

STEMS

for piano

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ED 30100

Alex Mincek's *Stems* starts with a sputter of harmonies in the lower-middle register of the piano. It punctuates an austere, seemingly lifeless soundscape that is colored by the halo of the sostenuto pedal. Slowly climbing toward the upper register, these harmonies erupt in melodic efflorescences or else fight with tenacity, as if against a physical obstacle. The harmonies span almost the entire keyboard, before indulging in riotous, decidedly less secco repetitions. The many fermatas function to give the listener time to appreciate the kaleidoscopic variety of overtones after the outbursts, and to generate suspense and tension inherent in the piece's structure.

Stems is a piece that is at once emphatically abstract and evocative. The sense that the fermatas continuously make the performer shape the musical narrative. One of the more vivid associations that come with the title is a process of organic growth – the mute drama of plant life blindly, doggedly fighting for survival, expanding its reach for eventual domination.

STEMS

Alex Mincek

♩ = 56-63

Piano

Sostenuto Ped.

2x

mf

p

3

5

3x

mp

p

8^{va}

2x

4x

7:8

mf

f

5

5

First system of a musical score in treble and bass clef. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The music features a complex texture with many beamed sixteenth and thirty-second notes. Dynamic markings include *mf*, *mf*, *p*, *mp*, *f*, *mp*, and *mp*. There are also slurs and accents.

Second system of the musical score. It begins with a **2x** repeat sign. The music continues with similar complex textures. Dynamic markings include *p*, *mp*, *mp*, and *mp*. There are slurs and accents throughout the system.

Third system of the musical score. It begins with a **7x** repeat sign, followed by a **2x** repeat sign. The music features a variety of textures and dynamics. Dynamic markings include *mf*, *fff*, *p*, *ff*, *p*, and *ff*. There are slurs and accents.

Fourth system of the musical score. It begins with a *p* dynamic marking. The music features a variety of textures and dynamics. Dynamic markings include *pp* and *fff*. There are slurs and accents throughout the system.