

Christopher Best

Fragilities

for alto flute (doubling bass flute) and
violoncello

2013











INTRODUCTION




Fragilities was commissioned by William Sleath and Rohan de Saram through the generosity of The Britten Pears Foundation. The first performance took place at the Performance Centre, Falmouth University on November 27th 2014.

KEY TO SYMBOLS





Common:

	A quarter tone sharp and flat (e.g. 11 th natural harmonic)
	A shade sharper (around 30 cents)
	A shade flatter (around 30 cents, e.g. 7 th natural harmonic)
s.v.	Senza vibrato
p.v.	Poco vibrato
s.v.----->p.v.	Move gradually from s.v. to p.v.
	Crescendo from nothing, diminuendo to nothing. Care should be taken not to rush from the borders of audibility
	Continue according to the previous boxed instruction
	Note head gives pitch only (though white notes are longer than black). Duration is governed by the length of the beam, sometimes also indicated by the number of seconds, the length of a breath, the length of a bow, etc.
	(In the Senza tempo section) Comma = short break, double slash = medium break, fermata = longer or unspecified break (usually determined by the next cue)
	Longer than standard fermata

Flute:

[t] [d] etc.	Consonant added to attack
t.s.	Timbral substitution (alternative fingering of pitch). Resultant small changes in intonation should not be corrected
	Flautist should give cue to the cellist
	Wait briefly after being cued (waiting time sometimes shown)
	Flute takes cue from cello
pre-bend down a semitone	Angle the mouthpiece prior to playing in order to achieve notes that would otherwise be outside the instrument's range

Cello:

	Cellist should cue the flautist
	Cello takes cue from flute
	Wait briefly after being cued (waiting time sometimes shown)
	Increase bow pressure momentarily (accent)
(D-4) etc.	Play the fourth natural harmonic on the D string (diamond headed note shown is sounding pitch)

PAGE TURNS

The score should be printed on A3 paper (or if an A3 printer is unavailable, printed on A4 and enlarged to A3 on a photocopier) as a series of separate sheets (not stapled) in landscape format, each holding two consecutive pages of score. Each player should use two music stands that allow two A3 sheets to sit side by side. The first A3 sheet (score page 1) should be placed on the left; all the others in order on the right. The first three score pages are therefore visible to the players at the start. Where indicated on the score, the player should slide the right hand A3 sheet silently over to the left, thereby covering the music already played and revealing the next two score pages on the right. This should avoid any need for having to take music off the stands or employ page turners. Pages may be folded down the middle to form a booklet and stored inside the title sheet.

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Free tempo

Alto Flute

Violoncello

10-15" 6-8" crossfade with cello

s.v. p.v. s.v. breath tone (echo)

with practice mute sul D sul A

crossfade with flute length of bow (l.o.b.)

mp *mf* (*p*)

A. Fl.

Vc.

normal tone 15-20" crossfade with cello

s.v. p.v. s.v. sul pont. (echo)

l.o.b. crossfade with flute

sul D sul A

mp *mf* (*p*)

A. Fl.

Vc.

8-13" 6-8" crossfade with cello

s.v. p.v. s.v. (s.v.)

l.o.b. crossfade with flute

sul D sul A

mp *mf* (*p*)

A. Fl.

Vc.

p.v. slow timbral changes (retake breath as needed) sim. t.s. t.s. t.s. t.s.

mp *pp* *mp* (*mp*)

sul D + sul G sul D + sul G

mute off

Adagio ♩ = ca.52

Flz. 3 pre-bend down a semitone loco 4:3 t.s. L.S. L.S.

A. Fl. *mp* marc. sim.

Vc. sul tasto *mp* marc. sim. *mf*

calando (tempo rubato) Free tempo

whistle tones (on G₆) sim (on A₅)

increase breath tone breath only

colla parte poco a poco sul pont. bow the bridge (white noise only)

veiled harmonics (bow almost over the bridge)

eliss. eliss. eliss.

A. Fl. *p* dim *pp* *ppp*

Vc. *p* subito *pp* *ppp*

sul A (harms 4-24)

A. Fl. s.v. [t] slow pulsing (vol. only - constant pitch and speed) To bass flute

Vc. normal bow position etc. V V

fff:pp *mf*

fff *mf*

sul D + L.H. Pizz.

Add G, and raise pitch on G string to create slow beating against open D string

Hold beating steady

raise further (accel beating) towards quarter tone

B. Fl. poco accel poco rall

Vc. c.2" c.5" c.3" c.1"

mp *mf*

B. Fl. s.v. [t] as before slide pages 2/3 silently across

Vc. *fff* *mf*

sul A/D + L.H. Pizz.

raise pitch on D string to create slow beating against open A string (sul A/D)

Hold beating steady

raise pitch on D string further (accel beating) towards quarter tone

B. Fl. poco accel poco rall molto rall [d]

Vc. c.2" c.5" c.3" c.1" free rhythm

mp *mf*

sing and play *mf*

B Andante ♩ = ca.72

B. Fl. *mp* *p* (behind cello)

Vc. *mp* *p* (behind cello)

slide pages 2/3 silently across

solo dolore (poco espress)

mf

B. Fl. poco accel poco rall

Vc. sul D

mp *mf*

B. Fl.

voice

Vc.

