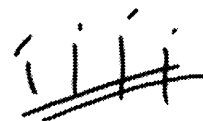


HL08501462

WJMS1035

US \$1.95

Eric Whitacre



Sleep

Charles Anthony Silvestri

for SATB a cappella Chorus

About the Work

In the following, composer Eric Whitacre describes the winding ways of a work from idea to publication:

In the winter of 1999 Ms. Julia Armstrong, a lawyer and professional mezzo-soprano living in Austin, Texas, contacted me. She wanted to commission a choral work from me to be premiered by the Austin Pro Chorus (Kinley Lange, conductor), a terrific chorus with whom she regularly performed.

The circumstances around the commission were amazing. She wanted to commission the piece in memory of her parents, who had died within weeks of each other after more than fifty years of marriage; and she wanted me to set her favorite poem, Robert Frost's immortal "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening". I was deeply moved by her spirit and her request, and agreed to take on the commission.

I took my time with the piece, crafting it note by note until I felt that it was exactly the way I wanted it. The poem is perfect, truly a gem, and my general approach was to try to get out of the way of the words and let them work their magic. We premiered the work in Austin, October 2000, and it was well received. Rene Clausen gave "Stopping By Woods" a glorious performance at the ACDA National Convention in the spring of 2001, and soon after I began receiving hundreds of letters, emails, and phone calls from conductors trying to get a hold of the work.

And here was my tragic mistake: I never secured permission to use the poem. Robert Frost's poetry has been under tight control from his estate since his death, and until a few years ago only Randall Thompson ("Frostiana") had been given permission to set his poetry. In 1997, out of the blue, the estate released a number of titles, and at least twenty composers set and published "Stopping By Woods" for chorus. When I looked on line and saw all of these new and different settings, I naturally (and naively) assumed that it was open to anyone. Little did I know that, just months before, the Robert Frost Estate had taken the decision to deny ANY use of the poem, ostensibly because of this plethora of new settings.

After a LONG battle of legalities back and forth, the Estate of Robert Frost and their publisher, Henry Holt Inc., sternly and formally forbade me to use the poem for publication or performance until the poem would become public domain in 2038.

I was crushed. The piece was dead, and would sit under my bed for the next 37 years as a result of rulings by heirs and lawyers. After many discussions with my wife, I decided that I would ask my friend and brilliant poet Charles Anthony Silvestri ("Leonardo Dreams of His Flying Machine", "Lux Aurumque") to set new words to the music I had already written. This was an enormous task, because I was asking him to not only write a poem that had the exact structure of the Frost poem, but that it would even incorporate key words from "Stopping By Woods", like 'sleep'. Tony wrote an absolutely exquisite poem, finding a completely different (but equally beautiful) message in the music I had already written.

And there it is. My setting of Robert Frost's "Stopping By Woods" no longer exists. I am supremely proud of this new work, and my only regret in all of this was that I was way too innocent in my assumption that lawyers and heirs would understand something as simple and delicate as the choral art.



commissioned in loving memory of Mr. M.W. Lacy and Mrs. Caroline Morris Lacy,
by their daughter, Julia Lacy Armstrong

3

SLEEP

for SATB Chorus *a cappella*

CHARLES ANTHONY SILVESTRI

ERIC WHITACRE

Lento; lontano e molto legato

SOPRANO *pp*
The eve - ning hangs be - neath the moon, A

ALTO *pp*
The eve - ning hangs be - neath the moon, A

TENOR *pp*
The eve - ning hangs be - neath the moon, A

BASS *pp*
The eve - ning hangs be - neath the moon, A

5
sil - ver thread on dark - ened dune. With clos - ing eyes and

sil - ver thread on dark - ened dune. With clos - ing eyes and

sil - ver thread on dark - ened dune. With clos - ing eyes and

sil - ver thread on dark - ened dune. With clos - ing eyes and

9

rest - ing head I know that sleep is com - ing soon.

rest - ing head I know that sleep is com - ing soon.

rest - ing head I know that sleep is com - ing soon.

rest - ing head I know that sleep is com - ing soon.

Poco più mosso

14

mf Up - on my pil - low, safe in bed, _____ *mp* A

mf Up - on my pil - low, safe in bed, _____ *mp* A

mf Up - on my pil - low, safe in bed, _____ *mp* A

mf Up - on my pil - low, safe in bed, _____ *mp* A

19

thou - sand pic - tures fill my head, I can - not sleep, my

thou - sand pic - tures fill my head, I can - not sleep, my

thou - sand pic - tures fill my head, I can - not sleep, my

thou - sand pic - tures fill my head, I can - not sleep, my

23

mind's a - flight; And yet my limbs seem made of lead.

mind's a - flight; And yet my limbs seem made of lead.

mind's a - flight; And yet my limbs seem made of lead.

mind's a - flight; And yet my limbs seem made of lead.

