

O NATA LUX

Duration: c. 6 minutes

*First performed 7 September 2008 in Neresheim Abbey, Germany,
by the Royal Academy of Music Chamber Choir, conducted by Patrick Russill.
Revised in 2016 for the Tallis Scholars, conducted by Peter Phillips.*

O nata lux de lumine,
Jesu redemptor saeculi,
Dignare clemens supplicum
Laudes preces que sumere.

Qui carne quondam contegi
Dignatus es pro perditis,
Nos membra confer effici
Tui beati corporis.

O Light born of Light,
Jesus, redeemer of the world,
with loving-kindness deign to receive
suppliant praise and prayer.

Thou who once deigned to be clothed in flesh
for the sake of the lost,
grant us to be members
of thy blessed body.

PROGRAMME NOTE

This piece was written for Neresheim Abbey in Germany where I was composer-in-residence in 2008. 'O nata lux de lumine' translates literally to O Light born of Light. This liturgical text has been set by many composers in the past, perhaps the best-known is by Tallis. Whilst I did not intentionally draw any direct influences from the Tallis, his setting remained quietly at the back of my mind as I composed.

The piece opens in a slow and very calm manner with simple but dramatic harmonies. More complex material gradually emerges as the piece develops and gives way to a more turbulent central section. It builds to a lyrical climax on the last two lines of text ('Nos membra..'), which is the part most influenced by Tallis. A return to the calm, opening soundworld follows in a short recapitulation. However, the text now has a stronger meaning than at the beginning. After the musical journey of this piece, the opening line 'O nata lux' is now in a new context, born of this new light.

O nata lux

Alexander Campkin (b. 1984)

Flowing, with grace (♩ = c. 60)

2 SOPRANOS

ALTO

TENOR

BASS

p *mp* *pp* *p*

O na - ta lux O

2 SOPRANOS

ALTO

TENOR

BASS

Flowing, with grace (♩ = c. 60)

p *mp* *pp*

O na - ta lux,

p *mp*

O na - ta lux,

p *mp* *pp*

O na - ta lux,

Piano

Flowing, with grace (♩ = c. 60)

7

mp *pp*
O na - ta lux,

mp *pp*
na - ta lux,

mp *pp*
O na - ta lux,

p *mp* *pp*
O na - ta lux,

p
O na - ta,

p
O na - ta,

p
O na - ta, o

p
O na - ta,