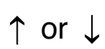
Marc Sabat

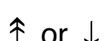
New shoes, without laces
text by Nicolás Fernández

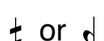
PLAINSOUND MUSIC EDITION

NOTES ON MICROTONAL INTONATION

The following symbols are used in addition to equal tempered 12-tone notation to approximate the tuning of intervals based on the harmonic series:

 raises/lowers a note by 1/6 of a semitone (about 17 cents)

 raises/lowers a note by 1/3 of a semitone (about 33 cents)

 raises/lowers a note by 1/2 of a semitone (50 cents)

Intonation may be adjusted by ear within a tolerance of ± 9 cents at any point in the music to shade the harmonic context.

New shoes, without laces
version for female voice, violin, cello, accordion, percussion

music : Marc Sabat
text : Nicolas Fernandez
1998

The character is a young woman of the middle class.

The setting is a small hill in a park, a ramp, in an suburb. It is near a place where adolescents gather; a fence or a wall, near a school. The performance takes place during a lull, a quiet time of the day. There is almost no one out, very little noise.

The set is a large image of a urban landscape. The musicians are behind the image, the percussion and accordion on the left, the violin and cello on the right, so they are partly visible to the audience.

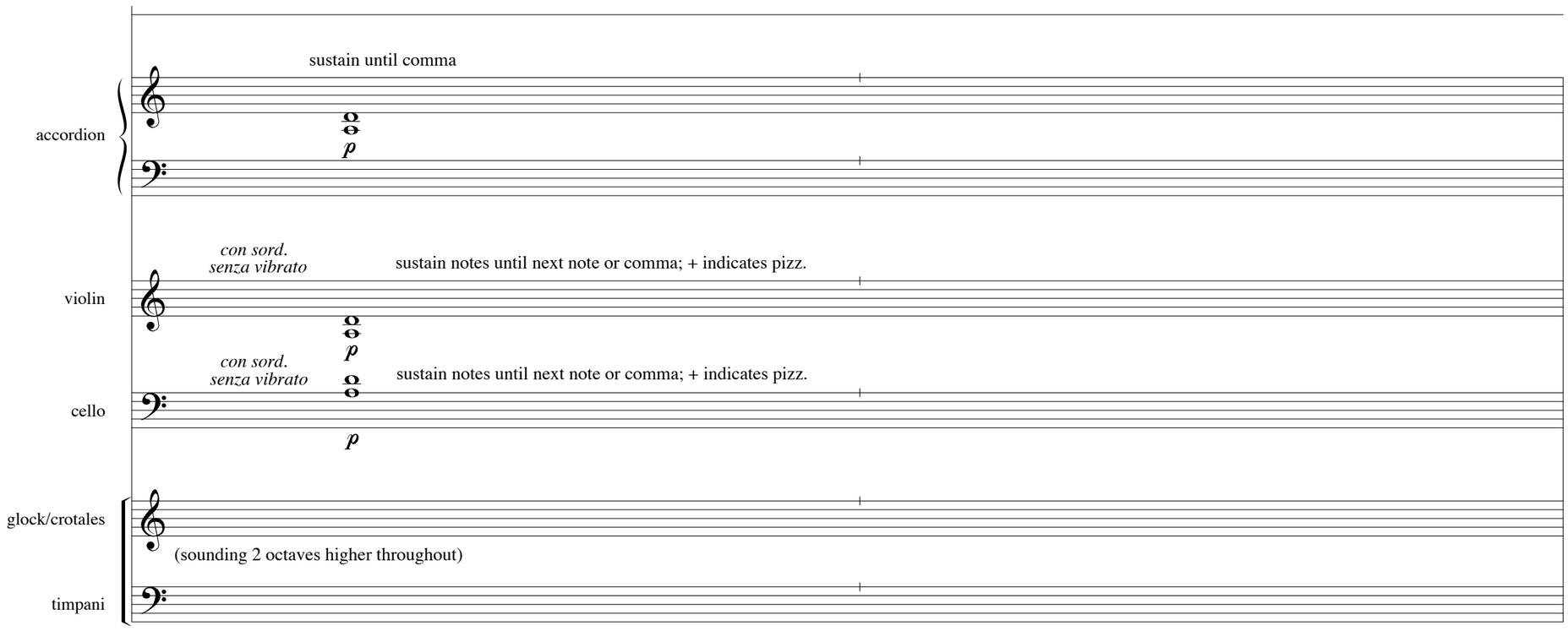
The text is read. It should be read as it comes, as if one doesn't know what it says, insisting on the words more than the phrases. The actor is amplified with a wireless microphone, through two speakers .

