Spotting Nowhere
for 4 players using string instruments

Alexis Porfiriadis
2010

Spotting Nowhere (2010) is a verbal score consisting of 36 verbally and 29 graphically instructed parts. Performers are invited to make a group realization of the composition using any amount of this material. The order of actions and their respective timings should be decided collectively prior to the performance. The resultant realization should be the product of a conversation between the performers and it should by no means be decided by one single person.

The actions of Spotting Nowhere may be combined in any manner (based on the performers’ choice), so that an action can continue while another starts, more than one action can be performed simultaneously etc. An action can be repeated by the same person provided that one or more other actions are inserted between repetitions to avoid successive appearances of the same action. The order in which the actions are presented in this score is random and reflects no structural preference on the part of the composer. The duration of the performance of the piece is indeterminate but it should not be less than 6 minutes.

Where there are no specific instructions regarding the number of performers, the way a page of Spotting Nowhere should be performed (e.g. duration, repeats, order of events, ways of performing given actions) and the dynamics, the performers may decide freely, without any limitations.

You are encouraged to perform your chosen action(s) as naturally as possible. Extreme displays and theatrics should be avoided. Each version should be agreed on for the specific performance; it may not be rehearsed or played at an earlier performance.

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register

<ting> speak normally

<n> hold the consonant

Harmonic

Harmonic (forth position)

Blow in the instrument

Play on the bridge (pitchless)

Arco on a string behind the bridge

Quartetone vibrato

c.l. e crini arco Arco with wood and hair

c.l.arco Arco with wood

ex.s.p. Extreme sul ponticello

Highest tone you can play

Knocking on the body of the instrument

Slapping on the body of the instrument

Tremolo on the body of the instrument

Maximum bow pressure

Maximum bow pressure behind the bridge

c.l.batt Strike with the bow (wood)

c.l.batt Strike with the bow on the instrument’s body

pizz Pizzicato
Pizzicato behind the bridge

Pizzicato fluido (do a small glissando using the metal tip of the bow)

Pizzicato Bela Bartok

Harmonic Glissando
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*Spotting Nowhere* (Graphic 1)

4 players, Duration: 2 to 3 minutes
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*Spotting Nowhere* (Graphic 2)

4 players - Duration: 30 seconds to 1.30 minutes
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*Spotting Nowhere (Graphic 3)*

1 to 4 players, Duration: 1 to 3 minutes
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*Spotting Nowhere* (Graphic 4)

2 players, Duration: ca. 2 minutes
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Spotting Nowhere (Graphic 5)

1 to 4 players, Duration: 1 to 3 minutes
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_Spotting Nowhere_ (Graphic 6)

4 players
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Spotting Nowhere (Graphic 7)

4 players, Duration: 5 to 30 seconds
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Spotting Nowhere (Graphic 8)

4 players, Duration: 30 seconds to 3 minutes
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*Spotting Nowhere* (Graphic 9)

4 players, Duration: 1 to 3 minutes
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*Spotting Nowhere* (Graphic 10)

4 players, Duration: max. 3 minutes
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Spotting Nowhere (Score 1)

4 players, Duration: 1 to 2 minutes
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**Spotting Nowhere (Score 2)**

4 players, Duration: 1 to 30 seconds
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*Spotting Nowhere (Score 3)*

1 player, Duration: 30 seconds to 1 minute
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*Spotting Nowhere* (Score 4)

1 to 4 players, Duration: 30 seconds to 1 minute
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Spotting Nowhere (Score 5)

1 to 4 players, Duration: 30 seconds to 2 minutes, Dynamic: pp
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*Spotting Nowhere* (Score 6)

4 players, Duration: 30 seconds to 2 minutes
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Spotting Nowhere (Score 7)

4 players, Duration: 30 seconds to 2 minutes
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**Spotting Nowhere (Score 8)**

4 players, Duration: max. 3 minutes
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*Spotting Nowhere* (Score 9)

4 players, Duration: max. 40 seconds
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Spotting Nowhere (Score 10)

