

Performing and Teaching Rose 32 Etudes

by Sean Osborn

Welcome. So happy you are here to share this wonderful music with me. I'd like to thank all the people who put on our virtual ClarinetFest this year, and all the people who helped me with this presentation.

Rose's 32 Etudes are the most famous and studied etudes for the clarinet. Consequently, I won't spend time talking about their well-known history. I love these Etudes for many reasons, but teach them mostly because I think they are the best music for learning phrasing from the Common Practice Period, and tonal phrasing for any Western-derived music.

I recommend using the original edition, currently published by Dover. While I appreciate the 2002 Carl Fisher edition edited by Melvin Warner, there are *significant* changes in dynamics and articulation from all previous published editions and he did not cite his sources. If anyone has further information on this, please contact me. The Dover edition, like the original, has some errors, which I list in this document.

When I teach this book, it seems to me that the first half is set up to introduce one (or a few) musical concept each, and the second half is about combining these ideas. While this is a broad generalization, it informs my approach to teaching them. I've listed the ideas later in this document.

I feel it's important to have the students write in the following for each etude:

- Target tempo (metronome marking)
- Moods
- Dynamics
- Rubato
- Breath Marks
- Fingerings
- Phrase markings (Brackets, Loops, etc.)

During this presentation, I will also talk about ideas I use to phrase, and teach phrasing.

Phrasing

Artistic absolutes only exist in a cultural context.

Toolkit - Volume, Time, Color

Volume - Strong, Soft, Getting Stronger, Getting Softer, Accents, *fp*, *sfz*

Time - Slow, Fast, Slowing, Speeding, Note Length, Rubato

Color - Intense, Washed-out, Faded, Cool, Warm, Harsh, Pure, Vibrato

These are best employed in support of one another.

Three Rules of Tonal Phrasing (modified from D. Stanley Hasty)

- 1) Line goes up - volume goes up, line goes down - volume goes down; OR the reverse
- 2) Tension-release. Emphasize the tension in the harmony
- 3) Change of position. In the same chord, emphasize the first and/or lowest note.

These three rules rely on music theory, which is one of the **two most important guides** to how your phrasing should go. With various combinations of these rules, you can get 99% of your phrasing ideas in tonal music. Often these rules can be in conflict, and which to emphasize more than the other is up to you and what you're trying to say with the music. These rules should be applied on a micro and macro level, even simultaneously, because there should always be many layers of music happening at once.

#1 is pretty self-explanatory.

#2 is mostly for cadences, where you emphasize the tension (usually a V chord), and diminuendo the release (usually the tonic). These diminuendos must be prepared with crescendos in most cases, and the point at which they peak is what I call "the point of maximum tension." I use maximum because phrases often have more than one point of tension.

#3 is very much like #2, except that it deals with portions of phrases that are single chords/arpeggios. For example, given a slurred one-octave ascending leap in a melodic phrase, rule #3 would have you stretching and playing the lower note louder than the upper note that follows.

Moods

The purpose of music is communication.

Nearly all of the time, that communication is an emotion, or mood. In Rose, there's a LOT of leeway for what is the "right" mood (for example, 26 is not happy and content), so it's not as important that you pick the "right" mood so much as that you pick ANY mood. Experiment!, just don't contradict anything Rose wrote (no playing *p* when he writes *f*)

If you're having trouble, you can use opposites and categories to experiment.

Joyful			HAPPY		Content		
Ecstatic	Exuberant	Laughing	Loving				
			Romantic	Friendship	Blissful		
					Relaxed	Sleepy	
Angry			SAD		Mysterious		
Seething	Furious		Melancholy				
			Depressed	Sobbing	Creepy	Secretive	Sneaking

The more specific the player gets, the more specific experience the audience will have.

Moods are one of the **two most important guides** to how your phrasing is should go. For example, if your goal is to portray sleepy, you're not likely to play strongly, intensely, and fast. Moods tell you which of your three tools to use, and how. When experimenting, reserve part of your brain to observe what and how you play, to decide which tool to modify the next time to make your mood-portrayal better.

When interpreting a piece, I personally find it best to start broad and move narrow. What is the character of the piece? Then what are the characters of the sections?, phrases? sub-phrases?, and finally nuance - the smallest portion of phrasing.

