

Andreas Papapetrou

## HKM: Four walls to wander in

For string ensemble

Performance at the mansion of Hadjigeorgakis Kornesios  
29 October 2022

### **INSTRUMENTATION\***

5 Violins

2 Violas

2 Cellos

+

the site-specific sound installation at HKM

\* a provisional group of 9 players, provided by the CYSO



## **SPACE SETUP**

This piece is a musical environment and will work as a layer of sound added upon the temporary short-duration sound installation that will be set up in the mansion of Hadjigeorgakis Kornesios on 29 October 2022. It combines live performers with electronic sound and video projection and allows performers and audience members to move in the performance space freely, maintaining all limitations of visitor etiquette in a museum space, apart from the expectation to be quiet.

The museum's spaces will be prepared prior to the performance to incorporate dramatic lighting and wireless speakers, which will be triggered using camera sensors. The exhibits will be as accessible to the public as in any other time the museum is open to visitors. There should be no seating available for performers or visitors, other than a chair for each cellist and a few sparsely placed chairs for audience members unable to stand for long periods of time.

There will be no distinction between performance space and audience space. Both parties of performers and audience will occupy and move within all spaces of the museum (courtyard, garden, rooms on the first floor etc.).

During the performance, audience members will choose what to focus on and for how long, as they navigate the museum's spaces. Each audience member's course through the space will give them an individual, personal experience of the museum and the performance. Navigating through the performance space will allow the audience members to choose their own focal points during performance (which might include spaces, exhibits, sound installation audio or performers) and create their own piece of music by choosing which sounds they want to hear, or which exhibits they want to observe over others.

Lighting, video projection and audio installation equipment will not change locations during performance. Using music stands and printed scores is optional (but recommended against), as the instructions in the score are easy to follow from memory and require a fair amount of improvisation and creative initiative from the performers.

During performance, the audience will be allowed to enter and exit the museum freely. However, in order to avoid overcrowding visitors to the upper floor must

not exceed 40 persons. The performers will follow the instructions for sound and movement that can be found in the following sections.

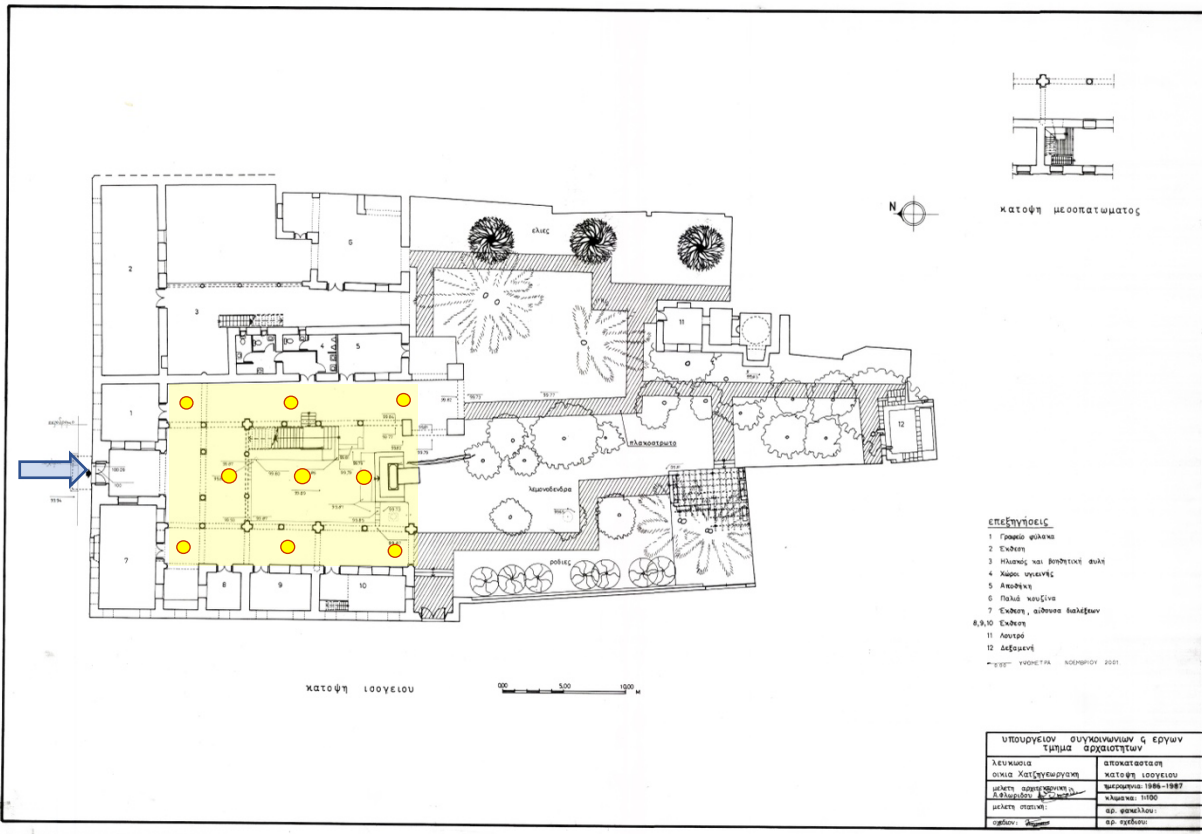
Performers start and end the performance placed in fixed spots in the courtyard, yet change locations following a pattern of rules in the meantime. Floor plans explaining placements and paths within the space can be found in the following sections.

