OCTAHEDRON

For

Violin I
Violin II
Viola
Cello

Flute
Oboe
B♭ Clarinet
Bassoon

Sounding Stone

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**Performance notes**

The daily practice routine of a string and a woodwind quartet, respectively exploring some possible combinations of C and G Lydian augmented scale notes, is abruptly interrupted by the unexpected appearance of an uncommon instrument, which destabilises the previously established balance. The sound of the Stone is like a magnetic field and the quartets’ compass needle suddenly goes mad. A new ‘North’ prevails and both quartets are slowly and irreversibly attracted by the stones’ ancestral recall.

*Octahedron* explores the sound of the Stones when played with a bow. It is not so much based on pitches (even though their role is relatively important for the final result), but rather on the mere fact that it is possible to produce a sound bowing a Stone. Given that every Stone is a unique instrument with its own pitch series, the piece can only be performed with precise pitches on a predetermined Stone. In order to allow performances with any limestone keyboard or harp, and create the effect of pitch variation from the initial one, the first note should be played in the central stele of a row of choice, to be considered as a central reference-point. A one-line staff proves useful to represent graphically a dividing line that separates the notes over the line, which should be played on the right of the central stele, from those notes under the line, which should be played on the left of the central stele.

![MIDI staff notation for octahedron](image)

A generous use of rosin on the bow it is recommended, as used by strings players.
In order to optimise the effect of a centripetal magnetic attraction, both quartets should be placed around the stone according to the following scheme:

![Diagram of instrument placement]

The alternation between moments when instruments are capable of keeping control of their routine and moments when they lose control - introducing some elements of improvisation concerning pitches, phrasing and dynamics, within a given rhythm - allows different degrees of variety, hence a different performance every time.

According to the instruction given in the score the headless notes indicate freedom of pitches in the notes chosen by the performer:

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play free notes alternating legato and staccato. P and F
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![Music notation example]
meno mosso e leggero, cercando il dialogo

whistle tones

morendo
play free notes alternating legato and staccato, \( P \) and \( f^* \)

*headless notes indicate freedom of pitches in the notes chosen by the performer*
20 Slow glissandi, play independently from P to PP, uncoordinated

Fl.
Ob.
Bb.Cl.
Bsn.
So. St.
Vln. I
Vln. II
Vla.
Vc.

al niente
molto vibrato
poco vibrato

play indipendently from       to       , uncoordinated

Slow glissandi,