Style

Knowing the time period and place of the composer and the style of music, song, or dance the piece is based on is critical to creating a unique flavor for each piece. Research and listening to various styles is critical! For example, it's helpful to know what a Menuet or Polonaise or Sarabande is, and not to play a Ländler like a Waltz. It's important to know that French music often ends the phrase on the final beat of the bar, or that Italian rubato often has a little "hitch" in it. Knowing the composer's life, influences, and other works will also help provide context for your musical ideas and strengthen your voice.

Song or Dance? - approach them differently.

SONG - irregular rhythm
often: slower, lyrical, smoother

DANCE - regular rhythm
often: faster, rhythmical, angular/leaping

Brackets and Loops

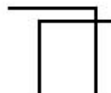
Brackets (called "Hasty brackets" at Eastman, after D. Stanley Hasty) show the phrase breaks.

Generally, music wants forward motion, so the default nuance for any group of notes is:

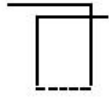


Etudes 5 and 6 are great for learning about how to apply brackets.

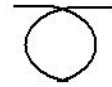
Sometimes a single note is both the end of one phrase and the beginning of another phrase. You can show this with overlapping brackets:



If you connect the bottom:

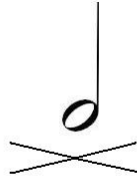


you get my shorthand, a loop:

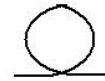


This loop is executed thusly:

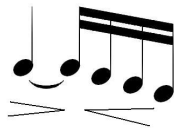
Better is to have your color and volume *crescendo* and *diminuendo* nadir at different times.



The other loop is one based on the sound that a looping roller-coaster makes, and it can give you a wonderful direction change, usually on ties or dotted-rhythms.



Executed thusly:



Rose Etude Ideas, first half.

No. 1 - this is more of a broad introduction to the concepts that will follow rather than focusing on one issue. The first phrase is a great way to introduce *Rule 1*. Measure 16 is great for *Rule 2*, and measure 8 is great for *Rule 3*. Concepts that may be new here include: accenting under a slur, turns, and side-key trills.

No. 2 - Rule 1. You can demonstrate it with both variations of the rule in the first phrase - either works just as well. Also great for writing in dynamics with no suggestions from the composer.

No. 3 - Rhythmic challenges with all the different rhythmic values. Long accents (m. 23).

No. 4 - Articulation and speed. Making great variation *within* dynamics - in this case, *p*.

No. 5 - Brackets and Loops. Adagio *staccato*.

No. 6 - Inherent Nuance in Articulation. Doing repeated sections differently.

No. 7 - Eingangs. Nested articulations.

Grace notes - Three step process:

- 1) Play passage without grace notes.
- 2) Play without grace notes, but imagine them in head.
- 3) Play with grace notes.

No. 8 - The bracket every group of notes has

No. 9 - Dotted eighth and sixteenth-note as a martial rhythm. Mixing song and dance. "Carrot" accents. Subito.

No. 10 - Two-voices with one instrument (m. 9-12).

No. 11 - Off-beat accents for expression. Limitless contrast.

No. 12 - Less about one idea. Combining Rules and Moods in phrasing.

No. 13 - False endings.

No. 14 - Dance styles, in this case, a Polonaise (Wikipedia: Polacca = Naval Vessel). Hemiolas.

No. 15 - Cadenzas. Extreme rubato.

No. 16 - Mordents

I play Backun MoBa clarinets, a Dan Johnston modified H3 mouthpiece, a Mitchell Lure ligature with cork, and make my own reeds.