## **DURATION AND PACING**

The duration of this piece is approximately 40 minutes, with changes in sound or activity happening every 5 minutes. Performers will need to use stopwatches to keep track of elapsed time.

Each action, shown with letters A to R, lasts for 3 breath cycles (one cycle is breathing in and out). The aim for this piece is to create a meditative atmosphere, to enhance the aesthetic contemplation of visitors about the exhibits, the space and its history. Therefore, it is recommended that performers prepare in order to remain calm, composed and reflective during performance, so that their breathing cycles are relaxed and slow, while they focus on adjusting their sound to correspond to external stimuli (audio from the sound installation or performer movement etc.).

## PERFORMER LOCATIONS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE PIECE



The performers place themselves in a symmetrical arrangement (as shown in the diagram above – each circle representing a performer) in the mansion’s courtyard. They remain in these places for the first section of the piece.

Performers must ideally allow 3 meters between themselves and the other performers situated closest to them. Performers standing next to a wall or in a corner should allow some space around them (ideally 2 meters), so that audience members can walk by them or around them if they wish, without being obstructed by a wall.

Cellists should place themselves at opposite ends of the space. The same applies for violists. Violins occupy the rest of the space. Exact positions of each performer will be fixed in rehearsal.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR SOUND AND MOVEMENT

The following instructions need to be followed linearly and individually by each performer. Performers will be cued in at the beginning of the piece (cue TBC in rehearsal) and will keep track of their own breath cycles in order to set their pace for moving on to the following actions, according to the instructions in each numbered action.

This should produce a slowly morphing cloud of sound, spreading across the performance space, in combination with audio coming from the sound installation's speakers. Changes in the performer's sound will be initiated by the performers individually, responding to external stimuli – namely the sound of the group and audio from the sound installation – acting according to their own judgement in order to contribute to the development of the piece. Even though these changes may seem abrupt, the overall character of sound produced by the group and sound installation will be perceived by the audience as gradual.

Each action instruction (A to R) lasts for at least three breath cycles (inhalation and exhalation, three times, ideally slowly). These parts may require several repetitions in order to create the collective sound as described. As such, performers may repeat these ad libitum and only move on to the next part when they feel that the objective of the instruction has been reached, *or* if they feel that the majority of the ensemble has moved on to the next one.

Performers will assign the director's role to one or two persons in the group, who will keep track of time using a stopwatch and set the pace of the piece by initiating changes when necessary. All performers are advised to use stopwatches if possible, as they may not always be able to see the director when they move independently in the space.

When changing locations in the space, performers produce sound if possible, following their breath cycle patterns and walk in a slow, calm manner, avoiding obstacles as necessary. Performers must not speak to audience members or to each other during performance.

