

ALEC ROTH

Night Prayer / Nachtgebet

(Te lucis ante terminum)

for unaccompanied choir
(SSATBB)

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EDITION PETERS

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Night Prayer was commissioned by ORA100 for Suzi Digby OBE and ORA Singers.
The first public performance was given by ORA Singers, directed by Suzi Digby,
Cutty Sark, Greenwich, 1 February 2017.

TEXT:

Te lucis ante terminum,
rerum Creator, poscimus,
ut solita clementia,
sis praesul ad custodiam.

Procul recedant somnia,
et noctium phantasmata:
hostemque nostrum comprime,
ne polluantur corpora.

Praesta, Pater omnipotens,
per Iesum Christum Dominum,
qui tecum in perpetuum
regnat cum Sancto Spiritu.

Amen

*anon. (ca. 5th/6th century?)
(Office Hymn at Compline)*

To thee before the end of day,
Creator of the world we pray,
That with thy wonted favour, thou
Wouldst be our guard and keeper now.

From all ill dreams defend our sight,
From fears and terrors of the night;
Withhold from us our ghostly foe,
That spot of sin we may not know.

O Father, that we ask be done,
Through Jesus Christ, thine only Son,
Who, with the Holy Ghost and thee,
Doth live and reign eternally.

Amen

J. M. Neale (1818–1866)

Bevor des Tages Licht vergeht,
Hör, Welterschaffer, dies Gebet:
Der du so milde and so gut,
Nimm gnädig uns in deine Hut.

Gib, dass kein böser Traum uns weckt,
Kein nächtlich Wahnbild uns erschreckt.
Die Macht des Feindes schränke ein,
Dass unser Leib stets bleibe rein.

Erhör uns, Vater, der du mild
Mit deinem Sohn und Ebenbild
Und mit dem Tröster aller Zeit,
Dem Geist, regierst in Ewigkeit.

Amen

*anonym
(Altkirchlicher Hymnus)*

DURATION: 3 minutes approx.

RECORDING:

Night Prayer is recorded by ORA, directed by Suzi Digby, and is available on CD and as a digital download on the album *Many are the Wonders* on the harmonia mundi label (HMM905284).

COMPOSER'S NOTE:

Thomas Tallis's *Te lucis ante terminum* has held me under its spell since I first sang it in my youth. Its plainsong melody has been a recurring obsession, appearing (usually hidden beneath the surface) in many of my works – the 3rd String Quartet and the cantata *A Time to Dance*, for example. So I was particularly delighted to be asked to compose a companion piece.

With music based on plainsong, an immediate challenge for the composer is how to pin down the rhythmic flexibility of the chant. Tallis's triple-time solution is supremely elegant, providing the slow-dancing heartbeat of his setting. My version, being macaronic, applies different rhythmic treatments to the Latin and vernacular (English or German) texts.

Being an inveterate lover of puns, I couldn't resist heading the score with a quotation from the Song of Solomon: 'Talis est dilectus meus'.

Latin: anon.
 English: J. M. Neale
 German: anonym

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1 Semplice (♩ = ca. 52-56)

S1&2 (unis.)

mf

To thee be-fore the end of day,
 Be - vor des Ta - ges Licht ver - geht,

mf

To thee be-fore the end of day,
 Be - vor des Ta - ges Licht ver - geht,

mp (sotto voce)

Te lu-cis an-te ter-mi- num, re-rum Cre-a - tor, po-sci- mus,

mp (sotto voce)

Te lu-cis an-te ter-mi - num, re-rum Cre - a - tor, po-sci-

pp *tutti*
mp

[vocalise, neutral vowel sound, ad lib.] [vocalise, sim.]

6

Cre - a - tor of the world we pray, that with thy won - ted fa-vour, thou
 hör, Welt-er-schaf-fer, dies Ge - bet: der du so mil - de und so gut,

Cre - a - tor of the world we pray, that with thy won - ted fa-vour, thou
 hör, Welt-er-schaf-fer, dies Ge - bet: der du so mil - de und so gut,

ut so - li - ta cle-men - ti - a, sis prae-sul ad cus - to - di-am.

- mus, ut so - li - ta cle-men - ti - a, sis prae-sul ad cus-to-di-

10 S1&2 2 solo (S1)
pp

wouldst be our guard and keep-er now. A - men [vocalise]
nimm gnä-dig uns in dei-ne Hut. →

A

wouldst be our guard and keep-er now. A - men
nimm gnä-dig uns in dei-ne Hut. →

T

A - men A - men A - men A - men

B1

-am. A - men A - men A - men

B2

A - men

mp

16 S1 (solo) tutti
mp

[vocalise]

S2 (tutti) *mp* (sotto voce)

Pro-cul re-ce-dant som-ni-a, et noc-ti-um fan-tas-ma-ta;

A *mp* (sotto voce)

Pro - cul re-ce-dant som-ni - a, et noc - ti - um fan-tas-ma-

T *mf*

From all ill dreams de - fend our sight,
Gib, dass kein bö - ser Traum uns weckt,

B1&2 (unis.) *mf*

From all ill dreams de - fend our sight,
Gib, dass kein bö - ser Traum uns weckt,