Winner of the 2017-18 American Prize in Instrumental Performance, composer and clarinetist **Sean Osborn** has traveled the world as soloist, chamber musician, and during his eleven years with the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra. He has also appeared as guest principal with the New York Philharmonic, Pittsburgh Symphony, Seattle Symphony, and others. The New York Times dubbed him "...an excellent clarinetist," the Boston Globe called him "...a miracle," and Gramophone "...a master." Former faculty of the University of Washington and others, collaborators include James Ehnes, Anne-Marie McDermott, Donald Weilerstein, Richard O'Neill, Milan Turkovic, Richard Stoltzman, members of the Tokyo, Colorado, Calder, Rimsky-Korsakov, and St. Lawrence Quartets. He has made dozens of recordings, appeared on over 100 movie soundtracks, and premiered the works of many, including Philip Glass, John Adams, John Corigliano, and Jennifer Higdon, as well as being an award-winning composer in his own right. He is the only person to win both the International Clarinet Association Performance and Composition Competitions. He has a significant online presence, with educational videos and essays routinely referenced in industry journals. www.osbornmusic.com

Addenda

The original edition has some obvious errors, which I will list here. Some few have been corrected in later editions, including Dover's. Please contact me if you have a different opinion or further information.

No. 1 - M. 27, beat three - add slur.

No. 2 - M. 9 - last note is B, not A. m. 27 and 28 - articulation should match m. 29 and 30. M. 29 - last note is an eighth-note, not a quarter-note. *In my opinion: there should be one slur from the low A in m. 17 through to the throat A in m. 21 - the original's articulation is ambiguous, this is my solution. Also, I think the end of m. 32 should slur to the downbeat of m. 33.*

No. 3 - no mistakes

No. 4 - M. 21, beat four, second note - should be throat A, not long C. M. 24, beat two - slur four notes, not three.

No. 5 - no mistakes

No. 6 - M. 45, 46, 47- beat one - articulation should be three-slurred, one-tongued (matching m. 13-15).

No. 7 - M. 25 - *mf* should begin on the long B in m. 24. M. 39, beat two - natural sign should be on the G (not A), making G-natural. *In my opinion: the groups of four grace-notes in m. 59, 67, and 69 should all slur into their respective downbeats.*

No. 8 - no mistakes

No. 9 - M. 48, beat three, second note - should be A (not B-flat).

No. 10 - M. 40, beat one - slur first two notes only, beat two - remove slur.

No. 11 - no mistakes

No. 12 - M. 6, beat one - articulation should be tongue-one, slur-two, tongue-one (matching beat one of m. 5). M. 8, beat two - articulation should be slur-two, tongue-two (matching beat one). M. 27, beat three - final two notes should be slurred together.

No. 13 - M. 5, beat one - slur all six notes, but not into beat two (matching m. 6).

No. 14 - M. 3, beat three - slur first three notes (matching m. 27). M. 4 - slur from trill into the D (not the C-sharp) on beat three. M. 9, beat two into three - slur from the D-sharp to the F-sharp (matching m. 11). M. 20 - slur from the G in beat one to the top-line F-sharp in beat two. M. 29, beat three - slur-three, tongue-one (matching m. 1). M. 31, beat three - slur-three, tongue-one (matching m.15). M. 1 and 47 - this dal Segno makes no sense on its own, and should be

omitted.

No. 15 - M. 25 - slur entire measure (matching m. 27).

No. 16 - M. 26, beat one - slur-two, tongue-two (matching m. 25) M. 33, first beat - slur-two, slur-two (matching m. 1) *In my opinion: M. 13, last note - F-sharp, not E.*

No. 17 - M. 12, beat four - under the large slur, there should be a short slur from the tied B-flat to the A (matching beat two). M. 20 - the turn should have a natural underneath, making the turn have B-natural, not B-flat.

No. 18 - M. 1 and 2 - slur all two measures together (matching m. 9-10). M. 3 to 4 - should slur over the barline (matching m. 11 to 12). M. 15 - one slur over the whole measure (matching m. 7). M. 23, beat one - fourth note should be F-sharp. M. 31, beat two - first note should be E-natural. M. 43, beat two - this ambiguous slur should end at the measure and not go to the G in m. 44.

No. 19 - M. 13 to 14 - slur over barline. M. 24 to 25 - break slur over barline (matching 22 to 23). M. 33 to 34 - break slur over barline (matching m. 1 to 2).

No. 20 - Time Signature should be 3/8, not 3/4. M. 19 - third note should be throat B-flat, fourth note should go up to E-flat (matching M. 17, 18, and 20).