A note about the sound installation: Audio will be played throughout the performance in various spots of the mansion, both outdoors and indoors, depending on where the sound stations of the installation will be placed. There will be soft constant drones coming from each sound station (a sensor and a speaker),

which will become more complicated, with multiple layers of sound added, as audience members or performers approach them. Performers are encouraged to explore the performance space and interact with the sound stations using their instruments, and adjusting the sounds they are producing according to the instructions they will be following. Audience members may choose to follow performers or to move independently from them when navigating the space. All sound stations will stop producing sound as the performance ends, along with the performers.

## PART ONE: Courtyard – Minutes 0 to 5

- A. Start with a D: Place yourselves as shown in the diagram above. Exact positions TBC in rehearsal. Remain silent until cued to start playing. Play the lowest D possible on your instrument, fading in from silence. Play in low dynamics.

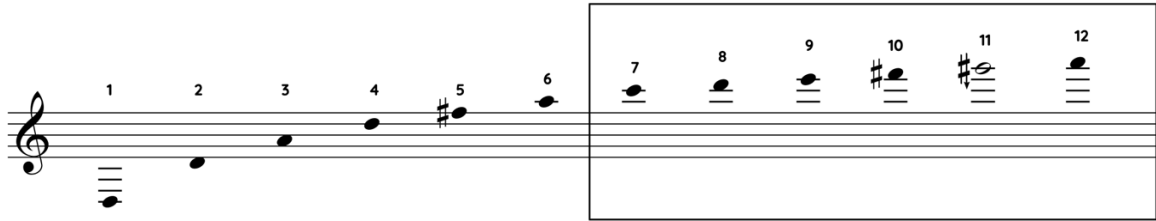
Duration: The duration of each note is one breath cycle, and each part must be played for at least three breath cycles before moving on to the next one. Repeat ad lib. *This applies to all parts.*

Timbral options: you may use harmonics, sul tasto, tremolo, extended techniques etc. as long as you remain within the indicated pitches and dynamics level for each part (*option applies for all parts*).

At this point avoid playing pizzicato. You may use this technique later, when interacting with a sound station producing sounds of a percussive quality.

- B. Add pitch alterations: Introduce microtonal alterations up to a quarter of a tone. Fluctuate between the altered and the original pitch, changing between them gradually.
- C. Add texture: Maintaining the same pitch, with microtonal alterations added, introduce repetitive rhythmical patterns (accents, a variety of articulations, alternations between playing and short rests etc.) or timbral fluctuations (for instance from sul tasto to sul ponticello and back or from modo ordinario to col legno tratto and back etc). Increase in level of dynamics, up to piano.
- D. Intensify: Gradually grow louder and denser in your rhythmical and timbral textures (for instance you may speed up or shorten your loops) and rise in dynamics up to mezzo-piano.
- E. Change pitch and come back: Choose one of the pitches indicated below. These approximately form the harmonic series, consisted of partials of D. You may transpose the pitches by an octave higher as needed. The new pitch you choose to switch to should be close to your original pitch. You may

maintain the rhythmical or timbral textures you have been using so far or develop them into new ones ad libitum. After the three breath cycles are complete return to the original pitch as used in the previous instruction and repeat this step ad libitum. Rise in dynamics up to mezzo-forte.