4 players, Duration: max. 1 minute
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*Spotting Nowhere* (Score 11)

4 players, Duration: max. 3 minutes
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*Spotting Nowhere (Score 12)*

4 players, Duration: 1 to 30 seconds
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Spotting Nowhere (Score 13)

4 players, Duration: max. 2 minutes, Dynamic: p
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Spotting Nowhere (Score 14)

4 players, Duration: max.2 minutes, Dynamic: pp
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Spotting Nowhere (Score 15)

4 players, Duration: max. 2.30 minutes
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Spotting Nowhere (Score 16)

4 players, Duration: 5 seconds to 2 minutes
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*Spotting Nowhere* (Score 17)

4 players, Duration: 30 seconds to 3 minutes
Spotting Nowhere (Score 18)

4 players, Duration: min. 3 minutes
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*Spotting Nowhere* (Score 19)

3 players, Duration: 2 to 3 minutes
**Bow hair**

count the strings on your bow

calmly, with focus and without unnecessary movements

for 2 to 3 minutes

(1 to 4 players)

**Arco on me**

play arco on your body until you are out of bow resin

perform the action with the utmost calmness, concentration and dedication

(1 to 4 players)

**Connection**

let’s all play on one another’s instrument a sustained sound

while still holding our own instrument

let’s all start and finish together

for about 2 minutes

(4 players)

**High**

choose a page from a string quartet of the classical or romantic period

retreat in a point within the space where you can no longer see your fellow performers

perform your part 2 octaves higher than written

(1 to 4 players)

Alexis Porfiriadis, 2010

*SpottingNowhere* (actions: Bow hair, Arco on me, Connection, High)
**Col legno**

choose a page from a string quartet of the classical or romantic period

retreat in a point within the space where you can no longer see your fellow performers

perform your part *col legno arco*  

(1 to 4 players)

**Outside**

prior to the concert, prepare between you a continuous chord, which will not bear musical associations for any member of the quartet.

during the concert, stand directly outside the entrance of the concert space and close the doors (the audience should stay inside)

perform for 90 seconds  

(4 players)

**Play the air**

play the air *arco*, 2 cm upon the strings

slowly, calmly, with the utmost concentration and dedication for 90 seconds  

(1 to 4 players)

**Intimate**

pick a member of the audience

play *arco*, making a continuous noise in *pp* as near their ear as you can  

(1 to 4 players)

Alexis Porfiriadis, 2010

*Spotting Nowhere* (actions: Col legno, Outside, Play the air, Intimate)
**Melody**

choose a member of the audience
go near them and ask them to sing their favorite melody to you, by whispering in their ear

he/she has to whisper in your ear too to convey that information.

if you are not familiar with this melody, ask somebody else, until you find a melody that you have heard at least once.

distance yourself from the spectator
and choose an inconspicuous point in the performance space

try to play the melody in **ppp**

(1 to 4 players)

**Close**

approach two of your fellow players, get as near them as you can

play **p**, 15 different sounds on your instrument

**Pizz**

choose a point in the space where you do not have eye contact with your fellow players

play one note **pizz** every time, trying not to play simultaneously with any of the other players

play 30 times with dynamics **mf** to **ff**

(4 players)
**On her**

pick a member of the audience

play *col legno arco* on him/her, slowly and with the utmost calmness

for one minute

(1 to 4 players)

**Bow**

apply resin to your bow

with very slow and calm movements

for at least one minute

(1 to 4 players)

**Leave it**

leave your instrument in the hands of a member of the audience for about 2 minutes

don’t ask the person to do anything

don’t stop him/her if he/she plays

after the 2 minutes ask politely for the instrument to be returned to you

(1 to 4 players)

**Swap**

let’s keep swapping our instruments for 2 minutes

without unnecessary or extravagant movements

let’s just swap instruments

with the utmost concentration, calmness and seriousness

(4 players)

