

Chorégraphié l'épisode pour quatre interprètes

Numéro deux

(Choreographed Episodes for Four Performers, Number Two)

Robert John Magnuson 2017

Approximate duration: 5:45



I wish attribution to include my name, date, and title of composition, as are listed in each score. I request that any public performance of any work I have released be recorded to video with sound, and that recording be forwarded to me (as video file or website URL of video). Please use the 'Contact' form on my website listed below if you have a video of a performance, to arrange how I might receive such.

This is the documentation and choreography details. The score is provided in an associated file.

Overview: This is a "recital with choreography". Whereas a typical recital finds musicians entering the stage, playing the music, and leaving the stage... all participants in this composition will PLAY and ACT. No speaking out loud is undertaken, all is 'mime' or "stage business".

In this score, I've elaborated as much as is reasonable, to detail what the musicians are to do, and how they should 'act'. Please do not fear suggestion you are asked to be an actor; if directions are followed, all will hopefully produce a satisfying experience for the audience, and the players. It might prove beneficial to have a sort of "stage director" during rehearsals, to help the performers with their choreography & actions. That person may be valuable, viewing from the audience's perspective, and action synchronization to the score.

All the 2017 "choreographed episodes" were specifically conceived with the intent to introduced a novel experience for the audience.

All my free compositions (and further info) are found at:
<https://www.gandsnut.net>

Important: from start to finish, musicians (who are to 'act' my listed choreography) **MUST NOT** 'ham things up". Musicians need to know that their essentially innocent authenticity has to be maintained from beginning to end. This is not about playing any joke on the audience. It's about a musical experience that has been enhanced by movement and/or individual or group actions.

We trust this unexpected kind of performance will please the audience.

What you performers are doing makes perfect sense to you... **WE** know in advance the audience will be surprised. But we can't "let on" that we know there will be surprises along the way.

I consider this performance to begin when the first individual walks out on the stage, even if no music is being played.

Participants: Pianist (P), Oboe (O), Bassoon (B), Trumpet (T). The O, B, and T **must** be the **same sex** (M or F), and **P** must be the **opposite sex** (F or M) from O, B and T. The reason for this distinction is made clear, considering the choreography. (If "alternative lifestyle" individuals have interest in this piece, please contact the composer prior to mounting the performance.) Non-formal, sedate clothing is recommended. As would be worn by those in a "pit orchestra". Please arrange by agreement all wear similar shirts, uniform color (black?) and with/without necktie. For ease of reference, 'he' / 'his' will be used here, no matter the sex of the participants.

Equipment: 3 each: standard music stand, typical musician's chair (please, all the same style for stands and chairs). Bench for P (not stool or shortened bench). Prefer a baby-or standard-grand style piano, as opposed to a cabinet grand or spinet). Curved side of piano faces downstage towards audience, center but shifted stage-left to allow space for 3 musicians behind P when seated at piano. The three chairs and stands are placed in a left-right line somewhat downstage of where P is seated, 3 feet apart. Please refer to Figure 1. Music for P (**ONLY**) is already placed on piano. Order of O, B and T seating left-to-right unimportant. Conductor's baton - the longer, the better - will be needed by P at one point. A squat, brightly gaudy vase maximum 6" tall will be placed to the right of the piano's music stand, above the keyboard and cover, into which is left the conductor's baton, handle-end down into vase.

Interactions between P, O, B and T should be done with minimal facial emotion or body language, except where specified in the choreography step at hand.

Choreography is indexed by notations in the score 'C1', 'C2', 'C3', etc., when something should happen, or begin happening, or stop happening. Measures which only contain fermatas are **not typically musical**, and should be interpreted as variable time spaces, in which the choreography (or other directions) are to execute.