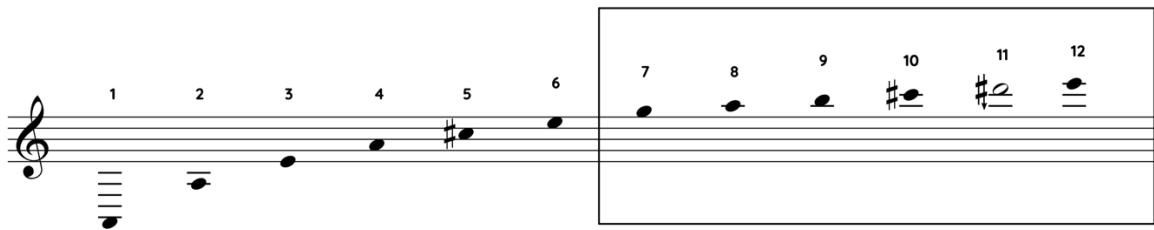
- F. Move away from your starting point: Gradually move on to pitches farther away from your starting note. Pitches are selected from the options listed above, as before. Do not repeat the same pitch more than 3 times in a row but keep coming back to your original pitch after every change. Textures in sound repeated or developed ad libitum as before.
- G. Moving further away: Changing pitches every 3 breath cycles as before, keep moving towards pitches that are farther away from your starting note yet remain within the harmonic series of D as indicated above. You no longer need to return to the starting note after every change. Textures as before. Rise in dynamics up to forte. Aim to collectively create a rich chord by this point (you can do this by avoiding playing the same notes as other performers) with layers of different textures.



## PART TWO: Courtyard and garden – Minutes 5 to 10

At this point, performers may start moving in the performance space. They can move to any point within the outdoor areas of the ground floor ad libitum. However, they must not start walking all at the same time (exact order of departure TBC in rehearsal if necessary). Performers should avoid moving in groups and they should spread out in all directions, to occupy as much of the space as possible. Audience members may follow suit. As they move, performers play sound whenever possible and walk calmly and slowly.

- H. Switch to A: Using the same style of playing as before (instructions A to G) gradually switch to pitches belonging in the overtone series of A, as shown below, or their octave transpositions. Use texture (rhythm, timbre etc.) as before. Dynamics ad libitum.



Interaction: It is likely that as you navigate the space you will come across a sound station at this point. If you approach it, it should produce sounds you may wish to interact with (for instance by mimicking certain qualities they have, harmonizing with them, using them as ostinatos etc.). You will essentially act as a mediator between the performance space (in our case, a museum), the sound installation and the audience and help bridge the gap between them.

- I. Add melodic cells and move to another location: Using your choice of 3 pitches from the harmonics 7 to 12 in the series below (including octave transpositions), create a short melodic motif and incorporate it in the texture of your improvisation. At first use this melodic cell sparsely, switching between drone and loops ad libitum. Repeat it a few times before developing it into an alternative form or inventing a new one. Textures and dynamics as before. Aim to move to another location by the end of this part if you have not already done so.

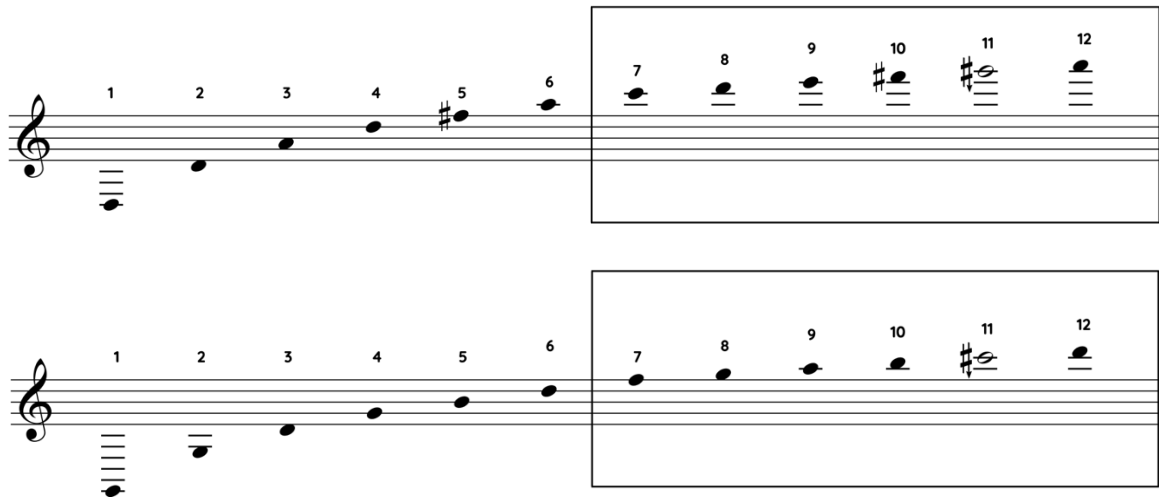
### **PART THREE: All spaces – Minutes 10 to 30**

After this point, performers may move into all parts of the performance space, including the rooms of the upper floor of the mansion. Please note that only up to 4 performers may be moving in the upper floor at any given time (due to space limitations – TBC in rehearsal) and the number of performers allowed to be in any room is limited to 2.

