Marc Sabat

Claudius Ptolemy

for violin or contrabass and cello

PLAINSOUND MUSIC EDITION

Claudius Ptolemy (2008/17)

for violin or contrabass and cello

for Johnny Chang and Jessica Catron
for Nicholas Chalk and David Eggert

NOTES ABOUT THE INTERPRETATION

Tempo is free: as swiftly as accurate intonation permits, but taking time whenever necessary. Each pitch may be considered to have a ‘virtual fermata’, which may be held whenever more time is needed to clearly focus the indicated just interval ratio. For the most part, overlapping tones produce ‘tuneable intervals’ which may be precisely realized by ear.

There are only seven pitch classes used in this piece, forming a D Major scale tuned according to Claudius Ptolemy’s tense diatonic (5-limit just intonation). The four pitches G - D - A - E are tuned as a chain of pure (3/2) fifths, matching the open strings of the violin. The pitches B - F# - C# are tuned as pure (5/4) major thirds above G - D - E, and are accordingly notated with downward arrows to indicate alteration by a syntonic comma (81/80). The resulting thirds should sound beatless and resonant, and care should be taken not to exaggerate the extent of the comma!

The two individual voices may also be played as solo pieces for violin or contrabass and cello. Various intrumentations (solo, duo) may be played on various repeats.

Berlin, 15 January 2008 / 28 February 2017

for Johnny Chang and Jessica Catron

Claudius Ptolemy

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Sempre rubato: swiftly and freely, sustaining longer whenever accurate tuning requires it

Violin

Cello

III ∨ con sordino

I ∨ con sordino

I ∨

port.

port.

12

Vln

Vlc

23

34

45

repeat often,
as desired

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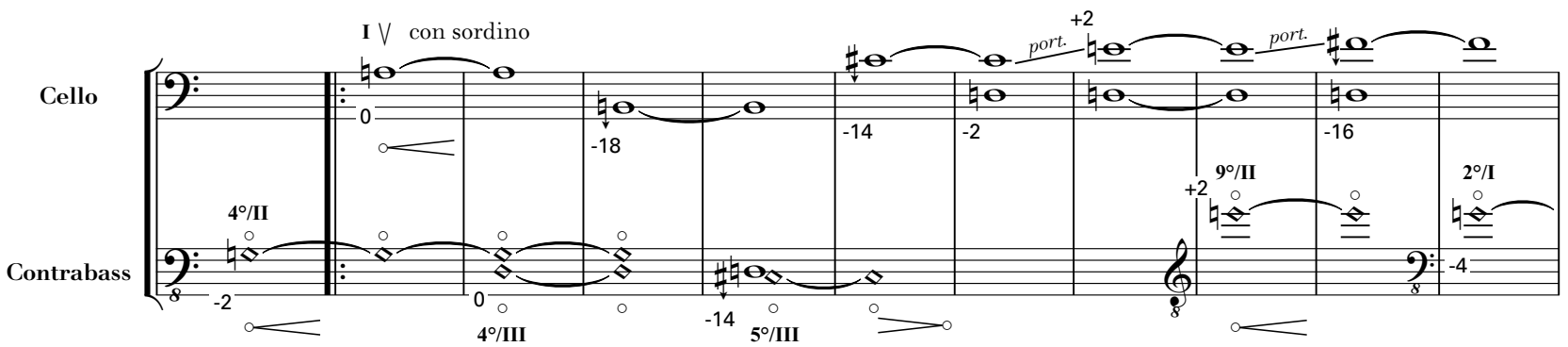

