

commissioned by The Towne Singers  
**THE SEAL LULLABY**

Dedicated with love and gratitude to Stephen Schwartz

ERIC WHITACRE

Simply, with a little rubato ♩ = 66

SOPRANO  
Ooh, ooh, ooh,

ALTO  
Ooh, ooh, ooh,

TENOR  
Ooh, ooh, ooh,

BASS  
Ooh, ooh, ooh,

PIANO  
pedal generously throughout

7

ooh, ooh, ooh.

ooh, ooh.

ooh.

ooh.

mp

12

Oh! hush thee, my ba - by, the

Oh! hush thee, my ba - by, the

*p*

18

night is be - hind us, And black are the wa - ters that spark-led so -

night is be - hind us, And black wa - ters spark - led so

And black wa - ters spark - led

And black wa - ters spark - led so

*mp*

23

*mp*  
green. The moon o'er the comb - ers, looks down - ward to

*p*  
green. The moon looks to

*p*  
green. The moon looks to

*p*  
green. The moon looks to

27

*p*  
find us At rest in the hol - lows that rus - tle be - tween.

*p*  
find us At rest in hol - lows that rus - tle be - tween.

*p*  
find us At rest in hol - lows that rus - tle be - tween.

*pp*  
find us At rest. Where

32

Ah wea - ry wee

Ah wea - ry

Ah wea - ry

bil - low meets bil - low, there soft be thy pil - low; wea - ry

37

flip - per - ling curl at thy ease!

flip - per - ling curl at thy ease!

flip - per - ling curl at thy ease! The storm shall not

flip - per - ling curl at thy ease! The storm shall not

41

nor shark\_ o - ver - take thee, A - sleep in the

nor shark\_ o - ver - take thee, A - sleep in the

wake thee, A - sleep in the

wake thee, A - sleep in the

*mp* *mf* *mf* *mf*

45

arms\_ of the slow - swing - ing seas, a - sleep in the\_

arms of\_ the slow - swing - ing seas, a - sleep in the

arms of the slow - swing - ing seas, in the

arms of the slow - swing - ing seas, rit. in the

*rit.* *mf*

49 *mp* *P* a tempo

arms of the slow - swing - ing seas. ooh,

arms of the slow - swing - ing seas. ooh,

arms. ooh,

arms. ooh,

a tempo

54

ooh,

ooh,

ooh,

ooh,

59

Musical score for measures 59-62. The score is in 4/4 time and features four vocal staves (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and a piano accompaniment. The key signature is three flats (B-flat major or D-flat minor). The vocal parts are marked with "ooh," and feature long, sweeping melodic lines with slurs. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and a moving bass line in the left hand.

63

Musical score for measures 63-66. The score continues with four vocal staves and piano accompaniment. The key signature remains three flats. The vocal parts are marked with "ooh," and include dynamic markings of *mp* (mezzo-piano). The piano accompaniment is marked with *mf* (mezzo-forte) and features a more active bass line with eighth notes.

rit.

a tempo

67

Musical score for measures 67-71. It features four vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are marked with *p* and *pp* dynamics and include the syllable "ooh,". The piano part is marked with *mp* and *p* dynamics.

72

Musical score for measures 72-76. It features four vocal staves and a piano accompaniment. The vocal parts are marked with *p* and *pp* dynamics and include the syllable "ooh,". The piano part is marked with *mp*, *p*, and *pp* dynamics.



# The Seal Lullaby

## About the Work:

In the spring of 2004 I was lucky enough to have my show *Paradise Lost* presented at the ASCAP Musical Theatre Workshop. The workshop is the brainchild of legendary composer Stephen Schwartz (*Wicked*, *Godspell*), and his insights about the creative process were profoundly helpful. He became a great mentor and friend to the show and, I am honored to say, to me personally.

Soon after the workshop I received a call from a major film studio. Stephen had recommended me to them and they wanted to know if I might be interested in writing music for an animated feature. I was incredibly excited, said yes, and took the meeting.

The creative execs with whom I met explained that the studio heads had always wanted to make an epic adventure, a classic animated film based on Kipling's *The Seal Lullaby*. I have always loved animation (the early Disney films; Looney Tunes; everything Pixar makes) and I couldn't believe that I might get a chance to work in that grand tradition on such great material.

*The Seal Lullaby* is a beautiful story, classic Kipling, dark and rich and not at all condescending to kids. Best of all, Kipling begins his tale with the mother seal singing softly to her young pup:

*Oh! hush thee, my baby, the night is behind us,  
And black are the waters that sparkled so green.  
The moon, o'er the combers, looks downward to find us  
At rest in the hollows that rustle between.*

*Where billow meets billow, then soft by thy pillow;  
Ah, weary wee flipperling, curl at thy ease!  
The storm shall not wake thee, nor shark overtake thee,  
Asleep in the arms of the slow-swinging seas.*

I was struck so deeply by those first beautiful words, and a simple, sweet Disney-esque song just came gushing out of me. I wrote it down as quickly as I could, had my wife record it while I accompanied her at the piano, and then dropped it off at the film studio.

I didn't hear anything from them for weeks and weeks, and I began to despair. Did they hate it? Was it too melodically complex? Did they even listen to it? Finally, I called them, begging to know the reason that they had rejected my tender little song. "Oh," said the exec, "we decided to make *Kung Fu Panda* instead."

So I didn't do anything with it, just sang it to my baby son every night to get him to go to sleep. (Success rate: less than 50%). And a few years later the Towne Singers graciously commissioned this arrangement of it. I'm grateful to them for giving it a new life. And I'm especially grateful to Stephen Schwartz, to whom the piece is dedicated. His friendship and invaluable tutelage has meant more to me than I could ever tell him.