



ANTHONY CAESAR

A Million Little Diamonds

Soprano Amy Carson
Piano Nicola Rose



Tracklist

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A Million Little Diamonds

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1	Pretty Cow	01.43
2	The Four Winds	01.07
3	The Rainbow Fairies	01.13
4	I Would Like You for a Comrade	01.07
5	The Clocking Hen	01.22
6	Winter Jewels	00.44
7	Buttercups and Daisies	01.34
8	Evening Song	02.44
	Total Running time	11.34

Programme Note

In memory of a beloved uncle

Reverend Canon Anthony Douglass Cæsar CVO, MA, MusB, FRCO 1924-2018
formerly Chaplain to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II

These eight songs are settings of poems from *A Treasury of Verse for Little Children*, first published in 1908. They are linked through themes of childhood, nature, farm animals and weather. The poems are characterised by innocence, charm and a lightness of spirit. Cæsar has set them like nursery rhymes: strophic and syllabic, with simple, short melodic phrases and light-textured piano accompaniment with straightforward harmonies. Their charm is in their simplicity and the melodies are catchy and affecting.

Cæsar uses subtle harmonic shifts, occasional dissonance and slight rhythmic alterations sparingly, only in service of the poetry. Nevertheless, the songs are sophis-

ticated in style, with melodies characteristic of twentieth century English pastoral songs, as well as the clear sense that Cæsar knew how to craft a good hymn tune. They are mostly all very short, and fit together like a set of miniatures. With their folklike phrases and pleasing, conjunct melodies, they have an instant appeal to singers of all voice types, and in particular as songs for children to sing both collectively or as solo songs.

Anthony Cæsar composed this cycle as a present to his first niece, Judith when she was born. The leather-bound book, *A Treasury of Verse for Little Children*, remains in the family. Cousins Amy and Judy dedicate this album to current and future members of the family.



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Biographies

ANTHONY CÆSAR

Anthony Cæsar (CVO) was a boy chorister in the Winchester Cathedral Choir under Harold Rhodes, who directed choir rehearsals in the short street known as "Dome Alley", the title later on of one of Caesar's hymn tunes. He studied music at Magdalene College, Cambridge where he was a music scholar and trained for the Anglican priesthood at St Stephen's House, Oxford. From 3 August 1979 to 1 August 1991, he was Subdean of the Chapels Royal (having previously been Canon Precentor and Vice-Dean of Winchester Cathedral). During this period, he was also the music editor of the New English Hymnal.

In 1991, on retirement, he was appointed Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, having been appointed LVO in 1987. Following his retirement from the Chapel Royal, he was appointed an Extra Chaplain to the Royal Household.

He is best known for his short Mass setting, *Missa Brevis Capella Regalis*, and his setting of Digby Mackworth Dolben's poem *Requests*, as well as his "O For a Closer walk with God".

A note on his composition from Kenneth Shenton:

'His special feel for the liturgy allowed him to write well for voices. Here, his extensive anthems, hymn tunes, introits, canticle settings, motets, chants, responses, and imaginative descants, often composed for special occasions, have retained their place in the repertoire.'

His numerous anthems include the ebullient Let Saints on Earth, written in 2001 for All Saints', Hove, and built around the hymn tune Dundee and the more restrained, May the Grace of God Our Saviour, for SATB choir, soprano solo and organ. Here, the organ part eschews mere gesture, and yet adds purposefully to the Howellsian mood.'

On a more expansive canvas is the Missa Brevis Sancti Pauli, sung at his requiem. The St Paul's in question is not the London cathedral but a church in Washington, DC. Further success in the United States followed with a series of anthems which includes Soul of my Saviour and O Love Divine, Caesar's tribute to Charles Wesley on the bicentenary of his death in 1988.'

Biographies

Anthony Cæsar died in July 2018 at the age of 94.

A Million Little Diamonds is a song cycle that Anthony wrote seventy years ago for his niece Judith (known as Judy Paterson, author and storyteller). It had never been heard until the family approached cousin Amy Carson in January 2023 about recording it.

AMY CARSON

Amy Carson was the youngest of the first girl choristers at Salisbury Cathedral. She went on to be a choral scholar at Trinity College, Cambridge. She has made highly acclaimed appearances on the opera stage and screen, most notably starring as Pamina in Kenneth Branagh's film of *The Magic Flute* when she was only 21. She has performed internationally both as a soloist and ensemble singer with many professional groups, including The Sixteen, the Monteverdi Choir, The Gabrieli Consort and the OAE.

Visit her website for further information:
www.amycarsonsoprano.com



Biographies

NICOLA ROSE

Nicola Rose began her musical training as one of the first girl choristers at Salisbury Cathedral. She studied piano at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama, where she is now a Junior Fellow, then at the National Opera Studio in London.

She works regularly as a répétiteur for Welsh National Opera, Longborough Festival Opera, Music Theatre Wales, Barefoot Opera, BBC National Chorus of Wales, and as a vocal coach in Italy, Switzerland and Oxenfoord. Nicola works as a pianist and Music Leader for the charity, The Forget-Me-Not Chorus.





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Soprano Amy Carson Piano Nicola Rose

CREDITS

Engineer Adaq Khan

Design Mike Cooter

Producer Malcolm Archer

Executive Producer Adrian Green

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Recording Location St Pauls Church House, Staverton, Wiltshire

Photography Amy Carson - Gerard Collett / Nicola Rose - Gemma Griffiths

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