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SONGS FROM A CHILD'S GARDEN (2003)

Program notes:

Songs from A Child's Garden is a setting of three songs from Robert Louis Stevenson's well-known *A Child's Garden of Verses*, and was composed during the summer of 2003 during a residency at Yaddo. The poems are generally short and sweet, and the three that I have chosen present the listener with a rainy day (common enough in Stevenson's native Scotland), a sunny day at the beach, and a moonlit night. The songs were premiered in January 2004 by Caroline Helton in South Bend, IN.

I. Rain

The rain is raining all around,
It falls on field and tree,
It rains on the umbrellas here,
And on the ships at sea.

II. At the Seaside

When I was down beside the sea
A wooden spade they gave to me
To dig the sandy shore.
My holes were empty like a cup,
In every hole the sea came up,
Till it could come no more.

III. The Moon

The moon has a face like the clock in the hall;
She shines on thieves on the garden wall,
On streets and fields and harbor quays,
And birdies asleep in the forks of the trees.

The squalling cat and the squeaking mouse,
The howling dog by the door of the house,
The bat that lies in bed at noon,
All love to be out by the light of the moon.

But all of the things that belong to the day
Cuddle to sleep to be out of her way;
And flowers and children close their eyes
Till up in the morning the sun shall arise.

Instrumentation: High Voice and Piano

Duration: 5:45

Premiere: January 25, 2004, Caroline Helton, Soprano, and Gabriel Gould, Piano, at Indiana University South Bend