

***I Gave My Love a Riddle* -CM Adams**

I Gave My Love a Riddle is a solo work for piano written as a creative transcription of the classic American folk tune *I Gave My Love a Cherry/The Riddle Song*. The text itself dates back to the 15th century and has been recorded in middle english. There are many many versions of the song itself, but this transcription was done on two recordings in specific, Josh White's version from the 1949 film, *The Walking Hills*, and Pete Seeger's recording from his 1958 album, *American Favorite Ballads, Vol. 2*. This recording of *I Gave My Love a Riddle* was made at the David Josefowitz Recital Hall at the Royal Academy of Music by Julian Chan.

The music itself moves as one long improvisatory line in a folk like manner. The material is organized into 3 verses following the vocal structure. Aspects of the tune continuously come back through various forms, and developments become developments of developments as they permeate the aesthetic landscape, as the music becomes increasingly hypnotic. The melody is as haunting as it is beautiful, so in my transcription, I find this feeling again but in a method idiomatic for piano; Single lines give way to ambient sections as the melodic line is further developed. *I Gave My Love a Riddle* is a confusing and ambling work, not in terms of content but form. The piano narrates a wandering story that doesn't know its true outcome but maintains its intentions. The answer to *The Riddle Song* is love, and while love is confused and lost amongst other things, its mere presence overwhelms all else, and its intentions flow throughout any landscape.