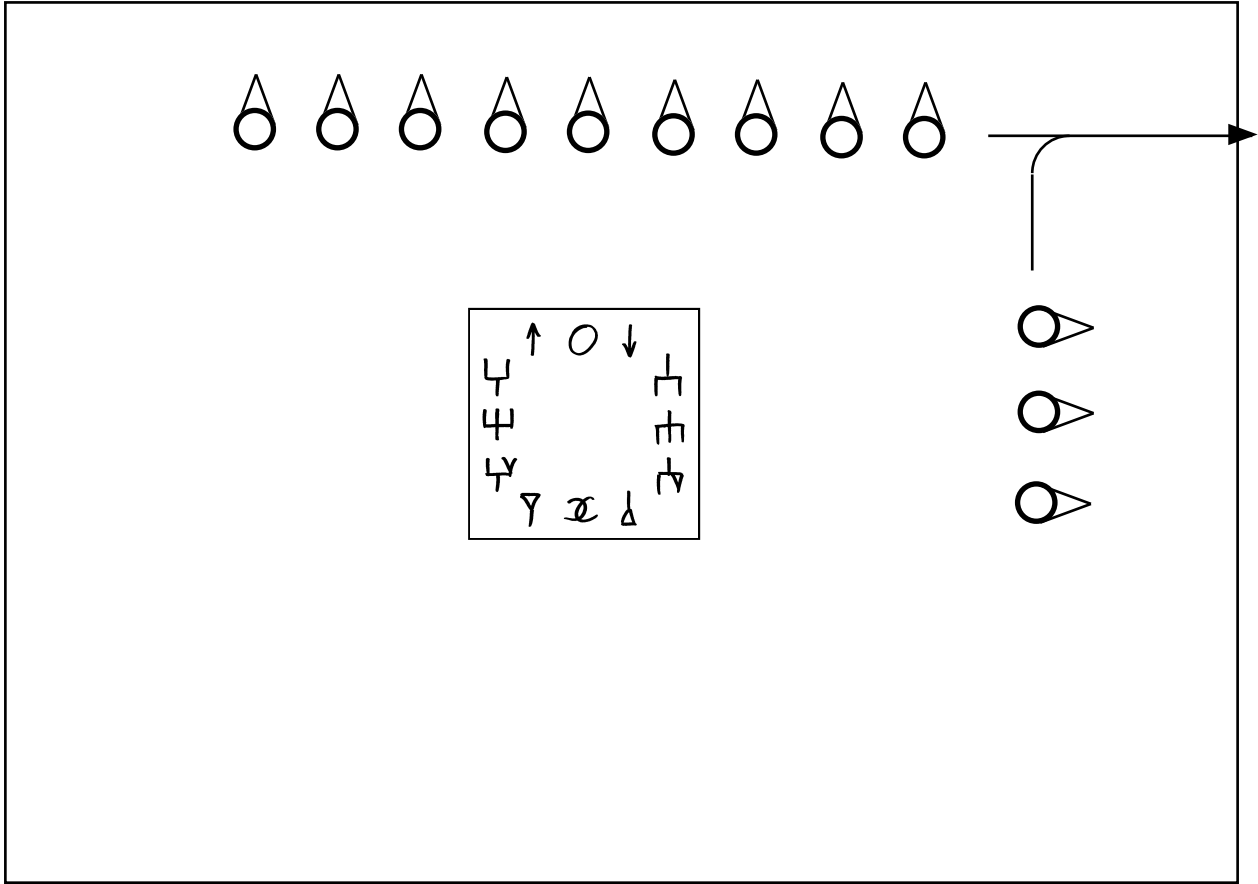
The image shows a musical score for two parts: Violins & Violas (Vlms & vlas) and Cellos & Double Basses (Celli & CB). The Violins & Violas part is written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It contains a series of rapid, disjointed phrases, described as "rather quiet". The Cellos & Double Basses part is written in bass clef and contains a few notes, with a specific instruction to "Stop when in position". The score is divided into two measures by a double bar line. The first measure contains the main musical notation, and the second measure contains a few notes and a specific instruction to stop when in position. The word "etc" is written above the second measure of the Violins & Violas part.

○ MARCH UP



- This is just like the march down; leader subtly sets tempo and gives upbeat; vlins and vlas play ff double stops as before, stepping upstage one pace at a time with each chord, keeping in a line
- Celli & CB wait silently until seven beats after the last chord, then...