- J. Pitch to noise – walking and interacting with sound stations: [approx. minutes 10 to 15] In this part, while playing you may navigate all spaces of the museum that are accessible to the public. This includes the rooms in the upper floor of the mansion. You do not need to be moving constantly but it is recommended that you change locations frequently. You will move to spaces in which you want to interact with the sound equipment, regardless of whether there are audience members present in them. It is likely that they will follow you if you do, but you can choose to move to spaces that have no visitors in them at any time.

Once you reach a spot where you will rest for a bit, you will either interact with the audio played back in that space or, if there is no sound station present, you will carry on with your improvisation independently from sonic stimuli at that point. If you are interacting with a sound station, you may choose, for instance, to mimic certain qualities of the audio such as rhythmical patterns or dynamics, to harmonize with them, to use them as ostinatos etc. It is also likely at this point that you will meet other performers moving in the space, as they form their own trajectories in it. In this case, you may also interact with them in a manner similar to the one you would use for interacting with sound stations. You may also choose to walk alongside them for brief periods or intentionally move towards them to build up your improvisation together. In any case, avoid playing exactly the same notes with each other.

Gradually move on to the pitches of the harmonic overtone series of D if you are moving on the ground floor and those of G if you are moving on the first floor. See options for pitches below.



As before, you may choose to use 3 pitches from harmonics 7 to 12 from the series of overtones (tonic of D or G, depending on which floor you are moving in) and invent short motifs to incorporate in your improvisation. Changes to your improvisation patterns should last for at least 3 breath cycles, as before. You may adjust the tempo or intensity of your improvised motifs according to the speed of your movement or the character of the audio stimulus you are interacting with.

While maintaining a sense of the pitches indicated earlier, according to your location in the space, gradually move on to sounds of indefinite pitch. You may do this by switching back and forth between pitched and unpitched sound per 3 breath cycles or by gradually introducing extended techniques over the same pitch patterns (for instance phasing in sul ponticello and then eventually moving to playing directly on the bridge). Some examples of ideas can be found below. Textures in rhythm and timbre ad libitum as before.

Examples of half-pitched sounds:

- Extreme sul ponticello (very close to the bridge)
- Col legno tratto
- Bowing on the tail piece (may work better on cellos)

Aim to develop any newly introduced element into an integral part of your improvisation. Avoid letting it fall into a static loop. Keep introducing new elements according to your location or to your interaction with the sound

stations you will find around the mansion. You may return to previous improvisation ideas ad libitum but do not repeat them for more than 3 times.

- K. Only noise: [approx. minutes 15 to 20] Eventually phase out pitched sounds in favour of unpitched ones. Switch back and forth between different unpitched patterns and use textures (rhythm, timbre, articulation etc.) ad libitum as before in order to maintain a connection to your previous style of improvisation (for instance, the unpitched motifs may sound like shadow versions of your previous ideas). Especially when playing the unpitched sounds in this part, aim to explore the darkest places in the venue (to create a sense of unease and a mysterious atmosphere).

Examples of unpitched sounds:

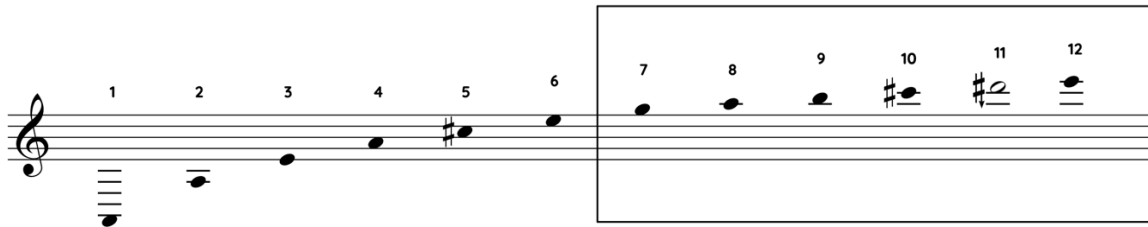
- Bowing directly on the bridge
- muffled strings (stopped by hand's grip) and bow pressure (this applies to pizzicato as well)
- percussive tapping on the body of the instrument