The audience is waiting for a while. The musicians are in their places. Very gradually they notice an approaching noise. The young woman is kicking an empty beer can along, offstage. Finally it reaches the right wing of the stage area. She begins to roll the can from one side to the other, from left to right, right to left. After 6 or 7 kicks, the musicians begin their first sound, together with the next kick. After 3 or 4 more kicks she stops.

The young woman appears on the right side of the image, her back facing the audience. She waits for a moment, then she enters, backwards. She stops in front of the image.

After a pause, she begins stretching her neck. She moves her head slowly and irregularly. She bends her head to one side, raises it, bends her head to the other side, stops, raises it again. She acts like someone who isn't sure which way to look at a painting.

She stands still, then begins reading the text.



- I hope you're paid to put up with this, at least. Well paid, I hope. Anyway, I'm not going on like this for nothing, give me something in return or forget it.

acc

vc

All these cars... Now she's got a car, now they all have a car. She must have found some work, or it's her father. To get something in return

acc

vn

vc

you've got to earn it. First you have to find work, which means some people will never get paid to put up with this, they'll have to take it for nothing, or lose it all. You know they say

acc

vn

vc

there won't be enough work for everyone. So there'll be more and more people having to put up with this, without getting anything back. They won't even be able to convince themselves

acc

vn

vc

they can buy it all even if their life is bad. I don't know what to do. I don't know what I'll do.

acc

vn

vc

You know some people pretend to ignore this, they act as if they're already bought out. They accept all this for nothing, free of charge! You should be thankful, they say. Actually you're already in debt

acc

vn

vc

from the start, just a child and already owing. They've paid for our childhood, haven't they? So you keep quiet, and don't ask for anything.

acc

(sustain ends)

vn

vc

I don't see anything. **I don't see anything.** **Is this what I'm learning in school?** **This is all I've learned.** **I can't get it.** **I don't get it.** *She raises her head to the sky, stands still.*

vn

vc

timp

dry

p

(sustain ends)

(sustain ends)

♩ = 160

3

5:4

It's a sky for rain...

timp

3

5:4

4:3

Her head is tilted back, making her voice a little strangled. She looks down to read to herself, then raises her head and recites the words.

It's a sky for rain **that won't quench any thirst.** **It will fill the roofs,** **spread itself against the panes,** **lose itself on the roads,** **fall in all these holes.** *She lowers her head.*

timp

3

3

3

A car, **you hear them,** **they all have cars,** **but no one uses them,** **they stay there,** **blocked by their garages.**

timp

3

3

3

The rain, **heavy water.**

timp

3

3

A car, you can hear them, they've got cars, but no one tries to escape, they make their rounds, coming and going,

timp

5:4 5:4 5:4 5:4 4:3

they go around in circles, they always come back. The streets are empty, and I don't know anybody.

timp

3 3

To enter buildings, to climb stairs, to take elevators, to look through the window, to run some water.

timp

I don't want to wait any more, you've taken everything, you will take everything, I want my share.

acc

♩ = 112 *f*

vn

♩ = 112 *f*

GLOCK.

gl/cr

♩ = 112 *f*

timp

f

Once, she ran away from home, but she came back, they brought her back. She couldn't have gone far. At least she managed to lose herself. Now, they've got their eye on her,

acc

vn

gl/cr

timp

at home, at school. I can see, I think I understood that my father was suffering, and that, I think, my mother too, like me.

acc

vn

gl/cr

timp

So they knew, they knew they could only reproduce in me this obedience that makes suffering, this suffering that makes obedience.

acc

vn

gl/cr

timp

That's how it's passed on, it's what you do to them at home, it's what they do to us at home, we're stuck with it. Anyway, these days, it's school that takes them right away, as soon as possible,

acc

vn

gl/cr

timp

cause you know, the family, it's so close, it sees its part in what's going on and now it's breaking itself down. Who else but the family itself, they haven't found anything better yet.

acc

vn

senza sord.

vc

gl/cr

timp

Not the schools, they don't deal with that kind of confusion there the pressure there isn't all tied up with love. It's the family, family ties all rebellion, all resolution, all determination, all clarification.

acc

vn

vc

gl/cr

timp

There is nothing, no one who wants to see it ruined, except the family itself. TV takes care of other things.

acc

vn

vc

gl/cr

timp

OK, there are those who won't go to school, or those who won't be able to go far, or not for long. Anyway, they'll all end up feeding this battle, outside, which destroys everything.

acc

vn

vc

gl/cr

timp

She turns the page, brings the text down by her side. She walks to the left, looking at the image, until she is standing beside it.

acc

vn

vc

gl/cr

timp

I don't even know the names of the trees or the plants which rest here.

acc

vn

vc

gl/cr

timp

8va

8va

So I can't name them.