No. 21 - M. 6 to 7 - omit the slur showing at the beginning of the line. M. 22 - "and" of beat two should slur to beat three (matching the rest of the measure). M. 24, beat two - slur should begin on the E, not the G (matching beat four). M. 25, beat three - slur entire beat. M. 30 - turn should have a sharp underneath, making the turn have B-sharp, not B-natural.

No. 22 - no mistakes

No. 23 - M. 22, beat four - last note should be F. *In my opinion: both m. 4 and 8 - the arpeggios should slur into the quarter-notes on beat three.*

No. 24 - M. 14, beat one - no slur (matching m. 13 and 15). M. 33 and 34, beats one - slur G to A (matching m. 1).

No. 25 - M. 38, big beat two - slur whole beat, from C to D.

No. 26 - M. 8, beat two - no slur C-sharp to D (matching m. 4). M. 9-10 - these ambiguously marked slurs should end on downbeats. For example the first slur should end on the "thumb" F on beat three downbeat. The next two slurs should end the same way. Do not slur into the downbeat of m. 11. M. 19 - two two-beat slurs: C to C, then B-natural to G. M. 26 - the slur from m. 25 ends on the first note, then a new slur starts on the high A-flat (matching much of the rest of the etude). M. 29, beat one - slur four notes from the high B-natural, ending on the D on beat two. *In my opinion: M. 11 to 12 - slur across the barline.*

No. 27 - M. 35, beat two to three - add tie.

No. 28 - M. 2 - slur stops before barline (matching m. 48). M. 5 and 51 - slur starts on the first C-sharp ("and" of beat one). M. 6 - slur starts on the first C-sharp (matching m. 52). M. 20 - slur continues from m. 19 into downbeat of 2, then breaks, beginning a new five-note slur starting on the high A. M. 29 - slur continues from m. 28, then breaks, beginning a new five-note slur starting on the E ("and" of beat one). M. 57 to 58 - slur across barline for four notes.

No. 29 - no mistakes

No. 30 - no mistakes

No. 31 - M. 7 and 8 - these ambiguously marked slurs should encompass the whole measure. M. 13 - the turn should have a natural underneath, making the turn have G-natural, not G-flat. M. 22, beat four - grace note should be C (matching m. 26).

No. 32 - M. 20, beat two - Slur from low F to A only, articulate C (matches beat three). M. 25, beat one - slur-two, tongue-two (matches the rest of the passage). M. 33, beat one - slur from second note (long C) to the E-flat on beat two (matching m. 34).

Liner Notes for my 2007 CD

Cyrille Rose (1830-1903) was one of the most respected clarinet performers of the nineteenth century. A student of Hyacinthe Klosé at the Paris Conservatoire, he won the first prize in clarinet in 1847. Rose taught at the Conservatoire from 1876 to 1900. From 1857 to 1891, he served as clarinetist at the Paris Opera. A highly respected professor renowned especially for his insistence on careful phrasing, many of his students went on to win first prizes. Today, Rose is remembered for his series of clarinet etudes and studies, most of them arrangements of earlier works for other instruments. His best-known collection is the 32 Etudes for Clarinet. Rose based all but one of these studies on Franz Wilhelm Ferling's 48 Etudes for Oboe, Op. 31. He generally preserved the outline of Ferling's original etude, but transposed the key and made alterations at times in the melody, rhythm, and articulations to render the etudes stylistically idiomatic for the clarinet: his goal was to develop control and good phrasing in the performer. In two etudes, nos. 16 and 20, Rose incorporated passages from Johann Sebastian Bach's solo violin works.

Franz Wilhelm Ferling (1796-1874) started out as a clarinetist himself, but became a successful oboist, filling first chair at the Hoftheaters in Brunswick from 1815 to 1859. His 48 Etudes for the Oboe consist of one fast and one slow etude in every key. Rose's 32 are in the written keys of C, G, F, D, B-flat, A, E-flat, E, B, and D-flat major, plus a, e, d, b, g, and c minor. Of course, when played on a B-flat clarinet, they sound a full step lower than written - for example, the first etude, written in C, sounds in B-flat.

