

Eric Whitacre (b. 1970)

Whitacre is that rare thing, a modern composer who is both popular and original.

— The Daily Telegraph, London

Eric Whitacre, studied at Juilliard under John Corigliano (Red Violin movie music). He recently completed two terms as Artist-in-Residence with the Los Angeles Master Chorale and is currently Visiting Composer at Pembroke College, Cambridge University.

Over his thirty-year composition career, he received major classical commissions from the BBC Proms, Minnesota Orchestra, Chanticleer, Cincinnati Pops, and The King's Singers to name just a few. Grammy Award-winning composer and conductor, Whitacre's works are programmed worldwide.

Widely considered to be the pioneer of Virtual Choirs, Whitacre created his first project as an experiment in social media and digital technology. Virtual Choir 1: *Lux Aurumque* was published in 2010 and featured 185 singers from 12 countries. In 2020, Virtual Choir 6: *Sing Gently*, written for a virtual choir during COVID-19, featured 17,562 singers from 129 countries.

Lux Aurumque (*Light and Gold*) is a Christmas piece inspired by an English poem written by Edward Esch (which may be a pseudonym of Eric Whitacre) translated into Latin by Charles Anthony Silvestri for Whitacre.

Light
Warm and heavy as pure gold
And the angels sing softly
To the newborn Babe.

The composer writes in the printed score: "... if the tight harmonies are carefully tuned and balanced they will shimmer and glow". Whitacre's music has been described as "softly spoken, deeply harmonic and tuneful, but making use of unusual rhythms and sound balancing to create highly textured music".

Sources: Eric Whitacre website, Wikipedia, *Lux Aurumque* sheet music.