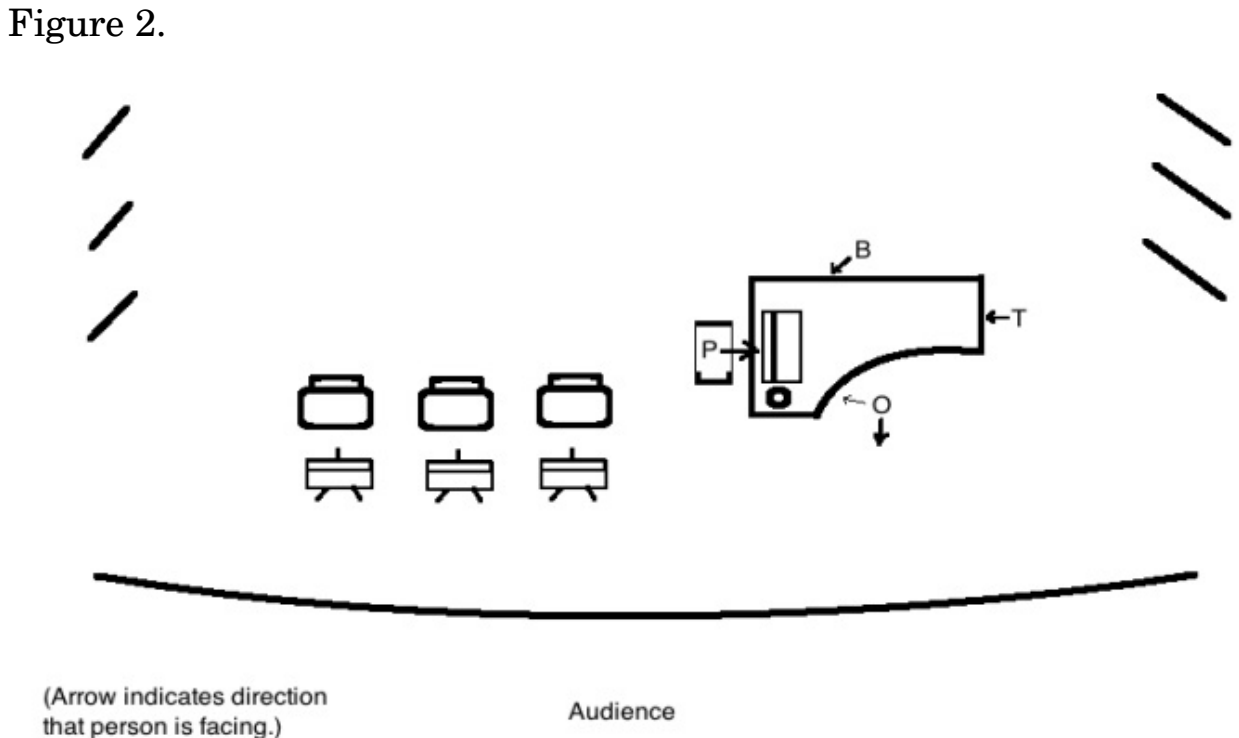
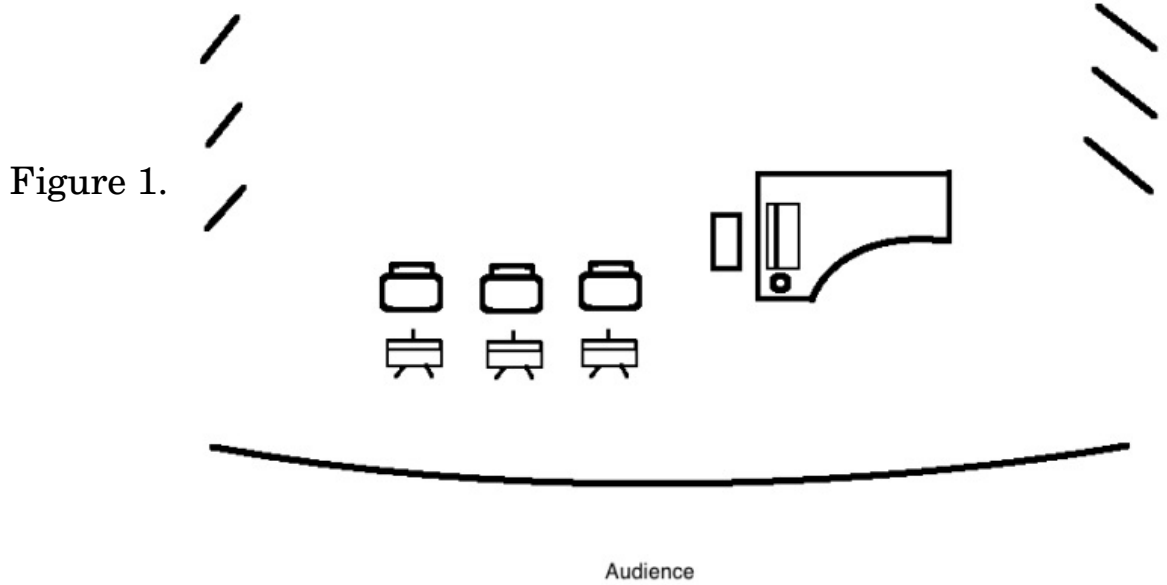
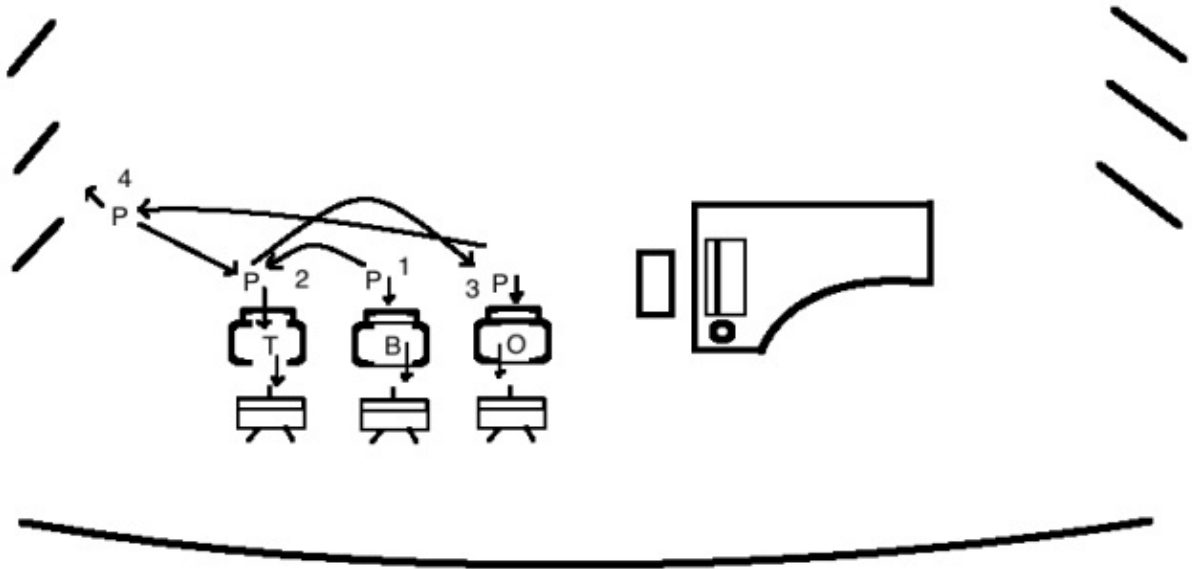