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*Spotting Nowhere* (actions: On her, Bow, Leave it, Swap)
**Circle**

let's leave all our instruments on the floor together
let's form a circle, touching hands

let's close our eyes

let's try to bond with our fellow players mentally
counting slowly and silently, to ourselves, from 60 to 0

(3 or 4 players)

**Contact**

feel the closest possible connection with each of your fellow players physically as well as mentally

when you feel that you have established an absolute connection with each and every one of the players,

play one sustained sound for one minute

(4 players)

**Play the breath**

listen to your breath.
concentrate.

play one short sound at the beginning of your every inhalation and exhalation

don’t play the same sound 2 times in a row.
perform the process 30 times

(1 to 4 players)

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*Spotting Nowhere* (actions: Circle, Contact, Play the breath)
Hold

inhale
exhale
inhale
exhale
I hold my breath playing a harmonic until I need more air

inhale
exhale
inhale
exhale
I hold my breath playing on the bridge until I need more air

inhale
exhale
inhale
exhale
I hold my breath until I need more air and I go on

(1 to 4 players)

Harmonic

Inhaling deeply

Exhaling all the air

My exhalation becomes a harmonic that breathes calmness,
relaxation and concentration
I repeat as desired

(1 to 4 players)

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SpottingNowhere (actions: Hold, Harmonic)
**In and out**

inhale = a sound  
exhale = another sound

inhaling and exhaling slowly playing the sounds of my choice

slowly breathing in and out, getting gradually faster and faster  
while the 2 sounds accompany every inhalation and exhalation

faster and faster until I'm panting and I don't have the energy to go on  
(1 to 4 players)

**Exhale**

let all the air out  
while playing arco on the bridge without pressure and effort

stop playing when your air has run out  
(1 to 4 players)

**Noise**

choose a point in the space  
play arco on your instrument only at points  
where no definite pitch is produced

so quietly that you will be the only one to hear it  
for 2 minutes  
(1 to 4 players)

**Bow 2**

bow 15 times  
(1 to 3 players)
**Touch**

touch a fellow player with your left hand
forming, in this way, a circle

perform a sustained sound with your right hand for 1 minute

(4 players)

**No string**

let's all play simultaneously on one of the 4 instruments
anywhere except the strings

for 2 minutes

(4 players)

**Breath**

stop!

listen to your breath for one minute

(1 to 4 players)

**Look**

pick one of your fellow players

look at him/her carefully for one minute

(1 to 4 players)

**Mbp**

maximum bow pressure

(where?)

for one minute

(1 to 4 players)

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*Spotting Nowhere* (actions: Touch, No string, Breath, Look, Mbp)
**Move**

place your hands on your musical instrument

hold them there for 30 sec

raise them from the instrument with a continuous movement that will last one minute

(1 player)

**Hug**

leave the bow beside you

hold your instrument in your arms

close your eyes and become one with the instrument

(1 to 4 players)

**Bow 3**

leave your instrument beside you

take the bow in your hands

close your eyes and scrutinize every inch of the bow with the utmost concentration and dedication, for 2 minutes

(1 to 4 players)

**Just for yourself**

pick a cozy spot in the space

close your eyes

forget about the audience

you are alone

nobody can hear you

play one sound/one chord/one melody only for yourself

(1 to 4 players)

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*Spotting Nowhere* (actions: Move, Hug, Bow 3, Just for yourself)
Four to one
four corners
four people

one sound
one minute

Audience
moving calmly, find a spot you like in the space
sit on the floor and leave your instrument beside you
close your eyes and stay there until you hear
an interesting sound from the audience
when that happens, stand up and continue, calmly

(Ocean
(1 to 4 players)

Ocean
close your eyes
fill your head with an ocean of sounds
you could potentially produce on your musical instrument
no rush
think of more sounds
they are endless
open your eyes
choose without reasoning one of the sounds that had previously
flooded your head and perform

(1 to 4 players)

Alexis Porfiriadis, 2010
Spotting Nowhere (actions: Four to one, Audience, Ocean)