



The Stonehaven Chorus

Felix Mendelssohn

Elijah *Op. 70*

Aberdeen Sinfonietta

Conductor - Ralph Jamieson

Sunday 21st May, 2023

Felix Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847)

Elijah op.70

An Oratorio for soprano, alto, tenor and bass soli and SATB chorus in a new arrangement for chamber orchestra by

Joachim Linckelmann

Text derived from the Lutheran Bible by Julius Schubring

English version by William Bartholomew

Elijah (Jehovah is my God) - called "the Tishbite." He was "of the inhabitants of Gilead," the wild and beautiful hill country east of Jordan. The northern kingdom was the scene of his work, at a time when, owing to the influence of King Ahab and Jezebel, Israel was introduced to one of the worst forms of Phoenician worship in place of the worship of Yahweh (Jehovah). As a result, the people had almost entirely forsaken the worship of Yahweh and had become worshippers of the Phoenician god, Baal - a weather god with power over lightning, wind, rain, and fertility.

The oratorio begins with Elijah creating a drought to encourage the people of Israel to repent. The drought will last for three and a half years. He is instructed by an angel to hide and stay with a widow in the area of Zarephath. Here, he performs several miracles. Strengthened, he returns and meets with King Ahab and the Queen, Jezebel. She and Elijah spar with each other for the supremacy of their respective faiths until they agree the matter will be settled by a duel between the gods themselves at the top of Mount Carmel. Both sides are to offer a sacrifice to their respective gods. Jezebel's priests will call on Baal and Elijah on Yahweh and whichever god responds by lighting the fire under a sacrificial bull will be recognized as the one true god.

The factions gather at Mount Carmel, and 850 priests of Baal call on him all day as they dance around the altar (I Kings 18:26) while Elijah mocks them by asking where their god is and why he is not answering. Baal fails to light his followers' sacrifice. When it is Elijah's turn, he calls out to Yahweh who sends down fire immediately: melting Elijah's entire altar to ashes, even after it had been soaked with water. The observers then followed Elijah's instructions to execute the priests of Baal. Subsequently it begins to rain, showing Yahweh's mastery over

the weather. Elijah’s life is still under threat and his death is ordered. He despairs over the stubbornness of the people to give up their idolatry and retreats to the wilderness. Here he is ministered to by angels and is told he is to enter God’s presence on the mount. He emerges from this experience ‘like a fire’; his words appeared ‘like burning torches’. Blessed for his faithfulness, Elijah did not taste of death: “there appeared a chariot of fire, ... and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.”

THE CAST

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|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| Elijah the Prophet | Bass |
| Obadiah - the steward of Ahab who protected the prophets of God from Jezebel | Tenor |
| Ahab - King of Northern Israel | Tenor |
| The Angel | Alto |
| The Widow | Soprano |
| The Queen | Alto |
| A Youth | Soprano |
| Angels, The People, Priests of Baal..... | Chorus |

FIRST PART

*Items marked * refer to text which offers a reflective viewpoint or response to an event and are not associated with any individual character.*

[†]*Soloists from the choir*

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| Introduction: Elijah | <i>As God the Lord liveth</i> |
| Overture | |
| 1. The People | <i>Help, Lord!</i> |
| 2. Duet: Sopranos, The people | <i>Lord! Bow Thine ear to our prayer[†]</i> |
| 3. Recit: Obadiah | <i>Ye people, rend your hearts</i> |
| 4. Air: Obadiah | <i>If with all your hearts</i> |
| 5. The People | <i>Yet doth the Lord see it not</i> |
| 6. Recit: An Angel | <i>Elijah, get thee hence</i> |
| 7. Angels | <i>For He shall give his angels charge over thee</i> |
| 8. Recit: An Angel | <i>Now, Cherith’s brook is dried up, Elijah</i> |
| 9. Recit and Air: The widow | <i>What have I to do with thee?</i> |
| 10. Recit: Elijah and the widow | <i>Give me thy son</i> |
| 11. Chorus* | <i>Blessed are the men who fear Him</i> |