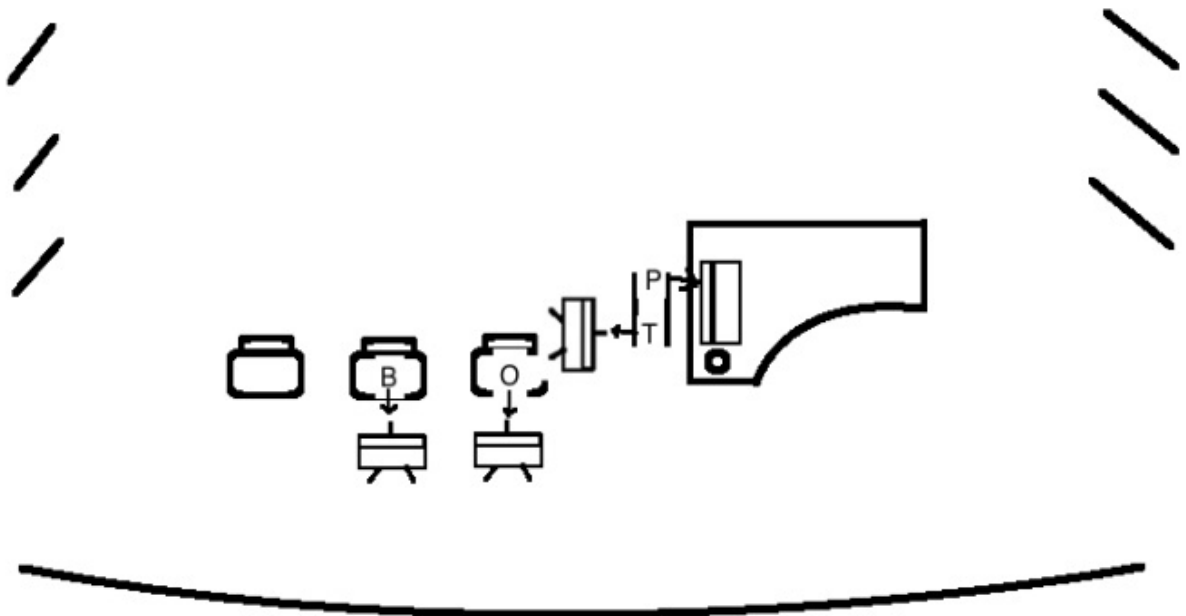
Figure 3.