- L. Noise to pitch again: [approx. minutes 20 to 25] Same idea as instruction J but happening the other way around (i.e. gradually move back to half-pitched sounds). Movement and interaction style as before. Remember to use the series of harmonic overtones of G if you are on the first floor and of D if you are on the ground floor.

- M. Back to pitched sounds: [approx. minutes 25 to 30] Gradually return to pitched sounds from now on, similar to the ones you were using for instruction I. Use of extended techniques is still allowed until the end of the piece, but priority is given to pitched sounds. Use a wide range of pitches your instrument can play, based on the series of harmonic overtones as indicated earlier. Dynamics and textures as before. Interaction style as before.

## PART FOUR: Back to the ground floor – Minutes 30 to 37

- N. Back to A and back to the ground floor: If you are on the first floor, start heading towards the ground floor of the mansion. Pace yourselves to avoid overcrowding at the staircase. As you head back outside gradually slow down the pace of the motifs in your improvisation and limit them towards the upper or the lower end of the range of your instrument. At this point use pitches from the series of harmonic overtones of A. When all performers are outside, move to the perimeter of the performance space on the ground floor (this includes the courtyard and the garden) and use dynamics up to forte.



- O. Slow down motifs and head for the projection corner: Gradually slow down your improvisation motifs and simplify them until you are left with a single pitch per 3 breath cycles. This can be any pitch you have been using so far (ideally one of the pitches of the harmonic overtone series of A), which you will hold for a short time as you start making your way towards the corner of the garden.

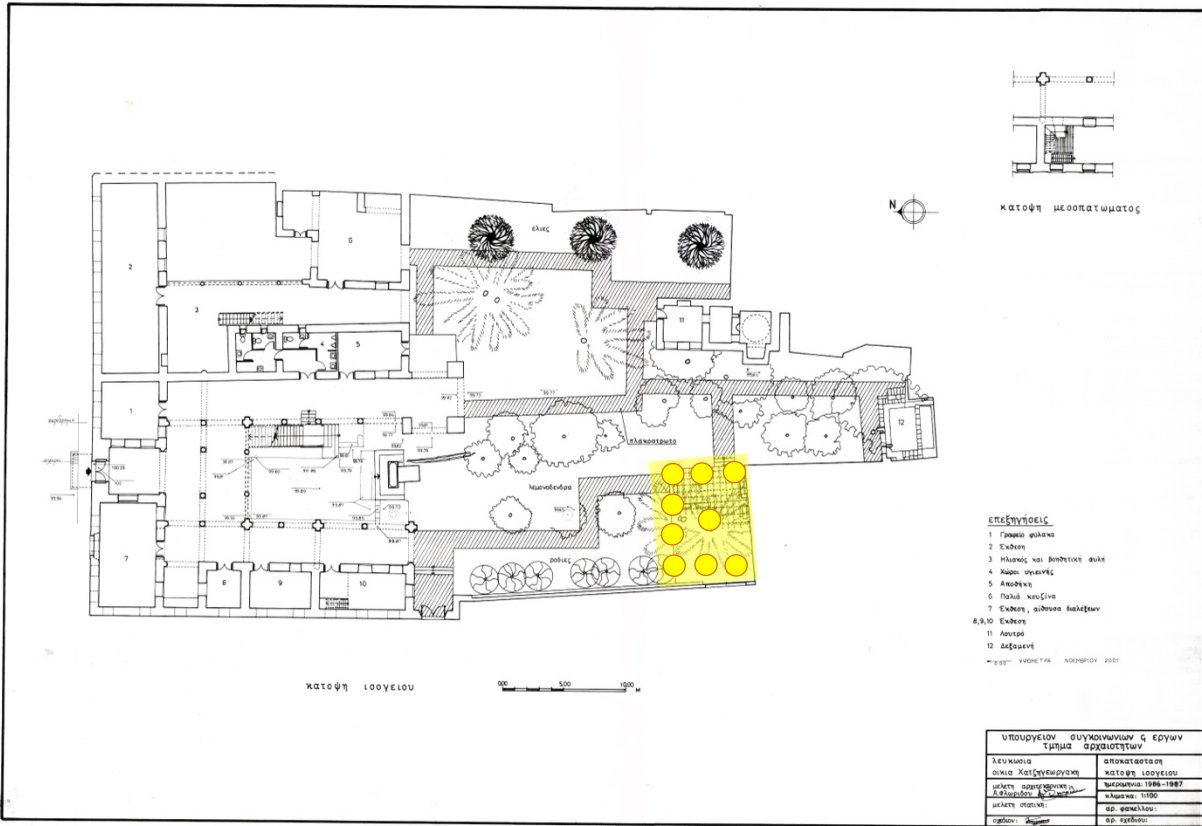
There will be a video projected throughout the performance on the empty vertical wall of the found at the south-western border of the garden. At this point you will set a course following a straight line if possible, until you reach the raised platform in front of the projection. Walk slowly as before and produce sound as you move. Once you have been heading for the projection space for a few steps you may move on to the next section.

