

The title 'RECORDS TO DIE FOR' is written in a large, white, serif font with a distressed, hand-painted appearance. The letters are set against a dark, textured background that looks like a weathered wall or stone.

ERIC WHITACRE: *Light & Gold: Choral Music*

Eric Whitacre, Eric Whitacre Singers. With: Grace Davidson, soprano; Stephen Kennedy, baritone; Laudibus; The King's Singers; Pávao Quartet; Hila Plitmann, narrator; Christopher Glynn, piano.
Decca B0014850-02 (CD). 2010. Raphaël Mouterde, prod.; Andrew Mellor, eng. DDD. TT: 71:16

This, the only CD to feature Eric Whitacre conducting his own, handpicked choir in his own music, is a revelation. Umpteen versions of the title work, *Lux Aurumque* (Light & Gold), may be available, not least of which are renditions by Polyphony (justly praised by John Marks), Cantus (the all-male choir spectacularly recorded by John Atkinson), and the YouTube/Whitacre Virtual Choir (a multi-million-hit worldwide sensation), but none offers the host of accents, volume gradations, and shadings that Whitacre and his singers lavish on this transcendently beautiful work. The textures in every track are so personal, the quiet passages so intimate, and the silences so profound, that it's as if we've been invited into Whitacre's inner sanctum. To hear his *Five Hebrew Love Songs* narrated by the poet herself (Whitacre's wife, Hila Plitmann), or *The Stolen Child* performed by its dedicatees (The King's Singers), is icing on the cake.