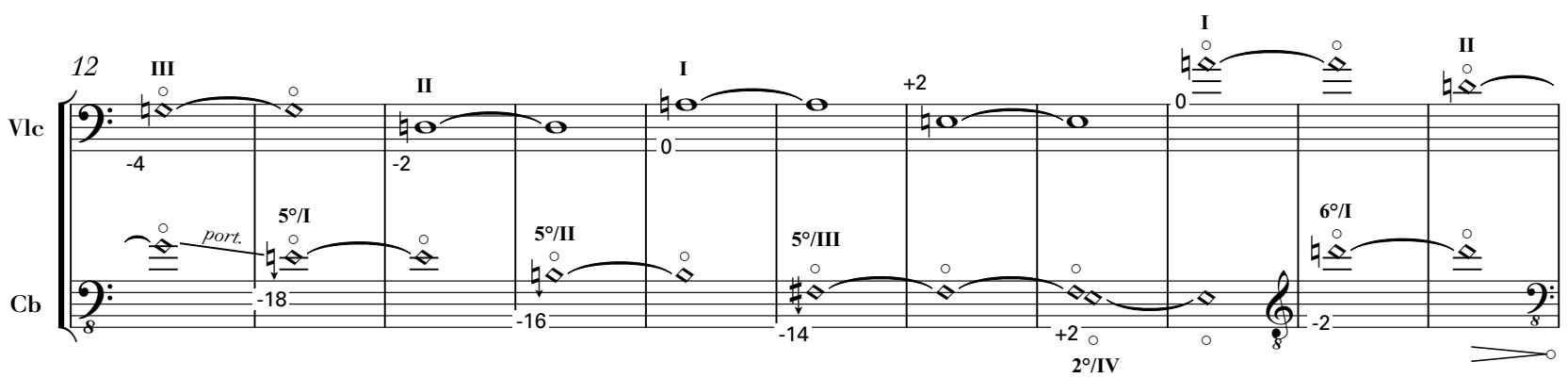

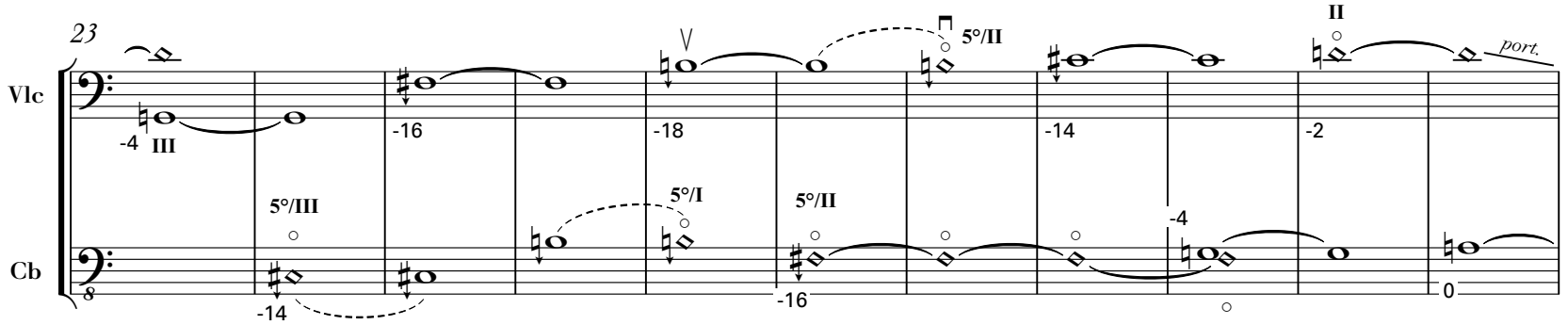

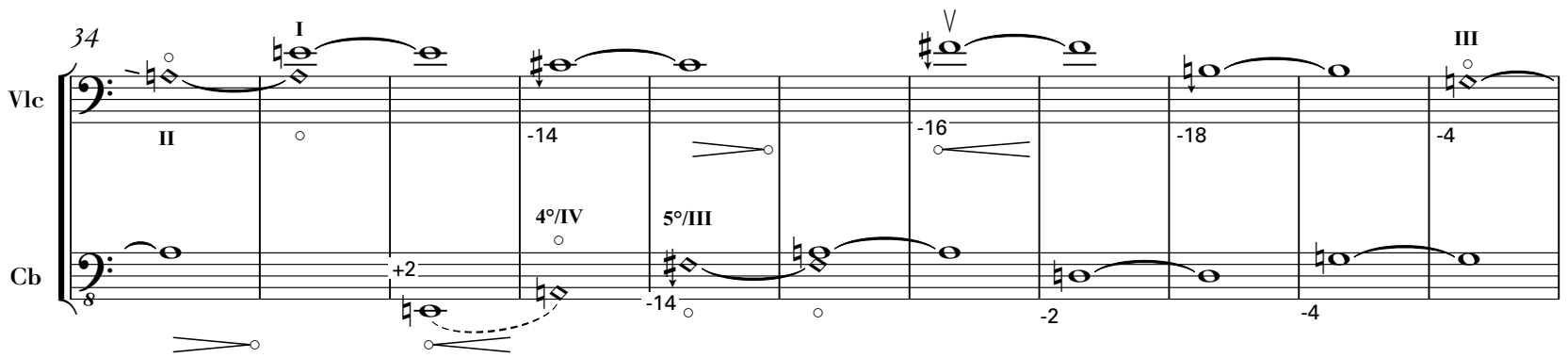

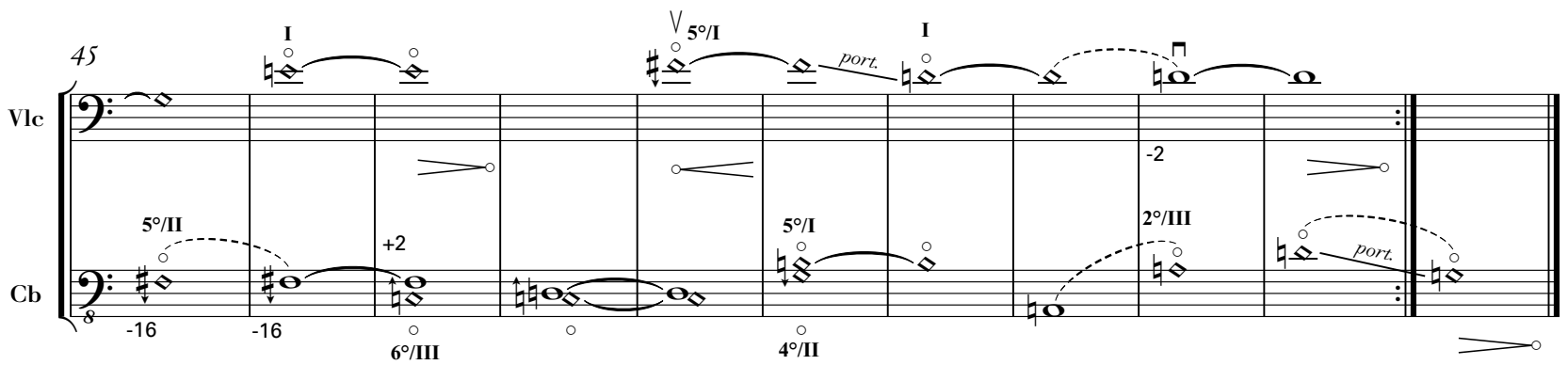

Berlin, 28 February 2017