

Name: _____

Eric Whitacre Interview Assignment – Oxford Union

1) **1:10 – 10:00 : Eric’s history as he began work as a composer.** Answer any one of the following questions:

a) How does his history relate to where you are right now? How is it different from where you’re at now?
(There’s no right answer and all of your answers will be different)

b) Reflect on what that means – being behind/similar/further than Eric was at your age. Look where he is now. How does that make you feel and does that inspire you to continue with music?

c) When he describes his first choral warm up (“I’d never been more embarrassed for humanity in all my life”), it’s a moment where he didn’t know what he’d gotten himself into. What is a moment like that for you? Describe it.

d) At the 6:00 mark, he recounts the feeling of singing his first song in a choir and how electrifying it is. What is a moment like that for you (musical or not)? Recount your own story.

2) **10:00 – 23:10 : Virtual Choir Project.** Answer any one of the following questions:

a) He describes the loneliness of his job and how he balances being an extravert and an introvert in the same profession. Are there any parts of your life where you need to reconcile those differences? Explore those.

b) He also talks about being unaware of the differences his work makes. Describe either 1) A project that you’ve made that’s made a difference for someone else, or 2) Describe someone’s project that’s made a difference for you, a difference of which the creator may be unaware. You don’t need to know the creator, it just needs to have affected you.

c) There are a variety of stories about people engaging with the Virtual Choir, particularly around the 19:00 minute mark. Which of these stories resonated with you the most? Why do you think that is? And how does that speak to the power of music?

d) At 21:45, Eric takes a more philosophical shift toward architecture and how it reflects the most valued aspects of a culture, ending finally that he believes technology can connect us in a way never before possible before the 21st-century. Do you agree? What would that mean for us? What does a world that is, as Eric described, “post-national, post-racial, post-religious” look like? Explore this.

3) Interviewer Questions:

23:30 – 28:35 : The interviewer asks three questions: What’s the hardest part about composing, what is it about [these certain poets] that inspires you to compose, and what is the biggest challenge facing the music industry. Which one of these questions resonates/connects with you the most? Why is that? Continue Eric’s answer with words and thoughts of your own.

4) Audience Questions:

28:35 – end : Respond to and explore the audience question that resonated with you the most. Furthermore, if you could ask Eric one question, what would it be?