

Matthew Whitfield

Out of Order

Prose Piece
for String Quartet

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Divide the parts of any one string quartet (preferably from the Classical or Romantic eras) among the players at random by rolling dice, drawing straws, or any other method of determining order. At the end of distributing the parts, all players must have a part written for an instrument other than their own. If, for example, the cellist randomly selects the Cello part, he or she must switch with another member of the ensemble. Ensemble seating should be determined at random using a similarly chance-based method.

Once the seating is determined and parts are distributed such that each player possesses a part other than their standard one, the performance may begin. To execute *Out of Order*, each performer must read the part in front of them as though it were their own. (i.e. if the cellist has the Violin II part, he or she must read the part, and all relevant accidentals, markings, etc. as though it is written in the Bass Clef.) If notes cannot be played due to instrumental limitations, these shall be either omitted or adjusted, as the performer sees fit.

The performance ends when the string quartet has been played in its totality.