B. Fl.

voice

Vc.

slowly lower flute
away from lips
rall.

pp

dreamlike

C Meno mosso ♩ = ca.60

B. Fl.

voice

Vc.

p

with practice mute

pp *p = flute+voice*

B. Fl.

voice

Vc.

poco rall.

ossia 8^{va}

D Adagio rubato ♩ = ca.56

slide pages 4/5 silently across

B. Fl.

colla parte

Vc.

(D-3) (D-8)

p

(D-8)

(G-7)

(D-7)

(G-6)

B. Fl.

Vc.

(D-7/G-6)

(D-16)

p sempre

L.H. Pull off Pizz.

pp

pp sempre

sim.

B. Fl.

Vc.

(8)

(D-14)

(D-13)

(G-12)

(G-14)

E Meno Mosso

♩ = ca.46

Adagio rubato come sopra

♩ = ca.56

B. Fl.

Flz

p

Vc.

(8)

(D-12)

(G-10)

slide pages 4/5 silently across

(D-11)

Meno Mosso ♩ = ca.46 Adagio rubato ♩ = ca.56
colla parte

B. Fl.

Vc.

slide pages 6/7 silently across

Meno Mosso ♩ = ca.46

B. Fl.

Vc.

Adagio rubato ♩ = ca.56
colla parte

B. Fl.

Vc.

Meno Mosso ♩ = ca.46

Flz

B. Fl.

Vc.

F Lento ♩ = ca.30 normale s.v.

B. Fl.

Vc.

L.H. Pizz. *pp* sempre

B. Fl.

Vc.

B. Fl.

Vc.

vib. normale

B. Fl.

Vc.

B. Fl.

Vc.

slow pulsing (vol. only - constant pitch and speed) allow harmonics to die with fade out

A. Fl.

Vc.

Quasi cadenza ♩ = ca.56

raise further (accel beating) to reach quarter tone

A. Fl.

Vc.

A. Fl.

Vc.

A. Fl.

Vc.

A. Fl.

Vc.

H Adagio ♩ = ca.40 (accomp sempre più mosso)

A. Fl.

Vc.

A. Fl. (solo) *mp*

Vc. slide pages 10/11 silently across

(*p sempre*)

increasing white noise

A. Fl. *mp*

Vc. *pp* = cello

Voice *pp* = cello + flute

I free tempo

increasing breath tone

breath tone

breath only c.7"

(*p sempre*)

almost directly over bridge

dampen strings with several fingers of left hand ('white' sound only)

V as required

add vocal imitation of cello sound*

use voice to imitate combined timbre of flute and cello sounds

marcato ma sempre pp

A. Fl. slide pages 10/11 silently across

Vc. cross string pairs ad lib

Voice

like inter-station noise on a VHF radio c.15-20"

increase bow movement (all on-string) to create occasional rhythmic episodes e.g. or etc.

like interference between distant carrier waves

* mouth/tongue shape somewhere between an 'FFF' sound and when blowing out a candle

A. Fl. Flute a tempo ♩ = ca.40

Vc. back to steady bowing (still virtually over bridge)

Voice imitate rhythms and timbre of cello

pp = cello

A. Fl. like distant music faintly heard through inter-station noise

Vc. imitate cello sound with whistle tones (on D) sim (on A)

Voice

Flute free tempo

ppp

L.H. lightly damping and moving up and down strings (upper half of strings only). R.H still bowing virtually on bridge (borderline between 'white' sound and harmonics)

ghost notes

gliss. gliss. gliss. etc.

sul D/G sul A/D sul A

A. Fl. Flute a tempo Flute free tempo normale s.v.

Vc. move bow gradually to bridge (from pitch to white noise)

Voice *pp* = flute

breath only

breath tone

add Flz.

pp = cello tones

sul D

sul D/G sul A/D sul A

l.o.b. p.v. s.v.

slide pages 12/13 quickly yet silently across

J A tempo (♩ = ca.40) poco accel. Più mosso

A. Fl. *mf*

Vc. *mf* non legato

A. Fl. *espress.* solo

Vc.

A. Fl. 3

Vc. (h) b

A. Fl. 4:3 3 3

Vc. *mp*

A. Fl. 4:3

Vc. *mf*

A. Fl.

Vc. *più f*

rall. **K** ♩ = ca.60

A. Fl. slowly lower flute away from lips slide pages 12/13 ← ♩ = ♩ → (played only)

voice sing and play *mf*

Vc. *f* start doggedly *mp*

A. Fl. *p*

Vc. *più p*

poco rall. A tempo

A. Fl. slowly lower flute away from lips *p* Flz.

voice *p*

Vc. *p* sul G/C raise pitch on G string to create slow beating against C string clear, slow beating between strings

A. Fl. normale *mp* *f* *mp* pre-bend down a semitone *sim.*

Vc. *mf* sul D + sul G raise pitch on D string to create slow beating against G string hold beating steady sul D/G

