

# Tu Pauperum Refugium (2006)

SSAATTBB

Difficulty rating: 4

Duration: 7'00"

Premiere: C4, conducted by Benjamin Niemczyk, NYC, 06/15/06

*Tu Pauperum Refugium* was written for a C4 program on the theme of “love,” which at first glance might not seem to be the primary focus of this text. Yet it was consciously conceived as a love song. The active acknowledgment of something or someone other than ourselves is at the heart of love as it is of prayer. In the first third of my piece the word “Tu” is repeated in all voices over several pages (“You, you, you”), achieving to some extent the aura of a love mantra (or, looked at from a different angle, the Swingle Singers via Tallis, perhaps). The men open a central section on a tune based on the piece’s opening *re-do-mi* motif, before accompanying a solo soprano, whose notes are derived from a longer compound melody also from the opening section. The work reaches an ecstatic climax at “salus mea, Jesu Christe” (my salvation, Jesus Christ), after which the texture of the opening returns with the men’s and women’s roles reversed. A slowly built 13-note chord initiates the coda of the work. The warm expressiveness of the beginning has by the end become more introspective, with the chorus intoning repetitions of the word “morte” (death). —*Jonathan David*

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Tu pauperum refugium,  
tu languorum remedium,  
spes exsulum, fortitudo laborantium,  
via errantium, veritas et vita.  
Et nunc Redemptor, Domine,  
ad te solum confugio;  
te verum Deum adoro,  
in te spero, in te confido,  
salus mea, Jesu Christe.  
Adjuva me, ne unquam obdormiat  
in morte anima mea.

*Thou art the refuge of the poor,  
remedy for afflictions, hope of exiles,  
strength of those who labor, way for the wandering,  
truth and life.  
And now, Redeemer, Lord, in thee alone I take refuge;  
thee, true God, I adore, in thee I hope,  
in thee I confide, my salvation, O Jesus Christ.  
Help me, lest my soul ever sleep in death.*