

Mandala 10

for iPhones

Greg Schiemer

Mandala 10 is an iPhone performance for up to 16 players. Each player launches the *Mandala 10* app on their iPhone. The app displays 16 phones that play major and minor chords of a 35-note microtonal scale. Blue phones produce major chords; green phones produce minor chords.



Fig. 1 Select Menu



Fig. 2 Play Menu (Major)



Fig. 3 Play Menu (Minor)

Each phone is physically attached to a nylon cord and pre-programmed to produce sustained pitches. A player selects one of the 16 phone icons from the Select Menu, plays a chord by touching one of the 9 dots in the Play Menu and then swings the iPhone gently for the duration of the sound.

PLAYING CHORDS

Black dots in the centre of each Play Menu play long sounds (90 seconds). Coloured dots on the perimeter play short sounds (30 seconds).

SWINGING

Players produce chorus effects by using the nylon cord to swing the phone. Phones are swung in a circular fashion – as slowly, gently and effortlessly as possible. The phone should travel no more than a metre above the floor.

For best results, grip the cord with one hand, secure the loose end with the other and swing the phone by holding the fore-arm above the head, keeping the phone in orbit with minimal wrist movement.

SEQUENCES

Mandala 10 is composed as sequences where players enter one after the other.

For example, one player leads by playing a long sound and then swinging the phone, followed by other players playing short sounds and swinging their phones. The other players enter one by one until all phones are swinging.

In the full configuration of *Mandala 10* where all 16 phones are used, there will be 16 sequences in total, each led by a different player. The first begins on blue phones; when this ends, a second begins on green phones; this is followed by a third (blue phones, starting on 3 then 5 7 9 11 13 15 and 1), a fourth (green, starting on 4 then 6 8 10 12 14 16 and 2), and so on until the final sequence (green, starting on 16 then 2 4 6 8 10 12 14).

PLAYER CONFIGURATION

For a performance using 16 phones, markers* are placed on the floor in a circle (see Figure 4). The markers are arranged in numerical order to identify where players stand during performance. Colours also help players know where other members of the ensemble are up to while they are playing. In this configuration, each marker represents one player playing either a blue phone or a green phone. The approximate duration of a performance using all 16 phones is slightly under 24 minutes.

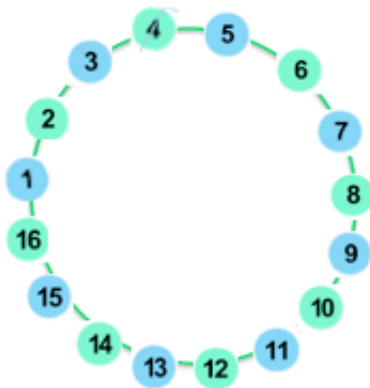


Fig. 4 Full configuration

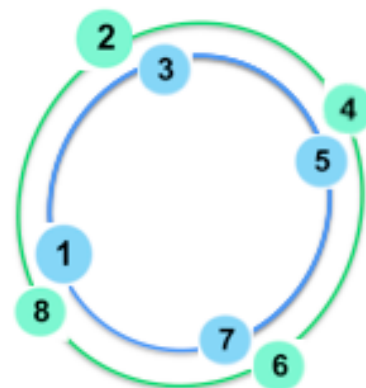


Fig. 5 Configuration for 4 players

In the smaller 4-player configuration (shown in Figure 5), players alternate between the blue phone and the green phone using the Select Menu (Figure 1) to select the alternate phone. In this configuration, a pair of markers identifies where each player stands during the performance. Figure 6 shows an approximate time-line with each player in turn leading a sequence.

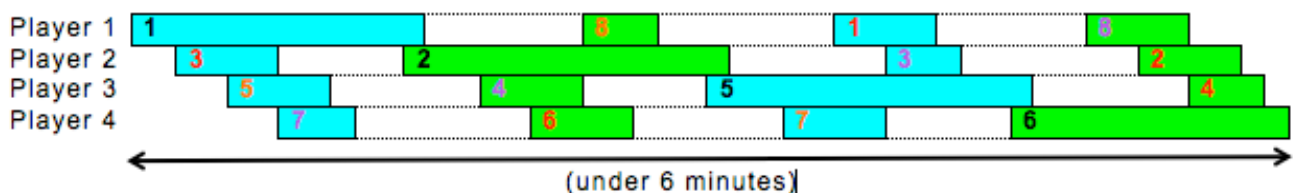


Fig. 6 Timeline for 4 players

For example, player 1 leads the 1st sequence; the sequence of phones is 1 3 5 and 7, where player 2 selects phone 3, player 3 selects phone 5 and player 4 selects phone 7; then player 2 leads the 2nd sequence, where the sequence of phones is 2 4 6 and 8, and so on. After each note event, players return to Select Menu select the alternate phone.

* The template to print markers is available at <http://anaphoria.com/mandala10-markers.html>
Greg Schiemer © 2011

It is possible to have other similar configurations playing e.g. an 8-player configuration playing all 16 phones. In fact, any combination that results in alternating major and minor sequences is allowed.

The size of player configurations is determined by factors such as the number of available phones and the available playing area. These factors must be considered as players need room to swing phones freely without injuring people or damaging phones.

The number of phones used in *Mandala 10* also affects the duration of a performance. The approximate duration of possible configurations are:

Number of Players	Duration
4	> 6 minutes
6	> 9 minutes
8	> 12 minutes
10	> 15 minutes
12	> 18 minutes
14	> 21 minutes
16	> 24 minutes

During performance each player faces towards the centre of the space (Figure 7). This allows players to have eye contact with one another throughout the performance.



Figure 7 Orientation of players in a 4-player configuration

The audience surrounds the performance area either on the same level as the performance or looking down onto it if the venue makes this possible.

PLAYING INSTRUCTIONS

- When the entire ensemble is in position, each player launches the Mandala 10 app on their iPhone and waits for the lead player of their group to start the first sequence.
- Each player swings an iPhone while it sounds and stops when it is silent.

Start of Piece

- Player 1 selects phone icon 1 in the Select menu, touches the black dot on the Play menu to start the sound and then swings the iPhone on the end of the cord.

Sequence

- Other players then enter in canon by selecting the appropriate phone icon, touching any of the coloured dots on the Play menu and then swinging their iPhone.
- Timing of entry is at each player's discretion; order of entry is in strict sequence.
- All players in the group swing their phone until its sound stops.

End of Sequence

- When the first sequence is finished, the next starts, led by Player 2. This is followed by the next, led by Player 3 and so on until all sequences have been played.

End of Piece

- The piece ends when the last phone has stopped swinging at the end of the final sequence.

***MANDALA 10* – a summary of cues for players to memorise**

Followers: - as soon as the player before you starts to swing

- 1 select your phone** (Select Menu)
- 2 touch any coloured dot** (Play menu) to start a short sound
- 3 swing your phone until your sound stops**
- 4 when your phone goes silent, stop swinging and wait** for the next sequence

Lead players: – as the phone of the previous lead player begins to fade

- 5 select your phone** (Select Menu)
- 6 touch the black dot** (Play menu) to start a long sound
- 7 start your sound** before the previous lead player stops swinging
- 8 when your phone goes silent, stop swinging and wait** for the next sequence