

commissioned by The Towne Singers

THE SEAL LULLABY

Dedicated with love and gratitude to Stephen Schwartz

RUDYARD KIPLING

ERIC WHITACRE

Simply, with a little rubato ♩ = 66

Musical score for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, and Piano, measures 1-6. The score is in 3/4 time with a key signature of three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The tempo is marked 'Simply, with a little rubato' with a quarter note equal to 66. The dynamics range from *p* (piano) to *mf* (mezzo-forte). The vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) all sing 'Ooh,' with various phrasing and slurs. The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and chords, with some passages marked *8va* and *loco*. A note at the bottom of the piano part reads 'pedal generously throughout'.

Musical score for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass, and Piano, measures 7-10. The score continues from the previous page. The vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) all sing 'Ooh,' with various phrasing and slurs. The piano accompaniment continues with a steady bass line and chords, with some passages marked *mp* (mezzo-piano). The score ends with a double bar line and repeat sign.

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12

p Oh! hush thee, my ba - by, the

p Oh! hush thee, my ba - by, the

p

18

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

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

mp And black wa - ters spark - led

mp 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

mp nor shark_ o - ver - take thee, *mf* A - sleep in the

mp nor shark_ o - ver - take thee, *mf* A - sleep_ in the

wake thee, *mf* A - sleep in the_

wake thee, *mf* A - sleep in the

45

rit. 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

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

ooh, ooh,

ooh, ooh,

ooh, ooh,

ooh, ooh,

63

mp ooh,

mp ooh,

mp ooh,

mp ooh

mf

67 **rit.** *p* **a tempo** *pp*

ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh,

mp *p* *mp*

72 *p* *pp*

ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh, ooh,

mp *p* *pp*

8^{va}

Los Angeles, February 2008

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 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' ver 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 the studio 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 the SATB arrangement of it. This new arrangement has been exquisitely created by Emily Crocker to whom I owe my gratitude.

The Seal Lullaby

About the Composer:

Born in 1970, Eric Whitacre has become one of the leading voices in contemporary choral composition. His concert works are regularly performed throughout the world.

Other choral works by Eric Whitacre:

Go, Lovely Rose (SATB)
I Hide Myself (SATB)
With a Lily in Your Hand (SATB)
Cloudburst (SATB, piano, percussion)
Water Night (SATB)
Leonardo Dreams of His Flying Machine (SSATB)
Lux Aurumque (SATB)
Sleep (SATB)
When David Heard (SSAATTBB)
i will wade out (SATB)
hope, faith, life, love (SATB)
i thank You God for most this amazing day (SATB)
Little Birds (SATB, piano)
Five Hebrew Love Songs (SATB or SA, piano, violin or string quartet)
She Weeps Over Ragoon (SSA, piano, English horn)
little tree (SATB, piano)
This Marriage (SATB)
Her Sacred Spirit Soars (SSATB/SSATB Double Chorus a cappella)
A Boy and a Girl (SATB)
Animal Crackers (SATB, piano)
The Stolen Child (SATB and sextet a cappella)

Please visit Eric on the web at:

www.ericwhitacre.com
www.shadowwater.com