← EXIT SL

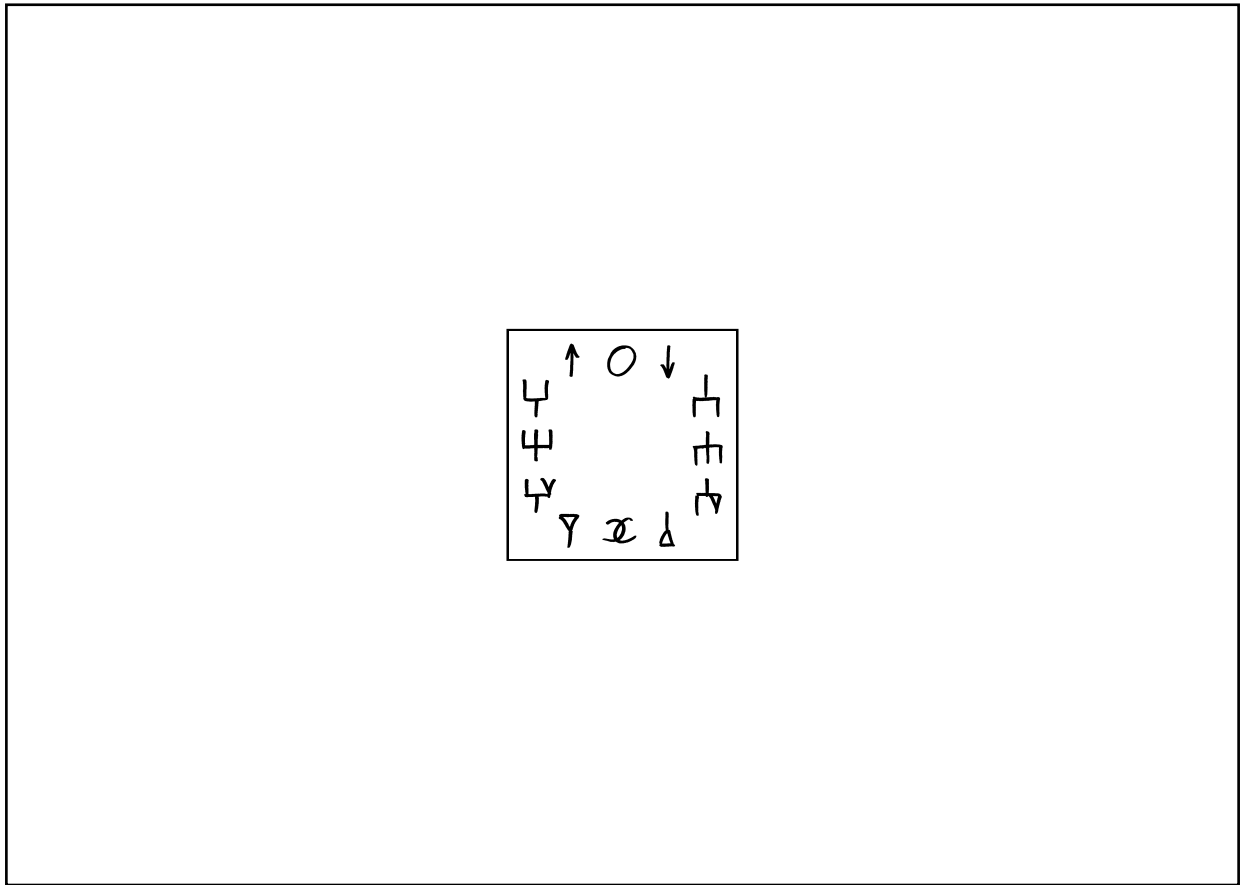


- ...celli & CB exit first stage left, followed immediately by vlns & vlas

← EXIT SL

(Tacet)

▷ OFFSTAGE R



- Someone had better start clapping here, or the audience aren't going to know the piece is finished
- At which point the players can reenter, out of character, to take applause
- Exuent players, strike carpet & set for next piece

▷ OFFSTAGE R

(Tacet)

Notes to the score

- **Forces**
 - Given version is written for **7 violins, 2 violas, 2 celli & 1 CB**
 - It would be possible to perform this piece with eight players, forming a square of two on a side, or even with just a string quartet
 - It would also be possible to perform it with a number of players which is not a multiple of four, at the expense of symmetry
- It is obviously **impossible to sight-read** this piece! The group will have to rehearse where to go & what to do, and memorise it. Fortunately, it is all very simple and logical. Key points to memorise include;
 - Turn **right, left, left, right**; always the longest way around to get to the new heading
 - The pacing for the march is **11 - 7 - 11 - 7 - 5 - 3 - 9 - 7**
- This piece must be performed **in uniform**. Ideally something vaguely religious or even slightly militaristic, absurd but not ridiculous. White tie and tails would be very suitable (ladies also); all black or all white acceptable. Barefoot?
- The players must **stay in character** at all times. Basically, think religious; carry yourself with as much seriousness as if you were performing at the funeral of someone you respected greatly, but did not know personally
- **Carpet**
 - Use an old rug or offcut of carpet, roughly 2m square
 - placed face-down
 - with the mystical design (see cover) painted on the back in white emulsion, or whatever
 - if this is difficult to organise, the composer may be prepared to supply same; it is indispensable to the piece
- **Diagrams**
 - The small circles represents where a player is standing; the pointy bird's beak shows the direction in which he or she is facing
 - Grey symbols show where one is coming from; solid symbols where one is going to
 - Front of house (ie, the audience) is at the bottom of each diagram
 - If it helps in rehearsal, one might like to refer to different directions as north, south, east and west (audience are sitting on the south side facing north) or in terms of a clock face (audience are sitting at 6 o'clock, facing 12 o'clock)
 - The runes on the carpet also have a musical significance, which it should not be impossible to divine
- **Problems & solutions**
 - The line of nine players is too long to fit in the space, once players have taken enough room to avoid poking each other in the eye. Solution; line up and march in two ranks of four and five instead, or three by three
 - There is not enough room for the players when standing around the carpet, either because of eye-poking issues or large-instrument-rotational issues. Solution; stand further away from the carpet in a larger square until all are comfortable
 - The exit is crowded, trying to get all the players off at the end is clumsy. Solution; don't go off, but remain static for a moment or two after the last chord before turning, coming out of character, and taking applause
- **Duration** ~5-6 minutes

