

R o b e r t N o r m a n d e a u

Figures de rhétorique

(1993-98)

To Jacques Drouin

For tape and piano
13'40"

Robert Normandeau

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Figures of speech translation

These devices act as the articulation of each movement.

Figures of speech

Allegory (Movement 3). A story, poem, or picture that can be interpreted to reveal a hidden meaning, typically a moral or political one : *Pilgrim's Progress is an allegory of the spiritual journey.*

Antithesis (Movement 4). A person or thing that is the direct opposite of someone or something else: *love is the antithesis of selfishness.*

- a contrast or opposition between two things : *the antithesis between occult and rational mentalities.*

- a figure of speech in which an opposition or contrast of ideas is expressed by parallelism of words that are the opposites of, or strongly contrasted with, each other, such as "hatred stirs up strife, but love covers all sins" : *his sermons were full of startling antitheses.*

- (in Hegelian philosophy) the negation of the thesis as the second stage in the process of dialectical reasoning. Compare with **synthesis** .

Apologue (Movement 3). A moral fable, esp. one with animals as characters

Ellipsis (Bridge and Movement 4). The omission from speech or writing of a word or words that are superfluous or able to be understood from contextual clues.

- a set of dots indicating such an omission.

Emphasis (Movement 3). Special importance, value, or prominence given to something : *they placed great emphasis on the individual's freedom | different emphases and viewpoints.*

- stress laid on a word or words to indicate special meaning or particular importance.

- vigor or intensity of expression : *he spoke with emphasis and with complete conviction.*

Hyperbole (Introduction and Movement 1). Exaggerated statements or claims not meant to be taken literally.

Irony (Movement 3). The expression of one's meaning by using language that normally signifies the opposite, typically for humorous or emphatic effect : "*Don't go overboard with the gratitude,*" *he rejoined with heavy irony.* See note at **wit** .

- a state of affairs or an event that seems deliberately contrary to what one expects and is often amusing as a result : [with clause] *the irony is that I thought he could help me.*

- (also **dramatic** or **tragic irony**) a literary technique, originally used in Greek tragedy, by which the full significance of a character's words or actions are clear to the audience or reader although unknown to the character.

Litotes (Movement 1). Ironic understatement in which an affirmative is expressed by the negative of its contrary (e.g., *you won't be sorry,* meaning *you'll be glad*).

Metaphor (Movement 1). A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to an object or action to which it is not literally applicable : "*I had fallen through a trapdoor of depression,*" *said Mark, who was fond of theatrical metaphors | her poetry depends on suggestion and metaphor.*

- a thing regarded as representative or symbolic of something else, esp. something abstract : *the amounts of money being lost by the company were enough to make it a metaphor for an industry that was teetering.*

Ornament (Movement 2). A thing used to adorn something but usually having no practical purpose, esp. a small object such as a figurine.

- a quality or person adding grace, beauty, or honor to something : *the design would be a great*

ornament to the metropolis.

- decoration added to embellish something, esp. a building : *it served more for ornament than for*

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protection.

- **(ornaments)** Music embellishments and decorations, such as trills or grace notes, added to a melody.

Oxymoron (Movement 1). A figure of speech in which apparently contradictory terms appear in conjunction (e.g., *faith unfaithful kept him falsely true*).

Parabola (Movement 1). A simple story used to illustrate a moral or spiritual lesson, as told by Jesus in the Gospels.

Pleonasm (Introduction and Movement 1). The use of more words than are necessary to convey meaning (e.g., *see with one's eyes*), either as a fault of style or for emphasis.

Repetition (Movement 4). The action of repeating something that has already been said or written : *her comments are worthy of repetition* | *a repetition of his reply to the delegation*.

- [often with negative] the recurrence of an action or event : *there was to be no repetition of the interwar years* | *I didn't want a repetition of the scene in my office that morning*.

- a thing repeated : *the geometric repetitions of Islamic art*.

- a training exercise that is repeated, esp. a series of repeated raisings and lowerings of the weight in weight training.

- Music the repeating of a passage or note.

Reluctance (Finale). Unwillingness or disinclination to do something : *she sensed his reluctance to continue*.

Rhyme (Movement 2). correspondence of sound between words or the endings of words, esp. when these are used at the ends of lines of poetry.

- a short poem in which the sound of the word or syllable at the end of each line corresponds with that at the end of another.

- poetry or verse marked by such correspondence of sound : *the clues were written in rhyme*.

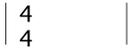
- a word that has the same sound as another.

Tautology (Movement 3). The saying of the same thing twice in different words, generally considered to be a fault of style (e.g., *they arrived one after the other in succession*).

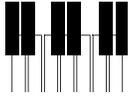
- a phrase or expression in which the same thing is said twice in different words.