(Arrow indicates direction
that person is facing.)

Audience

Figure 4.



(Arrow indicates direction
that person is facing.)

Audience

Pre-performance: The piano with is already present center-stage, please refer to Figure 1. The piano's lid is closed. P's music is already on piano's music stand. As said before, a vase with conductor's baton is already present, to the right of the piano music stand. Keyboard cover is open. All entries and exits happen from stage-right.

Performance begins. P takes the stage, goes to piano bench, sits, prepares music, and after appropriate pause, begins to play.

C1: As soon as P is playing, O, B & T (in matching order to where they will sit), walk onto stage with their instruments. Each is carrying, and looking at their music, deep in thought. Attempt should be made by them NOT to notice P playing. No interaction happens between them during entry and preparing to play after having sat. They sit still looking at the music on their stands, but not turning any pages.

C2: With instruments at the ready, and in synchronization, O, B & T turn heads left to - for the first time - see P at the piano as he plays. The gaze in P's direction should be held until the last moment needed to be ready to play their first notes at measure 11. (From this point forward, whenever O or B or T leave their seat, those left behind should take no notice whatsoever of that activity.)

(Note: for many of the following choreography & action instancs, Figures 2, 3 & 4 illustrate my ideas for positions taken by performances at various points. As in, who goes where, facing what direction, in what order.)

C3: B - with instrument in hand - stands, walks behind (upstage) of O & T, to upstage of P and the piano. B stops walking when at the mid-piano location, turns slightly towards P, gazes at P while playing, then after a few moments holds up instrument for P to be able to see, and points to instrument, then self, then instrument, then self, as if identifying who is playing what. P's attention can be distracted very slightly, but must focus on playing. B then lowers instrument and walks back to seat.

C4: B must be seated by this point.

C5: T - with instrument in hand - stands, walks behind (upstage) of O & B, upstage of P and the piano, along the length of the piano to its end opposite the keyboard. T stops when at far end of piano, turns to face towards P who is playing, and stands without touching the piano for a few moments, then holds the trumpet to lips but does not play. T freezes in this pose without any motion EXCEPT 3 times, randomly, does short spurts of valve pressing, 5 or 6 quick presses (still, no sound made). P's attention can be slightly distracted but is focused on playing. After a few moments T lowers instrument and walks back to seat.

C6: T must be seated by this point.

