



# *Violin Lullabies*

FEATURING WORKS BY BRAHMS, GERSHWIN, RAVEL, SCHUBERT,  
STRAUSS, AND MANY MORE



EDITED BY RACHEL BARTON PINE

PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT BY MATTHEW HAGLE

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION BY RACHEL BARTON PINE .....	7
PROGRAM NOTES: THE BERCEUSE BY PAMELA BLEVINS.....	8
ABOUT RACHEL BARTON PINE.....	15
ABOUT MATTHEW HAGLE .....	17
I. BRAHMS, JOHANNES (1833-1897)	
Wiegenlied (Cradle Song), No. 4 from <i>Fünf Lieder</i> , Op. 49, arranged by Albert Spalding .....	18
1A. BRAHMS, JOHANNES (1833-1897)	
Wiegenlied (Cradle Song), No. 4 from <i>Fünf Lieder</i> , Op. 49, arranged by Albert Spalding Simplified by Rachel Barton Pine .....	19
2. YSAÏE, EUGÈNE (1858-1931)	
Rêve d'Enfant (Child's Dream), Op.14.....	20
3. REBIKOV, VLADIMIR (1866-1920)	
Berceuse (Lullaby), No. 1 from <i>Trois Morceaux</i> , Op. 7.....	22
4. BEACH, AMY (1867-1944)	
Berceuse (Lullaby), No. 2 from <i>Three Compositions</i> , Op. 40 .....	23
5. SCHWAB, LUDWIG (1880-1943)	
Berceuse écossaise (Scottish Lullaby) .....	24
6. RESPIGHI, OTTORINO (1879-1963)	
Berceuse (Lullaby), No. 1 from <i>Sei Pezzi</i> .....	26
7. GERSHWIN, GEORGE (1898-1937)	
"Summertime" from <i>Porgy and Bess</i> , arranged by Igor Frolov (from his <i>Concert Fantasia on Themes from Gershwin's Porgy and Bess</i> ) .....	28
8. FALLA, MANUEL DE (1876-1946)	
Nana (Lullaby), No. 5 from <i>Siete Canciones populares Españolas</i> , arranged by Paul Kochanski.....	29
9. FAURÉ, GABRIEL (1845-1924)	
Berceuse (Lullaby), Op. 16 .....	30
10. SIBELIUS, JEAN (1865-1957)	
Berceuse (Lullaby), No. 6 from <i>Six Pieces</i> , Op. 79 .....	32
11. VIARDOT-GARCIA, PAULINE (1821-1910)	
Berceuse (Lullaby), No. 3 from <i>Six Morceaux</i> .....	34
12. HOVHANESS, ALAN (1911-2000)	
Oror (Lullaby), Op. 1 .....	36
13. STRAVINSKY, IGOR (1882-1971)	
Berceuse (Lullaby) from <i>The Firebird</i> , arranged by the composer .....	37

