Elijah

Sunday, October 7, 2007 • 3:00 PM
First Free Methodist Church

Sara Hedgpeth, soprano
Melissa Plagemann, mezzo-soprano
Stephen Wall, tenor
Michael Delos, Elijah
Ben Flor, boy soprano
Andrey Danilchik, baritone

Orchestra Seattle
Seattle Chamber Singers
George Shangrow, conductor

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

Elijah, Op. 70
1809-1847

Part I

INTERMISSION

Part II

Please disconnect signal watches, papers and cellular telephones. Thank you.
The use of cameras and recording equipment is not permitted in the concert hall.
Chorus

Thou didst fight the prophet break forth like a fire; his words appeared as burning torches. Mighty kings by him were overthrown. He stood on the mound of Sinai and judged the judgments of the future, and in Horeb saw vengeance. And when the Lord would take him away from the earth, 'tis said he came a fiery chariot with fiery horses, and was carried up to heaven.

Airo--inner

Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in his strength and of Jacob his chosen vessels. And all flesh shall see him and be ashamed; and all the nations shall be moved together.

Quartet

Gather together, old men, to render the works of our God: gather together, all the earth, to see the great things that he has done.

Chorus

And there shall be light... as the morning after the rain... all flesh shall see it together; and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed.

The second London performance of Mendelssohn's Elijah is described in the journals of Edward Arrowing, a prominent London musicologist.

April 23rd [1847]: "went to Exeter Hall and heard Mendelssohn's new opera of Elijah performed. He himself conducted the performance. He is a tall, thin man, under 40 years of age, and very intelligent in conversation. The Prince and Prince Albert were there, and almost everybody being in full dress, the effect was very fine. The National Anthem was beautifully sung. The oratorio itself is a most splendid composition. The pieces enclosed were the themes of 'Isaia we cry thee', the 'Liste thin exulting mountains' beautifully sung by Misses Kirkham, Duvall, and Dolby, and 'O rest in the Lord' by Miss Dolby. Many other pieces would have been encored had it been fair for the purpose to the Queen. The other solo singers were Philps, Miss Birch, Noell, and Lockey. The oratorio is quite worthy of Handel. Mendelssohn was tremendously cheered. The performances were over at 12½ past 10 o'clock. I was in the Area Reserved Seats, very near the Queen. I should have been very sorry not to have her present."

Prolific as well as extremely precious, Felix Mendelssohn's fabulous gift as a composer, conductor and pianist made him the most successful musician of the 19th century. He experienced few of the personal tragedies, career vagaries, financial difficulties, and physical ailments that beset many composers. It may well be, however, that ceaseless efforts to meet the musical demands of his public contributed to his early death. His music displays the influences of Bach (figural techniques), Handel (dyms and harmonic progressions), Mozart (dramatic characterization, form, and musical texture), and Beethoven (instrumental techniques). He wrote exquisite melodies, and made skillful use of orchestral color and of en-counter musical elements having a literary, artistic, geographical, or emotional associations. His dramatic traits are evident in his oratorios. He combined these romantic elements with the economy of means, emotional intensity, and artistic fineness of Mozart. Felix's great grandfather was the physician, geographer, and moralist, Moses Mendelssohn; his father Abraham was a wealthy banker (after Felix became famous, Abraham would sometimes say in jest, "I used to be known as the son of my father; now I am known as the father of my son!"); and his mother was an amateur musician who contributed to her astoundingly gifted son's artistic development. The boy grew up in Berlin amid a privileged and cultured circle of family and friends.