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Musical Indications



Bars. The bars, noted essentially in multiple of 1/4 with the quarter note at 60, are indicated as time divisions. They do not articulate the musical lines. At quarter note = 60, each quarter note = 1 second. Instead of indicating all the differences in time signature, the timings only are written on the score. The number of quarter notes can then be deducted from the timings.



D. *Figures de rhétorique* is based on the note D and on the fact that the white and black keys of the keyboard are symmetrically distributed on each side of this note. If there is any doubt in the notes to be chosen, this characteristic may help to make the right choice.



Shows a register inside which the performer can choose to play.



Same indications than for the previous bar.



Shows a rhythmic pattern.



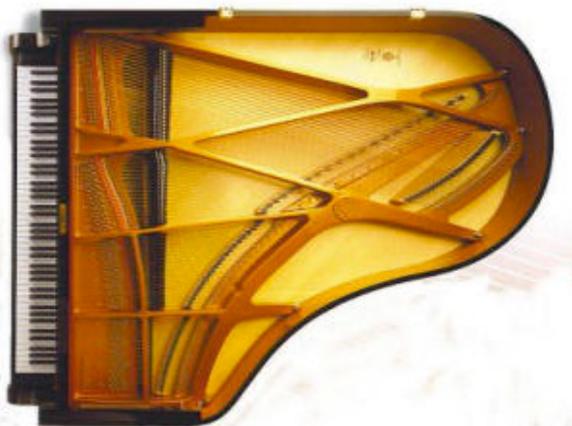
Note or a group of note with a rallentando.



Note or a group of notes with an accelerando.

Piano and speakers setup

Ideally the speakers should be placed as close as possible to the piano and slightly behind it. This way the sound of the tape and the sound of the piano will blend perfectly. The performer can use the Introduction of the piece as a template for the balance of the sound. The tape and the piano should sound perfectly equal. If the speakers are of good quality enough, there is no need to amplify the piano. Amplification may be needed in big concert hall or in the case that the speakers are not good enough to blend with the piano. In such a way the piano should be a little bit «dirtied» by the speakers and will better blend with the tape.



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Figures de rhétorique (1998)

For tape and piano

13'38"

For Jacques Drouin

The title: rhetoric is the art of discourse, and figures of speech are the forms that language takes to articulate that discourse. The figures of speech used here are arranged by type: figures of meaning (hyperbole, litotes, metaphor, oxymoron, parable and pleonasm), of words (alliteration, embellishment and rhyme), of thought (allegory, apologue, bombast, irony and tautology), and of construction (antithesis, ellipsis, repetition and reluctance). These figures determine the relationship between the tape and the piano and constitute the work's four movements.

The sub-title: for tape and piano, intended to emphasize the chronological primacy of one over the other. **Figures de rhétorique** (Figures of Speech) was composed as an acousmatic work, which required work on the material, trials, a dynamic approach, and listening—a great deal of listening. The pianist's score was created during the final stages of composition. It is a conclusion, not a premise. It is also the result of numerous working sessions with the pianist, Jacques Drouin; and as the performer is free to interpret a number of the passages it is his version that is presented here. This work only makes use of sounds made by the original instrument.

Figures de rhétorique was commissioned by the pianist, Jacques Drouin, with financial support from the Canada Council for the Arts. The tape sounds were obtained with the help of processing carried out on SYTER at the Groupe de recherches musicales de Paris in 1994. The final tape was produced at Queen's University in Belfast and in the composer's studio in 1997-98. Thanks to Michael Alcorn and Daniel Teruggi. It was premiered by Jacques Drouin on May 23rd, 1998 at the Chapelle historique du Bon-Pasteur in Montréal where it was recorded later. Thanks to Guy Soucie. **Figures de rhétorique** was awarded the 1st Prize for mixed music at the 1998 international Musica Nova competition (Prague, Czech Republic). The work was released on the compact disc *Figures* (IMED 9944) published by empreintes DIGITALes in 1999.

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Figures de rhétorique

for Jacques Drouin

Robert Normandeau
1993-1998

[01] Introduction

[02] Bridge 1

Tape

Pleonasm Hyperbola Ellipsis

0'00" 0'30" 0'52"

Piano

Fast, syncopated groups alternating with the tape. Hold the last note of a group.
D is predominant, with the other notes turning around its pivot. Same volume as tape.

White keys only.
Fast, warbling.

Varying accentuation

Free

ppp *f*

[03] Movement 1

Tape

Parabola

1'08"

Pno.

In this movement, the tape is tighter than the measure

f

3

23

Tape

Oxymoron

2'30" 2'42"

Pno.

mf

pp

mf

Alternate these five notes: slow, irregular, suspended, long lasting notes

25

Tape

Pleonasm

3'00" 3'05"

Pno.

