

*Commissioned by and dedicated to Gilda Lyons and the Phoenix Concerts*

*Written for entelechron: Roger Zahab, violin; David Russell, 'cello; Robert Frankenberry, piano*

*The Corporation of Yaddo is thanked for providing the ideal circumstances for the creation of this work.*

*Fragile Farewell is a brief fantasia on the folk song "The Parting Glass", a song I am ashamed that I did not know until Gilda Lyons directed me to it. It's suffused with poignant regret, bittersweet love, and drunken resignation: kind of like life itself. The text follows:*

*Oh all the money that e'er I had, I spent it in good company,  
And all the harm, that e'er I done, alas it was to none but me,  
And all I've lost for want of wit to mem'ry now I can't recall;  
So fill to me this parting glass, Good night and joy be with you all.*

*If I had money enough to spend, And leisure time to sit awhile,  
There is a fair maid in this town, Who surely has my heart beguiled,  
Her rosy cheeks and ruby lips, I own, she has my heart in thrall,  
So fill to me this parting glass, Good night and joy be with you all.*

*Oh all the comrades e'er I had, They are sorry for my going away,  
and all the sweethearts e'er I had, They'd wished me one more day to stay.  
But since it fall unto my lot That I should rise and you should not,  
I'll gently rise and I'll softly call, Good night and joy be with you all.*

*The ambiguous but expansive harmonic world of the piece derives from the interplay of two "vertical overtone rows": one rooted in the low C of the cello, the other radiating up from F, the tonic of Gilda's arrangement of the song:*

The image displays a musical score for the piece "Fragile Farewell". It features two vocal parts, Voice I and Voice II, and a piano accompaniment. The score is written in a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 3/4 time signature. The lyrics are written below the vocal lines. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings like "accel." and "rit.". The lyrics are: "Oh... all the mo-ney that... e'er I... had, I... spent it in... good com - pa - ny, And... all the harm... that... e'er I... done, a - las it was to... none but me, And all... I've lost for want of... wit to mem - ry now I... can't re-call, So... fill to me this... part ing glass, Goodnight and joy be... with you all." The score is enclosed in a black border with small circles at the corners.

*Timing: c. 5 minutes*