14.	<b>RAVEL, MAURICE</b> (1875-1937)	
	Berceuse sur le nom de Gabriel Fauré (Lullaby on the name "Gabriel Fauré") .....	38
15.	<b>CLARKE, REBECCA</b> (1886-1979)	
	Lullaby (1918) .....	39
16.	<b>SCHUBERT, FRANZ</b> (1797-1828)	
	Wiegenlied (Cradle Song), D 498 / Op. 98, No. 2, arranged by Mischa Elman.....	40
16A.	<b>SCHUBERT, FRANZ</b> (1797-1828)	
	Wiegenlied (Cradle Song), D 498 / Op. 98, No. 2, arranged by Mischa Elman Simplified by Rachel Barton Pine .....	41
17.	<b>SCHUMANN, ROBERT</b> (1810-1856)	
	Schlummerlied (Slumber Song), No. 16 from <i>Albumblätter</i> , Op. 124, arranged by Hans Sitt.....	42
18.	<b>DUROSOIR, LUCIEN</b> (1878-1955)	
	Berceuse (Lullaby), No. 4 from <i>Cinq aquarelles</i> .....	43
19.	<b>GRIEG, EDVARD</b> (1843-1907)	
	Vuggevisse (Cradle Song), No. 1 from <i>Lyric Pieces</i> , Op. 38, arranged by Hans Sitt.....	44
20.	<b>ANTSEV, MIKHAIL</b> (1865-1945)	
	Berceuse (Lullaby), No. 1 from <i>Four Pieces</i> .....	45
21.	<b>STRAUSS, RICHARD</b> (1864-1949)	
	Wiegenlied (Cradle Song), No. 1 from <i>Fünf Lieder</i> , Op. 41, arranged by Anonymous .....	46
22.	<b>SIVORI, CAMILLO</b> (1815-1894)	
	Berceuse (Lullaby), Op. 30 .....	48
23.	<b>BÉRAUD, VICTOR</b> (1840-??)	
	Petite reine Berceuse (Lullaby for a Little Queen), arranged by Edward Elgar.....	50
24.	<b>REGER, MAX</b> (1873-1916)	
	Wiegenlied (Cradle Song), No. 1 from <i>3 Kompositionen (Suite)</i> , Op. 79d.....	52
25.	<b>ILJINSKY, ALEKSANDR</b> (1859-1920)	
	Berceuse (Lullaby), No. 7 from <i>Noure et Anitra</i> , Op. 13, arranged by Alfred Moffat.....	53
26.	<b>MONTSALVATGE, XAVIER</b> (1912-2002)	
	Nana (Lullaby) .....	54
26A.	<b>MONTSALVATGE, XAVIER</b> (1912-2002)	
	Nana (Lullaby) Simplified by Rachel Barton Pine .....	55
27.	<b>KING, BETTY JACKSON</b> (1928-1994)	
	Lullaby .....	56

# PROGRAM NOTES

## THE BERCEUSE BY PAMELA BLEVINS

The lullaby, cradle song, or slumber song was born before language. From prehistoric times to the present, mothers have known instinctively that gently rocking their babies in their arms while humming or singing a soft melody is a soothing and comforting inducement to tranquility and sleep.

The lullaby is a natural form of music that music historians have called the “genesis of all song.” The cradle song, as we know it today, is rooted in the folk traditions of all nations and is known by as many names as there are languages in the modern world: *Berceuse* in French, *Wiegenlied* (cradle song) or *Schlummerlied* (slumber song) in German, *Oror* in Armenian, *Vuggevisse* in Norwegian, and *Nana* in Spanish, among them.

The earliest of these songs were passed down through the generations by oral tradition long before the advent of musical notation. In ancient Egypt and Greece, mothers might have accompanied their cradle songs on the lyre or harp, forerunners of contemporary instruments such as the violin, the instrument many consider closest to the singing voice.

The birth of the lullaby and the origin of its name are unknown. One of the earliest possibilities dates back to an ancient Roman nurses’ song of which only this fragment remains: “Lalla, Lalla, Lalla,/Aut dormi, aut lacta” (“either sleep, or nurse”). In more recent times, “Lullay, Lullay, litel child” appeared in a 1372 English manuscript, while references to cradle songs (“cradyl songes”) appeared in print as early as 1398.