Low chords together with the tape

etc.

Vary the notes, white keys only

f

28

Tape

Oxymoron
Hyperbole

Pleonasm

3'30"

3'39"

3'45"

Rumbling

Lightly, pointedly, almost detached

15^{ma}

8^{va}

loco

Increasingly irregular

f

dim.

31

Tape

Oxymoron
Pleonasm

Oxymoron

4'00"

4'11"

4'24"

(15)

Feverish, like a trembling

accel./ral.

increasingly deconstructed, dismantled

33

Tape

Litote

Ellipsis

4'30" 4'35" 4'41" 4'46" 4'52" 4'55"

Pno.

In echo with the tape

p

free

[05] Movement 2

39

Tape

Ornament

5'00" 5'10" 5'18"

fast notes, detached

15^{ma}

loco
faster and faster embroidery around the D

mf *ff*

fast notes, detached

f

42

Tape

Allegory
5'33"
dissolving progressively

Allegory Ornament
5'47" 5'59"

Pno.

ff

mf

46

Tape

Allegory Ornament
6'09"

Ornament
6'12"

slow, suspended embroidery

15^{ma}
regular, together with the tape

15^{ma}
punctual embroidery,
getting more and more sparse

Pno.

mf

49

Tape

Rhyme

6'30" 6'36"

(15)

faster etc.

slowing down

Pno.

(15)

faster embroidery

increasingly sparser embroidery

Detailed description: This block contains a musical score for section 49. At the top is a waveform labeled 'Tape' with the number '49' to its left. Below the waveform is a horizontal timeline with a vertical bar at 6'30" and another at 6'36". The word 'Rhyme' is centered above the timeline. Below the timeline are two staves for piano, labeled 'Pno.' on the left. The upper staff has a treble clef and contains a melodic line starting at 6'30" with the annotation 'faster etc.' above it. The lower staff has a treble clef and contains a line with the annotation 'faster embroidery' above it. Further right, the annotation 'increasingly sparser embroidery' is placed above the lower staff. A dashed line with '(15)' is positioned above the first staff. The word 'slowing down' is written above the right side of the piano staves.

[06] Bridge 3

53

Tape

Ornament

Ellipsis

7'00" 7'09" 7'13" 7'17" 7'21" 7'25" 7'29"

(15)

rapid ornaments, almost clusters that gradually vanish

loco

Pno.

(15)

slowing down

delicate embroidery, slow, whose intensity and density decrease in each section

loco

free

Detailed description: This block contains a musical score for section 53. At the top is a waveform labeled 'Tape' with the number '53' to its left. Below the waveform is a horizontal timeline with vertical bars at 7'00", 7'09", 7'13", 7'17", 7'21", 7'25", and 7'29". The word 'Ornament' is centered above the timeline, and 'Ellipsis' is at the far right. Below the timeline are two staves for piano, labeled 'Pno.' on the left. The upper staff has a treble clef and contains a melodic line starting at 7'09" with the annotation 'rapid ornaments, almost clusters that gradually vanish' above it. The lower staff has a treble clef and contains a line with the annotation 'delicate embroidery, slow, whose intensity and density decrease in each section' above it. Further right, the annotation 'loco' is placed above the lower staff. A dashed line with '(15)' is positioned above the first staff. The word 'slowing down' is written above the left side of the piano staves. At the far right, the word 'free' is written above the lower staff.

[07] Movement 3

8

60

Tape

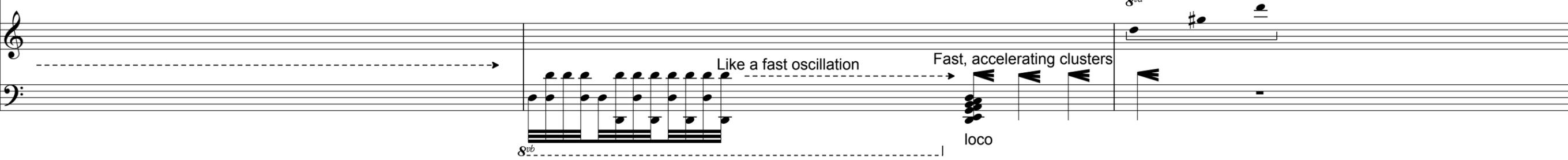


Emphasis

Apologue

7'30" 7'39" 7'51"

Pno.



