

CREATIVE PROJECT: The Influence of Eric Whitacre's Compositional Technique in the Music of Emerging Choral Composers.

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Eric Whitacre has been recognized as one of the most prominent choral composers of the twenty-first century. Although his compositions feature the frequent use of chords and clusters that would traditionally be considered dissonant, he is able to avoid the perception of dissonance through specific compositional techniques, allowing his works to remain accessible and attainable to audiences and performers alike. This study explores the influence of Whitacre's compositional techniques in the works of more recent composers. Using analytical techniques identified by Andrew Larson for exploring textural density, chord construction based on the harmonic series, and smooth voice leading techniques, there is compelling evidence of Whitacre's influence displayed in the sampled works of emerging composers Michael J. Mills, Alex Berko, Timothy C. Takach, and Theodore Hicks. Using side-by-side examples and synthesized analytical techniques, the analysis primarily compares three choral works of Whitacre ("Go, Lovely Rose," "A Boy and a Girl," and "Sleep") with a composition from each of the subsequent composers. The analysis suggests that Whitacre's influence is strong, but each composer uses the techniques in different ways to give voice to their own unique compositional style.