1. In its classical form, the *Berceuse*, or lullaby was pioneered by Frédéric Chopin in 1843, with his *Berceuse* for solo piano. The most famous example is, of course, Johannes Brahms’s *Wiegenlied* or, as it is popularly known in English, “Brahms’s Lullaby.” Although he never married, Brahms (1833–1897) fell in love many times. In 1858, he met the young Austrian singer Bertha Porubszky; she often sang folksongs to him, including a love song that stayed with him for many years. Later, after Bertha had married Arthur Faber and had her second child, Hans, Brahms dedicated his *Wiegenlied*, based on a variation of that song, to Bertha and her husband “...for cheery general purpose use.” In a letter to the Fabers, Brahms wrote, “Frau Bertha will immediately see that I composed the cradle song yesterday [August 17, 1868] specifically for your little one.” The American violinist Albert Spalding (1888–1953) is among many who have arranged Brahms’s *Wiegenlied* for violin and piano. When the theme is repeated, Spalding has the violin play harmony as well as melody, so it sounds like the single violinist is playing a duet.
2. By the time the fourth of his five children, Antoine, was born in April 1894, Belgian violinist, composer, and conductor, Eugène Ysaÿe (1858–1931) was known throughout Europe as the “King of the Fiddlers.” Although Ysaÿe enjoyed fame, fortune, and good future prospects, his home life was darkened by a cloud. His infidelity had driven a wedge between him and his wife Louise. Several months after Antoine’s birth, Ysaÿe was touring the United States. During a stop at Niagara Falls, he wrote to Louise, “Tears come to my eyes at the thought of Antoine ... precious mite ... how I am dying to take him in my arms...” Ysaÿe put that longing into his poetic *Rêve d’Enfant* (“Child’s Dream”), which he dedicated “À mon p’tit Antoine.” Originally composed for violin with orchestra, Ysaÿe later transcribed it for violin and piano, a version he published in 1901.
3. Vladimir Rebikov (1866–1920) had his ear tuned to the future and developed musical innovations that were ahead of his time. He was one of the first composers to use the whole tone scale and tone clusters—a favorite technique of twentieth-century modernists, such as Henry Cowell and György Ligeti. Although Rebikov had been a leader in the Russian avant garde, he is best remembered today for pleasant piano pieces that recall the lyrical expression of Tchaikovsky and Grieg. Rebikov composed many short pieces for and about children with titles such as “Children Skating” and “The Little Girl Rocking her Doll.” The *Berceuse* heard here comes from his *Trois Morceaux* (“Three Pieces”), Op. 7, composed in 1895.

# 1. Wiegenlied (Cradle Song)

No. 4 from *Fünf Lieder*, Op. 49

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)

Arranged by Albert Spalding

Edited by Rachel Barton Pine

**Dolce con moto**

*p* **espressivo**

*✓ sul G sempre*

1 3

6 1 1 2 3 *✓* 3 *✓* 3

13 2 4 3 *✓* 3 2 2 ,

20 *✓* 1 1 2 1 2 1 2 1

27 *✓* 2 1 1 1 2 4 2 *pp*

33 *✓* 1 II 1 III 2 *✓* 2 1 1 1 2

39 *✓* 4 2 2 2 1 1 1 4



# 1a. Wiegenlied (Cradle Song)

19

No. 4 from *Fünf Lieder*, Op. 49

JOHANNES BRAHMS (1833-1897)

Arranged by Albert Spalding

Simplified and Edited by Rachel Barton Pine

**Dolce con moto**

*p* **espressivo**

6

13

20

27

33

39

## OTTORINO RESPIGHI (1879-1963)

*(con sordino)*

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# 9. Berceuse (Lullaby)

Op. 16

GABRIEL FAURÉ (1845-1924)

Edited by Rachel Barton Pine

**Allegretto moderato** *con sordino*

*pp*

8

15

*mf*

*> pp*

22

*f*

*ppp*

30

*cresc.*

*espressivo*

38

*dolce*

46

*p*



*Edited by Rachel Barton Pine*

*p*

*cresc.*

*poco rit.*

*p marcato*

*cresc.*

# 23. Petite reine Berceuse

(Lullaby for a Little Queen)

VICTOR BÉRAUD (1840 - ??)

Arranged by Edward Elgar

Edited by Rachel Barton Pine

*Allegretto* *rit.* *a tempo*

*p cantabile*

*mf*

*p*

*f* *dim.* *pp*

*piu mosso* *pizz.* *arco*

*mf*

*fp*

sample

sample

sample

sample