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|-----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 12. Recit: Elijah, Ahab and the priests of Baal | <i>As God the Lord of Sabaoth liveth</i> |
| 13. Priests of Baal | <i>Baal, we cry to thee</i> |
| 14. Recit: Elijah | <i>Call him louder!</i> |
| 15. Priests of Baal | <i>Hear our cry, O Baal!</i> |
| 16. Recit: Elijah | <i>Call him louder!</i> |
| 17. Priests of Baal | <i>Hear and answer, Baal!</i> |
| 18. Recit and Air: Elijah | <i>Draw near / Lord God of Abraham</i> |
| 19. Angels | <i>Cast thy burden upon the Lord</i> |
| 20. Recit: Elijah | <i>O Thou, who makest thine Angels, Spirits</i> |
| 21. The People | <i>The fire descends from heaven</i> |
| 22. Elijah and The People | <i>Take all the prophets of Baal</i> |
| 23. Air: Elijah | <i>Is not his word like a fire?</i> |
| 24. Air: Alto* | <i>Woe unto them who forsake Him!</i> |
| 25. Obadiah, Elijah, The People, The Youth | <i>O man of God/ O Lord, thou hast overthrown/ Open the heavens/There is nothing</i> |
| 26. The People | <i>Thanks be to God!</i> |

Interval

SECOND PART

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| 27. Air: Soprano* | <i>Hear ye, Israel!</i> |
| 28. Chorus* | <i>Be not afraid</i> |
| 29. Recit: Elijah, The Queen (Jezebel) Priests of Baal | <i>The Lord hath exalted thee</i> |
| 30. Priests of Baal | <i>Woe to him!</i> |
| 31. Recit: Obadiah, Elijah | <i>Man of God</i> |
| 32. Air: Elijah | <i>It is enough</i> |
| 33. Recit: Tenor* | <i>See, now he sleepeth</i> |
| 34. Trio: Angels | <i>Lift thine eyes[†]</i> |
| 35. Angels | <i>He, watching over Israel</i> |
| 36. Recit: The Angel, Elijah | <i>Arise, Elijah</i> |
| 37. The Angel: Alto | <i>O rest in the Lord</i> |
| 38. Chorus* | <i>He that shall endure to the end</i> |
| 39. Recit: Elijah, The Angel | <i>Night falleth round me</i> |
| 40. Chorus* | <i>Behold, God the Lord passed by</i> |

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| 41. Recit: Alto* | <i>Above him stood the Seraphim</i> |
| 42. Seraphim and Angels* | <i>Holy, holy, holy[†]</i> |
| 43. Angels | <i>Go, return upon thy way</i> |
| 44. Recit and Air: Elijah | <i>I go on my way/ For the mountains shall depart</i> |
| 45. Chorus* | <i>Then did Elijah</i> |
| 46. Air: Tenor* | <i>Then shall the righteous shine forth</i> |
| 47. Soprano, Chorus* | <i>Behold, God hath sent Elijah/But the Lord</i> |
| 48. Quartet* | <i>O come every one that thirsteth</i> |
| 49. Chorus* | <i>And then shall your light break forth</i> |

Susan McNaught – Soprano

Susan was born in Montrose and studied Music and Art History at the University of Glasgow. Now based in Edinburgh, Susan sings regularly with choral societies and opera companies across Scotland and has performed a wide range of roles including Violetta (La Traviata), Lady Macbeth (Verdi's Macbeth) and Donna Elvira (Don Giovanni), Nedda (Pagliacci), Agathe (Der Freischütz), Sesto (La Clemenza di Tito), Dido (Dido and Aeneas) and Cherubino (Le Nozze di Figaro). Susan's concert performances as soprano soloist include Handel's Messiah, Beethoven's 9th Symphony, Mozart's Mass in C Minor, Vivaldi's Gloria, Vaughan Williams' Dona Nobis Pacem and Brahms' Requiem.

Susan is delighted to be singing with Stonehaven Chorus and Maestro Ralph Jamieson again after previously joining them in Opera Festival Scotland's concert performance of Verdi's Aida at Dundee Caird Hall in September 2022 where she sang the title role.

Sarah Shorter – Alto

Sarah Shorter is a mezzo-soprano based in Glasgow, where she performs regularly with Scottish Opera and the Dunedin Consort. She graduated from the Royal Academy of Music in London where she studied with Anne Howells.

With Scottish Opera, she has created the role of Boletta in Lady from the Sea, sung the roles of Second Postulant in Suor Angelica, Lady in Waiting and Second Witch in Verdi's Macbeth, and has covered Giovanna in Rigoletto, Flora in La Traviata, Peep Bo and Katisha in The Mikado, Kitchen Boy in Rusalka and Mercedes in Carmen.

Matthew McKinney – Tenor

Matthew McKinney is a Scottish tenor and graduate of the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland. In 2021 he sang Henrik in *A Little Night Music* for Buxton Opera Festival. He is currently an ensemble member for English Touring Opera (ETO), where he is singing the role of Luigino and 2nd cover Belfiore *Il viaggio a Reims* by Rossini and the role of Rustighello *Lucrezia Borgia* by Donizetti. He is also performing in a new work for children called *The Wish Gatherer*, which is currently touring primary schools across England.