C7: O - with instrument in LEFT hand and close to chest - walks with some urgency to a position in the mid-bend of the piano. O faces directly to audience, leans RIGHT arm on piano, and with consummate coolness, turns HEAD to gaze intently at P who is playing. P's attention can be distracted very slightly but continues with focus on playing. O - still with turned head looking at P - momentarily lifts instrument and rests one end of it on LEFT shoulder. These actions need to be brief but unhurried. O places instrument back to chest and walks back to chair.

C8: O must be seated by this point.

C9: P stands, takes conductor's baton from the vase, and walks to behind B. During the **casual, slower** walk, P taps the palm of the hand not holding the baton - with the middle of the baton, in a manner of preparing to administer punishment, but with no facial or other expressiveness.

(C10: *THIS IS EXPLANATION REGARDING C11.* The music between the repeats, measure 72 - 80, will be played once by B, then T, then O. During their playing, B and O (might) play a few wrong notes, wrong rhythms - even a 'squeak' would be fine. The last note of the passage (marked with accent) is wrong, and should be strongly accented. T should play the passage as mistake-free as possible. When not playing, B, T & O look out at the audience, and make no attempt to turn and look at P behind them. All of C11 serves as P 'evaluating' each of B, T, & O for what will follow.)

C11: With P standing behind B, P reaches with hand/arm holding baton over one of B's shoulders, and pokes a few times at the music on the stand. B nervously nods slight 'yes' and prepares to play. P taps the end of the baton on B's shoulder in a "one, two, one, two, three, four" cue, at which point B plays the passage. The tapping is made with a small-sized motion, providing obvious but gentle beat guidance. P continues the beat-tapping on B's shoulder throughout, sometimes looking at the music, sometimes looking somewhat up into the air.

When done, B continues to look blankly out above the audience. P then moves to behind T, reaches with hand/arm holding baton over one of T's shoulders, pokes a few times at the music. T calmly, confidently nods slight 'yes' and prepares to play. P does the intro and beat-keeping actions as were done with B. T plays the passage.

P then moves to behind O, and repeats the same actions as have just happened with B and T. O is somewhat nervous when nodding 'yes'. O also plays a few wrong notes, wrong rhythmns & squeak, with strong accent at end of passage.

P walks casually away from the 3 musicians, in a somewhat upstage diagonal direction for 5, 6 paces, in deep thought and consideration. As P is walking, B, T and O close their eyes, and make "waiting for the painful end" faces while P is ruminating. After a few moments, P casually walks directly to behind T, and touches each of T's shoulders in a "you are made knight of the realm" motion, whereupon T opens eyes with happy expression, and stands. B & O open their eyes, and with head straight to audience, look once or twice out of the corner of their eyes to see T stand. B & O then sit, looking blankly out to the audience, oblivious to what actions follow.

C12: P walks to piano and places baton back in vase, and seats himself to sit close to one edge of the bench (upstage 1/2), to allow space for T to sit. T follows P, at first without music stand, then stops, realizing the music stand left behind, goes back, carries the music stand. By this time, P is ready to play, T sits on on the remaining bench space, facing the opposite direction of P (back to keys). T adjusts music stand as needed. (T can slightly nudge P to signal ready.) P very softly taps with fingernail on body of piano to indicate tempo and start cue. Both begin playing.

C13: On completion of playing, P and T stand from piano bench, and - with P leading (T carrying instrument), walk single file at first, downstage of O & B. On passing O & B, T catches up so as to walk next to P offstage. They exit.

C14: As P and T have passed O & B, O & B turn to watch them exit. Once they have exited, O & B look at each other for a few moments, and look blankly at their music for a few moments. Very slowly, they raise their instruments to play, but before beginning, they simultaneously take a deep, exaggerated breath with raised shoulders, exhale, then prepare, then play the remaining bars of music. When done, as if with sad effort, both stand, take only their instruments, and walk, single-file, slowly offstage, and exit.

Applause: P, O, T & B all return to stage, single file, to down-stage, center. P, O, T, B individually take a bow. If a "stage manager" participated during rehearsals, he can take the stage, to join the others in bows. All exit.

I am more than happy to answer questions or comments about this piece and its performance as I have laid out. Contact me via my web page 'Contact' form, or through the MuseScore website.