

Quad [1982]

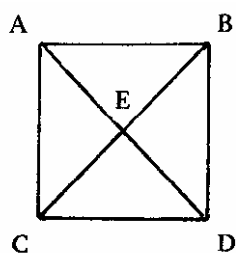
by Samuel Beckett

Quad was first transmitted in Germany by Sueddeutscher Rundfunk in 1982 under the title *Quadrat 1-2*. It was first transmitted by BBC2 on 16 December 1982. First published by Faber and Faber, London, in 1984.

A piece for four players, light and percussion.

The players (1,2, 3,4) pace the given area, each following his particular course.

Area: square. Length of side: 6 paces.



Course 1: AC, CB, BA, AD, DB, BC, CD, DA

Course 2: BA, AD, DB, BC, CD, DA, AC, CR

Course 3: CD, DA, AC, CB, BA, AD, DB, BC

Course 4: DB, BC, CD, DA, AC, CB, BA, AD

1 enters at A, completes his course and is joined by 3. Together they complete their courses and are joined by 4. Together all three complete their courses and are joined by 2. Together all four complete their courses. Exit 1. 2, 3 and 4 continue and complete their courses. Exit 3. 2 and 4 continue and complete their courses. Exit 4. End of 1st series. 2 continues, opening 2nd series, completes his course and is joined by 1. Etc. Unbroken movement.

1st series (as above): 1,13,134,1342,342,42
2nd series: 2,21,214,2143, 143,43
3rd series: 3, 32, 321, 3214, 214, 14
4th series: 4,43,432,4321, 321,21

Four possible solos all given.

Six possible duos all given (two twice).

Four possible trios all given twice.

Without interruption begin repeat and fade out on 1 pacing alone.

Light (2)

Dim on area from above fading out into dark.

Four sources of differently coloured light clustered together.

Each player has his particular light, to be turned on when he enters, kept on while he paces, turned off when he exits.

Say 1 white, 2 yellow, 3 blue, 4 red. Then

1st series: white, white + blue, white + blue + red, white + blue + red + yellow, blue + red + yellow, red + yellow.

2nd series: yellow, yellow + white, yellow + white + red etc.

All possible light combinations given.

Percussion

Four types of percussion, say drum, gong, triangle, wood block.

Each player has his particular percussion, to sound when he enters, continue while he paces, cease when he exits.

Say 1 drum, 2 gong, 3 triangle, 4 wood block.

Then 1st series: drum, drum + triangle, drum + triangle + wood block etc. Same system as for light.

All possible percussion combinations given.

Percussion intermittent in all combinations to allow footsteps alone to be heard at intervals.

Pianissimo throughout.

Percussionists hardly visible in shadow on raised podium at back of set.

Footsteps

Each player has his particular sound.

Costumes

Gowns reaching to ground, cowls hiding faces.

Each player has his particular colour corresponding to his light. 1 white, 2 yellow, 3 blue, 4 red.

All possible costume combinations given.

Players

As alike in build as possible. Short and slight for preference.

Some ballet training desirable. Adolescents a possibility. Sex indifferent.

Camera

Raised frontal. Fixed. Both players and percussionists in frame.

Time (3)

On basis of one pace per second and allowing for time lost at angles and centre approximately 25 minutes.

Problem (4)

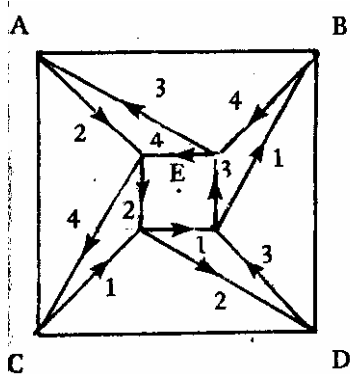
Negotiation of E without rupture of rhythm when three or four players cross paths at this point. Or, if ruptures accepted, how best exploit?

1. This original scenario (*Quad I*) was followed in the Stuttgart production by a variation (*Quad II*).
(5)

2. Abandoned as impracticable. Constant neutral light throughout.

3. Overestimated. *Quad I*, fast tempo. 15' approx. *Quad II*, slow tempo, series 1 only, 5' approx.

4. E supposed a danger zone. Hence deviation. Manoeuvre established at outset by first solo at first diagonal (CB). E.g. series 1:



5. No colour, all four in identical white gowns, no percussion, footsteps only sound, slow tempo, series 1 only.