

# ARTCETERA MUSIC ADVENTURES WITH ARFIE AND FRIENDS

## HOW TO MEET A DOG Class CD #1

### Notes From the Producer

This CD is meant, first and foremost, as accompaniment and as resource to be used in conjunction with ArtsCetera music classes. Of course that doesn't stop kids and adults from having fun with it in many other situations as well!

Several musical and other ideas underpin the collection.

First, we wish to present a diversity of musical styles, giving young children an opportunity to immerse themselves (and their caregivers) in different genres of music together in class. The result here was the inclusion of pop music, "old timey" music, lyrically re-thought kids standard melodies, gospel-sounding music, mariachi, classical melodies and a wonderful lullaby. Additionally, we used mostly real instruments to help students begin to be able to differentiate between them.

Another effort was to give young children an early exposure to languages other than English. Our mariachi niños sing in Spanish and there are two wonderfully silly songs in French. Both are repetitive and easy to sing along with, especially when everybody else is singing, too. Most research tells us early childhood is the best time to learn a new language. These songs can "start the ball rolling".

We wanted our young students (and, of course, their caregivers) to be exposed to a very wide variety of musical sounds, some usual and some distinctly unique.

Aside from the songs with typical popular music instrumentation there are banjos, fiddles, various percussion instruments, harpsichord, guitarons, harp, unaccompanied singing, all manner of sound effects and, last but by no means least, our resident mad musical genius, Frank Longino, performs the William Tell Overture as an entire orchestra of barking dogs (note that some real dogs tend to join in on this one). One has to hear it to believe it.

Storytelling in song is a device we became fond of. Most young children love a good story, especially if it has humor and surprises. In our case, for instance, the traditional Old MacDonald becomes a female and the saga entails her moving from the farm to the big city where she drives a cab only to eventually become a helicopter pilot. Our *Buffalo Gals* becomes a tale of clapping animals, dancing daddies and the question, in the end, as to whether the whole thing was a dream.

I believe we have succeeded (and our testing agrees) in creating a collection that bears up to the repetitive listening a young child's preferred CD can get. *How To Meet A Dog* seems to be truly a family affair.

We are using the CD to introduce Arfie, the ArtsCetera central musical character. Arfie welcomes everyone to class (*Bark Hello*) and says his very own "see you next time" (*Bark Bye Bye*). Our favorite musical dog also presents the first in what will be a line of

“health and well being” lessons, this time it’s “How To Meet A Dog”, helpful hints from the dog’s perspective. There will be lots more Arfie songs and other items to come.

Finally, we believe that young children understand much more than the average adult gives them credit for. If you’re among the percentage of adults who have ever presented a complex idea to a youngster with trepidation only to watch them blossom with comprehension on their own level, then you know what we mean. Hence we found ourselves striving to give youngsters an initial interest in music and the fun there is to be had with it. Perhaps just as importantly, we also believe the ArtsCetera collections in conjunction with class can stimulate very positive socialization skills, enhance curiosity, raise the level of self-confidence of many of our young students and allow for the establishment of those wonderful first friendships. Tall order for a CD but I believe the ArtsCetera collections are up to the tasks!

And, oh yes, this is a tremendous amount of unadulterated fun for everyone involved!

---Bob Hinkle, producer