Like a fast oscillation

Fast, accelerating clusters

loco

8^{vb}

8^{va}

These 3 notes, like fugitive apparitions as if suspended

63

Tape



Emphasis

Allegory Emphasis

8'03" 8'14" 8'25"

Pno.



oscillate between full masses and vacuums

loco

Large, accented, low-frequency masses with accents

ff

p

f

8^{vb}

67

Tape

Emphasis 8'35"

Apologue 8'43"

Apologue Emphasis 8'56"

Pno.

very fast, but with speed variations
loco

ff

f *ff*

f

8^{vb}
mf

Detailed description: This block contains a tape recording and its corresponding musical score for measures 67-70. The tape recording at the top shows a dense, noisy texture that gradually tapers off towards the end of the section. Below the tape is a musical score for piano. The score is divided into three sections: 'Emphasis' (8'35"), 'Apologue' (8'43"), and 'Apologue Emphasis' (8'56"). The 'Emphasis' section features a very fast, loco passage with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic. The 'Apologue' section consists of a series of notes with a crescendo from *f* to *ff*. The 'Apologue Emphasis' section features a fortissimo (*f*) dynamic with a sub-octave (*8^{vb}*) and a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic.

71

Tape

Apologue

Emphasis Irony

9'00"

9'07"

9'18"

9'28"

Pno.

3

3

3

loco

f *ff* *f* *ff*

ff heavy machinery

Detailed description: This block contains a tape recording and its corresponding musical score for measures 71-74. The tape recording at the top shows a dense, noisy texture that gradually tapers off towards the end of the section. Below the tape is a musical score for piano. The score is divided into four sections: 'Apologue' (9'00"-9'07"), 'Emphasis Irony' (9'18"-9'28"), and two sections of '3' (triplets). The 'Apologue' section features a series of notes with a crescendo from *f* to *ff*. The 'Emphasis Irony' section features a series of notes with a crescendo from *f* to *ff*. The final section features a series of notes with a crescendo from *f* to *ff*, described as 'fleeting dense apparitions, coming out of the mass' and 'heavy machinery'.

10

75

Tape

Tautology

Emphasis

9'48"

9'59"

Pno.

sim.

mf ff f mf

77

Tape

Apologue

10'09"

10'20"

flexible tempo, according to the tape

8va

Pno.

p pp mf

8va

[08] Bridge 4

[09] Movement 4

80

Tape

Ellipsis Ellipsis, Antithesis Antithesis

10'30" 10'41" 10'50" 10'57"

(8) ----- loco

Pno.

free ----- *f*

15^{ma}

f

b \sharp b 8^{vb}

84

Tape

Antithesis

11'00" 11'14"

(15) -----

variations, two or four notes symmetrical to the D, interspersed by silences, with suspended endings for each group, alternating with the low notes

mf

black keys only

solo notes, accelerating, spaced out at first, becoming more and more dense

going up progressively

b \sharp b 8^{vb}

(8) -----

86

Tape

Antithesis Repetition

11'30" 11'47" 11'51"

15^{ma}
very fast slowing down...

Pno.

in the register, reaching the upper limit at the end of the bar

loco

89

Tape

Antithesis

12'00" 12'21" 12'28"

(*ts*) ... progressively constellations of rapidly disseminated notes

sim. simile, accelarating, until synchronous with the tape fast rhythmic structure, rapidly alternating between duple and triplet feel

permanent pitches these notes used for accidents in the texture

Pno.



Ellipsis, Reticence

12'43"

Pno.

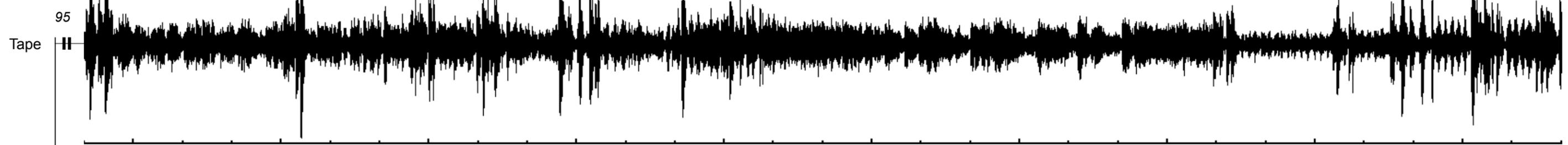
15^{ma}

loco

p

free

A musical score for piano in measure 92. The score is written on a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. The upper staff contains a melodic line with several notes, some marked with a sharp sign. A dashed line labeled "15^{ma}" spans across the upper staff. The lower staff contains a bass line with notes and a "loco" marking. A dynamic marking "*p*" is placed at the end of the measure. A vertical bar line is positioned at the 12'43" time mark. To the right of the bar line, the word "free" is written above a horizontal dashed line that extends across the remaining staves.



13'00"

Pno.

An empty musical score for piano in measure 95, consisting of a grand staff with a treble clef on the upper staff and a bass clef on the lower staff. A horizontal dashed line is drawn across the middle of the staves.

96

Tape

13'30"

Pno.