- P. Pitches gravitate towards D<sub>4</sub>: Walking to the projection space, you will meet other performers, as you all converge towards it, and you will be able to hear their playing (keep playing mostly forte). A random chord will occur from the pitches you and the other performers are playing at the end of instruction O. You must squash this chord into a single D<sub>4</sub> (octave doublings TBC in

rehearsal). You will achieve this by starting from the pitches you are already playing and moving towards the pitch of D<sub>4</sub> (ascending or descending). Switch pitches for every breath cycle. Each cycle should ideally be a semitone step from the previous one but microtonal intervals are encouraged and whole tones are allowed. Aim to have reached the D<sub>4</sub> by the moment you step on the raised platform. Rhythmic and timbral textures ad libitum as before.

## PART FIVE: At the projection area – Minutes 37 to 40

At this point all performers have reached the raised platform in front of the vertical wall at the corner of the garden, where there is a video projection. We will decide final locations in rehearsal and whether performers will be inside the projection area (and may thus have images projected on them). Below is a diagram showing possible positions of musicians for the end of the performance.



Q. Crescendo in unison: By this point you will have reached your final positions (or you will be very close to them) and you will already be playing a D<sub>4</sub>. Until everybody reaches the D<sub>4</sub> and their final locations, performers that have already done so may introduce microtonal alterations or discreet, slowly evolving textures to their sound, however the overall sound produced by the group must remain a drone in D<sub>4</sub>. If you are using microtonal alterations, fluctuate between altered and original pitch, always changing gradually and taking 3 breath cycles to complete changes. When everyone has reached the

D<sub>4</sub>, start increasing in dynamics and bow pressure (perhaps combined with extreme sul ponticello), as if trying exceptionally hard to produce an extreme, stressed crescendo. It is encouraged that you let your sounds become distorted and harsh at this point. We may synchronise our crescendo to a movement occurring in the video projection (TBD in rehearsal – we may need to set a director-performer to cue you in for this).

- R. Fade to noise, then to silence: After the group reaches its peak in dynamics and intensity of the drone sound, start a collective diminuendo (we may need to set a cue for this and determine the speed of the diminuendo – TBD in rehearsal), while still playing D<sub>4</sub>. At this point, also phase out textures: your sound should mostly be a long drone. Similarly to sound transformations occurring in instructions H and J, aim to gradually phase into half-pitched and then into unpitched sounds. Unpitched sound should still be audible and have visible gestures (bowing speed and direction as necessary) for a few breath cycles before fading out to nothing. When silence is reached, remain still, with your bow in playing position until the performance is finished (lights on, audience clapping, or other cue TBC in rehearsal).