27

pp *transparente mp* *mp*

If there are nois - es in the night,

pp *transparente mp* *mp*

If there are nois - es in the night,

pp *transparente mp* *mp*

If there are nois - es in the night,

pp *transparente*

If there are nois - es in

31

mp *mp*

A fright - ening shad - ow, flick - ering light;

mp *mp*

A fright - ening shad - ow, flick - ering light;

mp *mp*

A fright - ening shad - ow, flick - - ering light;

the night, in the night, —

35

Where

pp Then I sur - ren - - der un - to sleep, Where *mp*

mp Then I sur - ren - der un - to sleep, Where

mp Then I sur - ren - der un - to sleep,

39

clouds of dream give sec - ond sight. _____

clouds of dream give sec - ond sight. _____

clouds of dream give sec - ond sight. _____

clouds of dream give sec - ond sight. _____

43 *p* *espressivo*
What dreams may come, both dark and deep, Of
p *espressivo*
What dreams may come, both dark and deep, Of
p *espressivo*
What dreams may come, both dark and deep,
p *mp*
What dreams may come,

47 *f*
fly - ing wings and soar - ing leap As
f
fly - ing wings and soar - ing leap As
dark and deep,
dark and deep,

51

I sur - ren - der un - to sleep, _____ As I sur - ren - der
 I sur - ren - der un - to sleep, _____ As I sur - ren - der
f dark and deep, _____ dark _____ and
f dark and deep, _____ dark _____ and

55

un - to sleep, _____ As I sur - ren - der un - - -
 un - to sleep, _____ As I sur - ren - der un - - -
 deep, _____ dark _____ un - - - -
 deep, _____ dark _____ un - - - -

59 *ff*

to sleep, to sleep, to sleep, to sleep,

This block contains four staves of music for measures 59 through 62. Each staff begins with a dynamic marking of *ff* (fortissimo). The music is written in a key with two flats and a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics 'to sleep,' are written below each staff, with horizontal lines indicating the vocal line. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, with some notes beamed together. The accompaniment features chords and moving lines in the lower staves.

63 *p*

sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep,

This block contains four staves of music for measures 63 through 66. Each staff begins with a dynamic marking of *p* (piano). The music is written in the same key and time signature as the previous block. The lyrics 'sleep,' are written below each staff, with horizontal lines indicating the vocal line. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes, with some notes beamed together. The accompaniment features chords and moving lines in the lower staves.

67 *mf* *p* *dim. poco a poco*

sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep,

**gradually reduce dynamic to a whisper;
repeat and dim. al niente*

71 *ppp*

(sleep,) sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep, sleep,

About the Composer

Born in 1970, Eric Whitacre received his M.M. in composition from the Juilliard School of Music, New York, studying with John Corigliano and David Diamond.

Today, Eric Whitacre is one of the bright stars in contemporary concert music, and has quickly become a much commissioned, published and performed choral and symphonic composer, as well as an accomplished conductor and clinician. In addition, he also writes for the motion pictures and has a Grammy nomination to his name (contemporary classical crossover). In 1997, the American Record Guide named his first recording, 'The Music of Eric Whitacre', one of the top ten classical albums and the Los Angeles Times praised his music as "electric, chilling harmonies; works of unearthly beauty and imagination."

Eric Whitacre has received composition awards from ASCAP, the Barlow International Foundation and the American Composers Forum. *Water Night* (1995) for SATB chorus a cappella, has become one of the most popular choral works of the last decade, widely performed internationally by high school choirs and professional choruses alike. It was followed by *Cloudburst*, for mixed chorus, piano, hand bells and percussion, which received first prize in the American Choral Directors Association's "Composers of the Future" competition.

Internationally, Eric Whitacre conducted the first in an annual series of wind symphony concerts in Tokyo, Japan, and was named music director of the Narashino Wind Consortium. Across the United States, Eric Whitacre has conducted, played in, or assisted over 30 musical theater and operetta productions. He has served as chorus master for the Nevada Symphony Orchestra and his guest conducting appearances include the San Francisco Symphony Chorus, the Gregg Smith Singers and the Miami Children's Chorus.

Eric Whitacre has recently begun his tenure as the appointed composer-in-residence for the Pacific Chorale in California.

<u>Choral works by Eric Whitacre:</u>		<u>To Order:</u>
WJMS1001	<i>Cloudburst</i> – Octavio Paz For SATB Chorus, Piano, Hand Bells & Percussion	HL08500165
WJMS1021	<i>i thank You God for most this amazing day</i> – e.e. cummings For SATB Chorus, a cappella	HL08501413
WJMS1032	<i>Leonardo Dreams Of His Flying Machine</i> – Charles Anthony Silvestri For SSAATTBB Chorus, a cappella	HL08501444
WJMS1023	<i>Little Birds</i> – Octavio Paz For SATB Chorus, with piano	HL08501434
WJMS1023A	Separate piano part	HL08501440
WJMS1024	<i>Lux Aurumque</i> – E. Esch/C.A. Silvestri For SATB Chorus, a cappella	HL08501418
WJMS1003	<i>She Weeps over Ragoon</i> – James Joyce For SSA Chorus, English Horn & Piano	HL08500167
WDW1008	<i>Water Night</i> – Octavio Paz For SATB Chorus, a cappella	HL08500040
WJMS1019	<i>When David Heard</i> For SSAATTBB Chorus, a cappella	HL08501407



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