

Marco Polo
by Scott Pfitzinger
for 4 or more musicians and one audience volunteer

Preparation: Lay out a path or obstacle course on the stage.

Directions: Musicians gather in the four corners of the stage. A volunteer member of the audience is blindfolded and led to the beginning of the course. The musicians improvise and guide the volunteer walker through the course by playing only when the walker needs to walk toward them. The walking volunteer will literally follow the sounds to be guided through the course. If they need to walk at an angle, the two individuals or groups on either side of that direction will be needed. When the walker reaches the end of the course, ALL musicians play loudly for 5-10 seconds, then stop, ending the piece and applauding the volunteer.

Suggestions:

- Chairs, music stands, piano benches, instrument cases, etc., may be used to mark out the pathway. Other obstacles or guiding lanes may be used as desired.
- Alternatively, obstacles may be totally cleared, so the volunteer walks around a non-existent course.
- To keep the piece musically interesting, the pathway should involve twists and turns in all directions.
- Musicians may choose to play harmoniously and gently if the volunteer is doing well, then louder or more frantically if the walker needs to respond to them more immediately.
- The volunteer should be given some basic instructions, such as "Walk toward the music you hear playing" and not much more than that.

Duration: Approximately 3-5 minutes