Many of the etudes seem to have corresponding relationships to other etudes in the set, which I will point out, along with some qualities that are important or unique about each etude. I list their written key, followed by the etude by Ferling from which they are derived. Rose was sparse with his dynamic markings, especially in the fast etudes - many of which have no markings at all. This plus their remarkable compositional strength leave many valid interpretations possible. My performances and thoughts about them represent only **one** of many possibilities.

1. C major - Andante cantabile (No. 5 in G major, Andante cantabile) - Probably the most performed and studied, because it's the first. Tender expression and quiet moments punctuated by short storms of emotion. It is similar to No. 21.

2. C major - Allegro (No. 6 in G major, Allegretto scherzo) - The shortest etude. I have employed a type of phrasing where the dynamic arc is generally determined by the relative altitude of the pitch at hand. It is related to No. 28 in character, meter, and tempo.

3. a minor - Andante sostenuto (No. 7 in e minor, Largo) - A bridge between the less tumultuous No. 1, and the gigantic No. 5.

4. a minor - Allegro (No. 8 in e minor, Allegro moderato con fuoco) - Mostly about tonguing, this is one of the faster etudes. It is also interesting that the bulk of the etude is *piano* with *forte* only in the coda.

5. G major - Adagio (No. 1 in C major, Adagio con espressione) - The longest etude, this one contains some of the greatest variety in the set, with very long phrases, short fragments, legato, staccato, and a passage that sounds like an accompaniment with no tune.

6. G major - Allegro (No. 2 in C major, Moderato risoluto) - All about nuance related to the many different articulations which give it life. For example, the first four bars are all the same chord, but it isn't dull or without variety. This etude is one of five with a repeated section. It is somewhat related to No. 8 in mood.

7. e minor - Allegretto (No. 3 in a minor, Andantino) - Similar to No. 25, this Siciliana contains dance elements and very long crescendos.

8. e minor - Allegro (No. 4 in a minor, Allegro moderato) - Related to No. 6, it begins with the opposite articulation of No. 6. It contains a repeated section, and one of the hardest passages in the set, owing to the difficulty of playing octaves on an instrument that overblows and octave-and-a-half.

9. F major - Moderato assai (No. 21 in A major, Maestoso) - The fastest "slow" etude, it is also part of the most closely related pair in the set, its counterpart being No. 10. This etude seems to contain echos of the first movement of Weber's second clarinet concerto.

10. F major - Allegro (No. 22 in A major, Allegro Moderato) - Sounding best at nearly the same tempo as the previous etude, this "dancy" etude has elements of singing in it.

11. d minor - Larghetto (No. 27 in c minor - Largo lagrimoso) - This beloved etude is one of the most expressive with fast notes, very long fermatas, and the largest range of any etude save one. It also contains Rose's only use of *fortissimo* in the whole set.

12. d minor - Allegro moderato (No. 16 in b minor - Allegretto risoluto) - Essentially three phrases long, although the third is one of Rose's hallmark run-on phrases, this etude treads water in the mid-range of the clarinet until it bursts forth, heading to one extreme end or another. It is similar to No. 24.

13. D major - Adagio non troppo (No. 9 in F major - Adagio con espressione) - Another long etude, this one brings to mind No. 5, which also contains three statements of the first theme. This etude demands total control at its sublime ending, just when one is most fatigued.

14. D major - Tempo di Polacca (No. 10 in F major - Tempo di Polacca) - Unequivocally a dance, this bouncy etude is often published with an ambiguous *dal Segno* which I have omitted.

15. b minor - Adagio (No. 31 in c-sharp minor - Adagio pietoso) - This forlorn, depressed, and desperately lonely etude remains one of my favorites, and is a great recital piece.

16. b minor - Allegretto (No. 20. in g minor - Allegretto) - This short, neo-baroque etude contains some difficult ornaments and elements of J. S. Bach.

17. B-flat major - Adagio cantabile (No. 17 in B-flat major - Adagio cantabile) - The beautifully sighing opening theme gives way to a seemingly unrelated, entirely Rose-composed, g minor middle section before calmly returning to the pastoral nature of the opening.

18. B-flat major - Allegro vivace (No. 18 in B-flat major - Vivace) - Perhaps the fastest etude, and certainly one of the most difficult, this tumbling, whirling etude contains some of the longest phrases of the fast etudes.