He has had the privilege of performing a wide range of repertoire for prestigious and local music organisations across the UK and abroad and enjoys these opportunities in equal measure. Highlights of Matthew's musical career so far include his role debut as Henrik in *A Little Night Music*; recital performances taking him to his hometown of Dunblane and to the Palazzo Corsini in Florence; singing regularly with *the Sixteen*; and performing most of the canonical oratorio work as a soloist throughout Britain.

Matthew looks forward to the upcoming year of touring. He is excited to continue discovering the wealth of skills and interest's life as a musician invites.

Ross Cumming – Bass

Ross Cumming is a Baritone originally from the NE of Scotland. He has just completed his 2-year MA in Opera Studies at the Alexander Gibson Opera Studio at Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS) in Glasgow. At the RCS Ross studied under Scott Johnson and performed roles of Siroco in 'L'étoile', President in 'A Feast in a Time of Plague' and Krumpelblatt in 'Four Sisters'.

A music graduate of the University of Aberdeen, Ross also studied at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester (RNCM) achieving Distinction in his Vocal Studies Masters. While there he was under the tutelage of Matthew Best. In 2021 he won the Bessie Cronshaw/Frost Brownson Song Cycle Competition.

Outside RCS he has been a Young Artist at Buxton International Opera Festival, and other roles have included Amonasro in 'Aida' with Opera Festival Scotland, Don Giovanni in 'Don Giovanni' with ALLO Opera, The Forester in 'The Cunning Little Vixen' RNCM, Kilan in 'Der Freischutz' Random Opera. He has performed St John's Passion with Cumbria Opera Festival and has also sung with The Sixteen, The Dunedin Consort and Voces8. He is now looking forward to embarking on a professional singing career, starting with performances with Grange Park Opera and British Youth Opera this summer.

The Stonehaven Chorus

Conductor: Ralph Jamieson

Assistant Conductor: Paul McKay

Accompanist: Blair Cargill

President: Tom Armstrong

Secretary: Jennifer Macdonald tel: 01569 764750

Sopranos

Margaret Brooks, Sally Cooper, Amanda Ferguson[†], Zana Grant, Elma Guthrie, Margaret Hearne, Margaret Hutchison, Pamela Karner, Fiona Malcolm, Allison Morgan Elizabeth Mitchell, Alison Peaker, Suzi Scaife, Jenny Soper, Susan Thain, Evelyn Watt

Altos

Cath Allwood, Fiona Armstrong[†], Caroline Clephan, Margaret Dixon, Susan Farquharson, Frances Gilroy, Margaret Hamilton, Wendy Harding, Susan Henderson, Margaret Longino, Jennifer Macdonald, Anne McClure, Margaret Mitchell, Wanda Paluch, Fiona Petrie, Gaynor White, Jo Woolley

Tenors

Tom Armstrong, May Arthur, Julie Bryce, Paul McKay, Chris Scaife, James Webb

Basses

David Baker, Ross Clephan, Graham Cooper, Jeremy Cutler, Don French, Andy Harding, Mike Harding, Brian Nixon, Philip Rose, James White

Honorary Members

Alan Cooper, Ralph Jamieson, Vera Fillingham, Ray McIntosh, Dr Roger Williams, Dr John Hearne, Douglas Clark, Rita Young, Robbie Middleton, Irene Squires.

[†]*Soloists from the choir*

Aberdeen Sinfonietta

Leader: Bryan Dargie

Violins

Bryan Dargie, Sarah Beattie, Andrew Birse, Emily Birse, Teresa Boag, Alexandria Grant, Ruth Kalitski, Rachel Mackison, Jenna Main, Coralie Usmani

Violas

Sandra Thomson, Ewa Bartmann, Richard Clark, Vanessa Turner

Cellos

Alison Macdonald, Hilary Cromar, Martin Couzin, Mary Dargie

Double basses

Scott Matheson, Callum Young

Woodwind

Margaret Preston (Flute), Fiona Gordon (Oboe), Ailsa Matheson (Clarinet), Kate Friday (Bassoon)

Brass

Kevin Cormack (Horn), Alan Haggart (Trumpet), Mark Boyd (Trombone)

Percussion/Organ

Isabel John (Timpani), Roger Glass (Organ)

We acknowledge with thanks

Alastair Watt for Lighting Design, E Giulianotti, Stonehaven
All friends who assisted us this evening

Visit our Website, www.stonehavenchorus.co.uk



Stonehaven Chorus is a charity registered in Scotland No. SC030519