How they're called isn't important, I call them anyway.

♪= 180

acc

♪= 180

vc

f

p / mp

To know them, they shouldn't all look the same, there should be different ones,

acc

vc

not always the same flower-beds, not always the same trees. You don't need to know their names.

acc

vc

Some weeds, I'd like to know weeds, these plants which push against walls,

acc

vc

3 3 3 3

these plants which break out in the street,

acc

vc

these plants which still manage to yellow, to dry up, in spite of everything. There's got to be more than this.

acc

vn

p / mp

What's the difference between singing and speaking. Breathing the air, I don't know.

acc

vn

pont. pizz. (dry)

vc

f

Even if you're paid to keep quiet, to swallow it, it's not worth it. Anyway, it's too hard. With all they've accepted already, they feel they can't say no any more, with all they've accepted,

acc

vc

they feel they can't decide any more, they feel it's not their decision to continue the contract or not. They think they're corrupted, forever.

acc

(f)

vn

vc

(f)

CROTALES

l.v. sempre

gl/cr

p

There's got to be more. There's got to be more than what they're saying? There's got to be more than what I'm saying? Or what?

acc

vn

vc

gl/cr

timp

She takes some steps towards the musicians

I want to go out.

All these buildings are so tall.

I don't need to escape out the window, there's no one ever home.

acc

vn

vc

gl/cr

timp

Laid off, shown the door from one day to the next. So they go out, outside all the time, the two of them, they stay together. Now I don't know if I should go out too,

acc

vn

vc

gl/cr

timp

or if I should go and close myself up alone in my room. Now when I go out I don't have the feeling of going out any more. And when I come back, I don't have the feeling of coming back any more.

acc

vn

vc

gl/cr

Alex told me, pretending he didn't care, "When we used to come here,

gl/cr

each step was a splash of crickets..." He cares, he misses his childhood, I don't, I'm not ready to regret it, that's not what I miss.

gl/cr

Later, he also told me, "Here, they used to exploit the gum of these pines. You see these long tears in their trunks, in their bark?

gl/cr

Harvests every year." This can't be my fault, I didn't have anything to do with it.

gl/cr

This can't be all there is. *She moves towards the area behind the image, still partly visible to the audience.*

gl/cr

CROTALES

l.v. sempre

GLOCK.

poco ***f***

gl/cr

gl/cr

You've got nothing to gain from it. **That's for sure,** **you can't win,** **because it's not a question of money.** **You're bound, from birth.**

That's it. **For sure,** **it's easier** **to let yourself be persuaded you're collaborating,** **because you collect something in return,** **that all this** **isn't happening for nothing.**

con sord.

vn

ff

gl/cr

You can let yourself believe that you can escape.

vn

gl/cr

You can't escape alone. **You should act as if you had no family or work.**

vn

Easy to say when you don't have family or work. **They haven't paid me yet, to put up with this.**

vn

gl/cr

I'm not asking for anything else. *She disappears behind the image.*

acc

pp

vn

gl/cr

Hands dirty, nails black, feet on the ground, stomach hungry, legs with the arms, with the branches, of the trees,

acc

senza sord.

♩ = 160

3

5:4

vn

pont. pizz. (dry)

fff

gl/cr

3

ff

the sky between, the leaves, eyelids stiff, hair matted, clothing stiff, tongue dry.

acc

vn

gl/cr

Who gathers mud, who remembers the last rain, who feels a coward, weak, powerless, who burns up garbage cans, who looks back,

acc

vn

vc

con sord.
arco

f

who turns eyes away, who'd love this money, who loves money, who's got no light, no dignity, not all of that space...

acc

vn

vc

gl/cr

Who sees the wrong way, who doesn't have obstacles, who doesn't meet anything, who doesn't stop, who doesn't hold anything,

acc

vc

who doesn't remember, who's fallen there, there, here and there...

acc

con sord.
arco

vn

f

vc

gl/cr

Who's recovered night, who still has no one, who sleeps in the day, who doesn't look where,

acc

vn

vc

pont. pizz. (dry)
senza sord. ***ff***

gl/cr

only so they can't watch her, that's all.

She doesn't reappear.

acc

(sustain ends)