A. Fl. *f* *mp* *f* *mp* *mf* *sim.* *loco*

Vc. (sul D/G)

A. Fl. *mp* *f* *mf* *sim. loco* poco

Vc. *mp* (A-4/D-4)

L Molto lento, ma flauto un poco più mosso dal cello
 flute ♩ = ca.48 (♩ = ca.24)
 sempre non vib. e legato

A. Fl. *p* (= cello) *semplicé* t.s. t.s. t.s. t.s. t.s. t.s. t.s.

Vc. *p* *semplicé* (A-4) (D-6) (A-4) (G-9) (G-8) (D-3) (D-3) (D-5) (C-8) (C-10) (D-6) (D-6) (C-8) (C-12) (C-12) (A-2)

A. Fl. t.s. t.s. t.s. t.s. t.s. t.s.

Vc. (A-3) (G-4) (G-4) (G-6) (G-6) (G-5) (G-5) (G-3) (C-6) (D-4) (C-5) (C-8) (D-2) (D-2) (C-4)

A. Fl. t.s. t.s. t.s. t.s. t.s. t.s.

Vc. (D-3) (D-3) (D-2) (D-2) (C-6) (C-6) (D-5) (G-6) (G-6) (G-4) (G-4) (A-2) (G-3) (G-4) (C-5) (D-4) (C-6)

A. Fl. t.s. t.s. t.s. t.s.

Vc. (G-5) (C-8) (C-4) (A-2) (A-2) (D-3) (G-2) (G-2) (C-3) (G-7) (C-10) (G-3) (C-7)

omit repeats, or repeat more, or slow down to await cue

M Flauto e cello più mosso ♩ = ca.40

A. Fl. *mf* *p* *mf* *p*

Vc. *mf* *mf* sul D/G sul G/C

A. Fl. *f* *f*

Vc. *f* *mf* sul D sul G

A. Fl. *mf* *mf* free tempo

Vc. *mp* *mf* sul C sul D I.o.b. S.V. p.v. S.V.

...unique sonorities and an engaging sound world... a major opus in terms both of its evocative musical content and its duration,
...representing an important contribution to the body of music for low flutes...

Will Sleath (flautist) '**Fragilities**'

...'**How Great, How Fall'n**' created a lot of interest from both audience and performers alike. [It] was exactly the type of new music that
JAM prides itself on supporting...

Edward Armitage, Chairman John Armitage Memorial Concert Series

...An idiosyncratic blend of stylistic types- Gamelan/folk...the music comes across vividly...

SPNM Reading panel '**Dolya Nash Krai**'

...'**Playfall**' is a mature and powerful work, able to portray the dark shadows of loss that can unexpectedly creep into even the most joyful
moments in life...

Dance Europe

...'**Night Walking**' impressed me because it combined lightness and warmth. Here was proof that contemporary music can succeed on all
fronts; it required concentration but was also exhilarating...

Artistic Director SPNM

...'**Another Kind of Air**' is courageous in its simplicity and deserves to be heard...The sharp focus of the thematic material combines with the
transparent medium to make for a piece that proclaims an unambiguous space...

SPNM Reading panel

...This is lovely music for dance and it develops in a delightful way... I particularly liked the pizzicato section...

(composer Howard Skempton) '**Life Before Birth**'

...The piano command is impressive... the pieces make a satisfying arch in terms of mood...

SPNM Reading panel, '**Then Again...**'

...'**Triphony**' showed competence in the handling of a difficult medium... the climax to the third movement was highly effective...

Cambridge Evening Telegraph

...Best has previously written, with verve, for traditional forces... [**'Cue-Play-Review**'] seemed so clearly bound up with human responses...
but the finale to this concert was his electronic tape '**From Steel to Stone**'. In the darkened studio, its shifting layers made a shapely and
animating effect.

Nottingham Evening Post

Christopher Best is a freelance composer based in the South West of England writing mostly concert, dance and acousmatic music. Commissions have included pieces for the Fisarchi Ensemble of Florence, the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra, Emilyn Claid and Company, Scottish Dance Theatre, Bimba Dance Theatre and Jamaican National Dance. Works have been especially written for ensembles including Aquarius, Jane's Minstrels, Kokoro, the choir of Selwyn College Cambridge and Onyx Brass, plus a host of distinguished soloists. Chris's compositions have received widespread critical acclaim and been performed and broadcast internationally.

Recent output includes; '**Clarion Song**' for trumpet and organ; '**Odes and Episodes**' and '**Echoes of a Lost Music**', both for electric guitar; '**They Fall, They Dance**' for flute and string quartet; '**Scending**' for flutes and accordion and '**Fragilities**' for flutes and cello.

A more comprehensive list of compositions can be found at: www.chrisbestmusic.com/works

Since 2010 Chris has held a senior lectureship in music composition at Falmouth University, having formerly been Reader in music composition at Dartington College of Arts in Devon. He has taught extensively throughout the UK and abroad, and co-directed residential music and dance exchanges in Devon, London and Madrid.

For further information, scores, parts and recordings visit composer's website: www.chrisbestmusic.com