

For this set of four **CHILDREN'SONGS**, I chose poetry that seemed to be written from the viewpoint of children, rather than about them. I tried to mirror this candid, fresh, whimsical, naive point of view in the music, and to make four miniature sound portraits of the texts.

I. AFTERNOON ON A HILL

I will be the gladdest thing
Under the sun!
I will touch a hundred flowers
And not pick one.

I will look at cliffs and clouds
With quiet eyes,
Watch the wind bow down the grass,
And the grass rise.

And when lights begin to show
Up from the town,
I will mark which must be mine,
And then start down!

Edna St. Vincent Millay

II. HE THOUGHT HE SAW

He thought he saw a Buffalo
Upon the chimney piece:
He looked again, and found it was
His Sister's Husband's Niece.
"Unless you leave this house!"
he said,
"I'll send for the Police!"

He thought he saw a Banker's Clerk
Descending from the bus:
He looked again, and found it was
A Hippopotamus?!
"If this should stay to dine," he said,
"There won't be much for us!"

He thought he saw an Albatross
That fluttered round the lamp:
He looked again, and found it was
A Penny-Postage Stamp.
"You'd best be getting home," he said:
"The nights are very damp!"

Lewis Carroll

III. FOG

The fog comes
on little cat feet.
It sits looking
over harbor and city
on silent haunches
and then moves on.

Carl Sandberg

IV. A MAN WITH A LITTLE PLEATED PIANO

Lean out the window: down the street
There's lovely music flowing -
It floods the gutters, wets the feet,
A brook of silver, bright and sweet,
A jet of jewels blowing,
A gush of golden drops that fly,
It bubbles far, it splashes high
Until it glistens in the eye
Of every twinkling passer-by.

Hold out your hand, let each round note
Be lightly caught and felt there -
Oh, hear the sprays of soft sound float
Around your hair, against your throat,
Across your mouth to melt there.
Leap down the stair, the doorstep, run
Along the sidewalk in the sun
To smile upon that strolling one,
Tugging at his accordion.

Winifred Welles

Carol Barnett works in the Twin Cities as a free-lance composer and flutist. She is a charter member of the American (formerly Minnesota) Composers Forum, and recently concluded a term on its board. She is a graduate of the University of Minnesota where she studied with Dominick Argento, Paul Fetler, and Bernhard Weiser. The Women's Philharmonic, the Dale Warland Singers, the Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, the Minnesota Orchestra, the Westminster Abbey Choir, the Ankor Children's Choir of Jerusalem, Israel, the Nebraska Children's Chorus, and the Gregg Smith Singers are among the ensembles which have performed her works. In 1991 she was a fellow at the Camargo Foundation in Cassis, France, and since 1992 she has been composer in residence with the Dale Warland Singers.