19. g minor - Adagio (No. 35 in f minor - Andante con gravita) - This strange etude, with its fragmented phrases, took me a while to figure out but quickly became one of my favorites. Its extremes of expression bring to mind No. 11. Though there is no *fortissimo* it does utilize the greatest range of pitches of any etude in this set.

20. g minor - Allegro vivace (No. 32 in c-sharp minor - Allegretto) - This 3/8 etude (marked 3/4 in some editions!) contains the possibility of performing it in two or three, based on how one clips or doesn't clip the third note of each measure. The beginning of the repeated section is clearly in three, but I believe that doesn't necessarily mean the rest is. For this recording, though, I have chosen to play in three throughout.

21. A major - Andante cantabile (No. 33 in A-flat major - Adagio) - This easy-going etude, with its graceful ornaments and untroubled nature, is related to No. 1.

22. A major - Allegro moderato (original by C. Rose) - This repetitive etude is difficult to find

music in, and probably has more different possibilities for phrasing than any other. From a technical standpoint, deciding how consistently to play each off beat in order to remain uniform, or how inconsistently to play it for the sake of the music remains its most troubling intellectual challenge.

23. E-flat major - Andante con moto - Adagio (No. 41 in D-flat major - Adagio) - Rose took Ferling's *de facto* introduction and turned it into a real one for this expressive, but never tense, etude.

24. E-flat major - Allegro moderato (No. 30 in E major - Allegro poco moderato) - Related to No. 12 in tempo, articulation, and three-phrase length, this easy-going etude bears no resemblance to No. 12's mood. It does, however, contain another set of cumbersome octaves, and is one of the shortest of the set.

25. c minor - Andante con moto (No. 11 in d minor - Larghetto) - Related to No. 7, this etude reminds me of a British sea ballad with its lilting lamentations.

26. c minor - Allegro furioso (No. 12 in d minor - Allegro furioso) - Along with No. 18 the fastest in the set, this is certainly the most storm-tossed etude, with wild leaps and sweeping chromatic climbs followed by arpeggiated falls.

27. E major - Andante (No. 29 in E major - Andante amabile) - Somewhat like No. 1 and 21, this short, amiable etude ends as softly as the last verse of a lullaby whispered to a sleeping babe.

28. E major - Allegro (No. 42 in D-flat major - Poco allegretto) - This four phrase etude is closely related to No. 2, though this key makes for considerably more slipping around the clarinet.

29. B major - Andante (No. 13 in D major - Andante con gusto) - In triple meter (9/8), this lilting, waltz-like etude is a exercise in portraying awkward fingerings as if they were the easiest thing on the clarinet, never letting them impact the music in any negative way.

30. B major - Allegretto (No. 14 in D major - Scherzo) - With every note staccato, this etude is reminiscent of No. 22's potential monotony. Approaching it as a blank slate ready for any interpreter's idea, I have utilized extensive rubato to point out the phrases. Consistent staccato remains one of this etude's most difficult challenges.

31. D-flat major - Adagio (No. 25 in E-flat major - Adagio con espressione) - This apotheosis of romance shares its first three notes in common with No. 15. But where 15 plumbs the depths of passion, this etude explores the heights of passion from declamatory to intimate.

32. D-flat major - Allegro moderato (No. 26 in E-flat major - Allegro con brio) - The final etude in the set is in many ways a culmination, though probably not intentionally so. It is the most forward looking harmonically, contains a great variety of articulations, and uses one of the widest ranges of any etude. Elements of Nos. 4, 6, 8, 12, 19, 26, and 30 are used. It also contains

Rose's characteristic truncated and run-on phrases, ending with a run-on that takes three lung-fulls to perform.

Program notes Melvin Warner, Brian Hart, and Sean Osborn

This CD was made possible by a grant from Jack Straw Productions. It was recorded in the summer of 2006 at Jack Straw Studios, Seattle, WA using two Royer 121 ribbon microphones. The engineer was Moe Provencher, and the editor was Sean Osborn.

Sean would like to thank Moe and all the people at Jack Straw; Jennifer Nelson for her friendship, her artistry, and her ears; and all the people I studied Rose with, particularly Krina Allison who introduced them to me.