

## ***Cages for the Wind (2013)***

**XI. Words and Roses**

**XII. Warning to Children**

**XIII. Gift of Dreams**

**XIV. Whitey**

**XV. Roots**

One afternoon Margaret Medlyn and I sat down to discuss poems I might set as the basis of a song cycle for her. She produced quite a stack of New Zealand poems for me to consider: within this pile was a slim, rather unassuming little volume by Alistair Campbell titled *Gallipoli & Other Poems*. Whilst Gallipoli naturally conjures up powerful socio-historical associations for all New Zealanders, I was almost immediately drawn to the second set of poems in the book titled *Cages for the Wind* and decided to set the last five poems in the collection as a cycle. What struck then, and still seems so fresh now, was Campbell's talent for evoking deeply powerful images and feelings in poems of matchless delicacy and subtlety. As important for me as a composer, though, was the immediately singable lyricism of the poems. I distinctly recall the way, as I began reading it, "Words and Roses" (the first song, and one of Campbell's most famous poems), began to suggest musical atmospheres and vocal lines unfolding in my mind like buds of roses unfurling their petals. When poems begin to sing themselves to me, I know I have found the right material.

Duration: 25:00 minutes