

Operandi

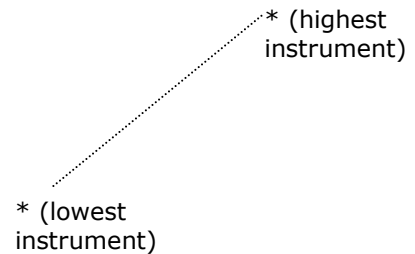
for 2 or more string players

Composer's note: Throughout *Operandi*, players strive for perfect relative intonation. Although this perfection, in a mathematical sense, is impossible to reach and sustain in any mobile fashion, players should focus on the pursuit, rather than the goal itself. One player is excused from this struggle; this is not because he or she should wield a larger influence than others, but rather to illustrate the relativity, and resultant mobility, of harmonic perfection.

-Adam Fong, 2004

Physical Arrangement

Players should arrange themselves in a diagonal line, from lowest to highest (contrabass, cello, viola, violin II, violin I), downstage right to upstage left. If there are multiple players in a given section, a sequence should be determined so that one player may serve as "lowest" of the group, another as the "second lowest", and so on.



----- AUDIENCE -----

Lowest Instrument

Play *arco* a continuous tone on the string indicated on page 2. Try to make bow direction changes as subtle as possible. You may *glissando* in any direction on the given string, playing any available pitch with the exception of the open string. *Glissando* movements may occasionally be dramatic and quick, but in general should change pitch at a fairly slow rate. Try to be changing pitch almost continuously; you should not linger on the same pitch for more than a few seconds. Be sure to use absolutely no vibrato; the dynamic level should be *mezzo-forte* throughout.

All Other Instruments

Play *arco* a continuous tone on the string indicated on page 2. Try to make bow direction changes as subtle as possible. Using *glissandi* to change pitch, try to play as perfectly as possible the pitch above the one that is being played by the next lower instrument by the goal interval indicated on page 2. Do not worry about creating intervallic relationships with instruments other than the next lower one. Be sure to use absolutely no vibrato; the dynamic level should be *mezzo-forte* throughout.

Beginning, Ending, Duration

The lowest instrument begins and ends the piece by beginning and ending his or her tone. All other players should, as with pitch, take cues for entrances and exits from their next lowest player. This will create a sequence of entrances at the beginning, and of exits at the end. An approximate duration should be agreed upon beforehand.

For all instrumental combinations:

- If a player and his or her next lower instrument are in the same section, the goal interval should be a perfect unison.
- If only one violin is available, he or she should be considered a violin II.
- If a player's next lower instrument is not the one listed next in the chart, that player should add the goal interval for the missing part to his or her own goal interval. For example, in an ensemble with two violins and a cello, the goal interval for violin II would be an octave and a fifth above the cello.
- In the "String" column, letters preceded by *scord.* indicate the player should tune the given open string down to the given note.
- All goal intervals refer to "just" intervals; "octave" indicates an interval of exactly one octave.

Lowest Instrument: CONTRABASS

<u>Section</u>	<u>String</u>	<u>Goal Interval</u>
Violin I	II	Fifth
Violin II	III	Fourth
Viola	III	Fifth
Cello	IV	Octave
Contrabass	IV (<i>scord. D</i>)	Unison

Lowest Instrument: CELLO

<u>Section</u>	<u>String</u>	<u>Goal Interval</u>
Violin I	III (<i>scord. C</i>)	Fourth
Violin II	IV	Fifth
Viola	IV	Octave
Cello	IV	Unison

Lowest Instrument: VIOLA

<u>Section</u>	<u>String</u>	<u>Goal Interval</u>
Violin I	III	Fifth
Violin II	IV	Octave
Viola	III	Unison

Lowest Instrument: VIOLIN

<u>Section</u>	<u>String</u>	<u>Goal Interval</u>
Violin I	II (<i>scord. G</i>)	Octave
Violin II	IV	Unison