The musical prodigy whose natural talent probably surpassed even Mozart's, Mendelssohn studied violin and piano while a very young child, painted, and demonstrated significant linguistic gifts as well. He made his public debut as a pianist in 1818 at the age of nine, and wrote his first piece of music at age eleven. At seventeen, he composed an enduring masterpiece, the overture to his stage work Midsummer Night's Dream. In 1836, he entered the University of Berlin, where he studied for three years, and in 1829, at the age of 20, he made the first of two appearances in London, conducting his Symphony No. 1 in C Minor. That same year, he authored the first of his many compositions, "St. Matthew Passion" which since Bach's death, thus initiating the revival of Bach's music that continues to this day. As a highly successful and popular composer, Mendelssohn founded and directed the city's contemporary music of orchestra. He composed the and conducted the famed Gewandhaus Orchestra with great success, popularizing the works of many undeservedly neglected composers. Alongside his rich contributions to music, Mendelssohn also wrote several books on the nature of music and music's place in society. He was a prominent figure in German culture, writing articles, giving recitals, and organizing many concerts, symphonies, and other music. In 1837, he took on the additional responsibilities of family life when he married Cécile Jeanpont, the daughter of a pastor, with whom he had three and two daughters. "A conscientious chronicle of Mendelssohn's life from 1815 to 1835 would merely weary the reader," wrote the late George Marx. "It would link work with more work, string success after success, place tribute next to tribute, and enumerute an ever larger register of acquaintances and friends."

In 1841, Mendelssohn became director of the Music Section of the Academy of Arts in Berlin, a new cultural venture of King Frederick of Prussia. He was required not only to supervise and conduct a large variety of programs, but also to compose upon royal demand. By the end of 1844, unhappiness and exhaustion began to affect his health, and in his official duties. By September 1845, however, Mendelssohn had recuperated sufficiently to return to Leipzig, where he plunged again into a magnificent, comprehensive, listening, and composing. He was teaching at the conservatory, editing, and performing on the piano and organ.

When his beloved older sister, Fanny, also an excellent pianist and composer, and always his closest friend and confidante, died suddenly on May 14, 1847, Mendelssohn's own heart and health broke also. Hoping to recover from his grief and illness, he traveled to Switzerland, where, as a talented painter and draftsman, he created and painted watercolors and drawings of the Swiss landscape. On September 7, he returned to Leipzig, and then went to Berlin to supervise an upcoming performance of Elijah. It is said that while in Berlin he was taken to "the room where his sister was attacked by the fit of which she died. One of his Walpurgisnacht Choruses still remains, with his words on three page she had been playing. Nothing had been moved since he had died, either in the one or the one where she died. They showed him both. He was excessively agitated, his grief burst out afresh, or more even than before. He told the King that it was impossible for him to supervise Elijah, and he returned to Leipzig." On November 4, 1847, at the age of 38, Mendelssohn succumbed to a stroke.

Even after his death, Mendelssohn's reputation continued to soar, opening an incomparable approach through his life. Although not a student journalist, the two orators that drew musical inspiration from Bach and Handel—St. Paul, premiered in 1836, and Elijah, which ranked for many years just below Handel's Messiah as the world's most popular Easter liturgical oratorio. In the year of St. Paul's first performance, Mendelssohn began to contemplate a subject for a new oratorio, finding especially congenial the life of the volcanic Old Testament prophet, Elijah, described in 1 Kings 17-19 (which tells of the disastrous results of
rediscovered the enduring treasures of this magnificent oratorio: the creative and colorful orchestration, the freshness and forcefulness of the orchestral sections. In 1837, the young Russian composer Nikolai Rubinstein, pianist, librettist and editor for St. Paul, Julius Schurberg, to help in drafting a libretto. He wrote to Schurberg, "... the dramatic elements could have a profound psychological and spiritual dimension..."

Elisabeth's unusual and highly dramatic opening of 
Elisabeth
consists of the novel use of a storm in her opening number. The storm, and the fantastic musical expressions of the elements, creates a powerful sense of foreboding and the eddy of the wild sea. Elisabeth, with her fury and her anger, creates a sense of the storm's power. Her voice is powerful and her singing is compelling, as if she were a powerful force of nature.

The storm is not only a symbol of the stormy sea, but also of the stormy emotions of Elisabeth. Her voice is powerful and her singing is compelling, as if she were a powerful force of nature.

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rest in the Lord" has achieved great popularity with the public and leads to a relatively austere chorus that provides welcome contrast. At last God the Lord passes by Elijah on the mountain, accompanied by a silence and a still small voice or a voice so soft and sweet that it can only be heard by those who are prepared and open to hear it. This is a powerful image that paints in sound the fury of wind, earthquake, and fire. Mendelssohn contrasts this turbulence with a starkly simple setting and a driving rhythm, introducing a solemn, yet intense, procession that begins in the depths of despair and ends in radiant hope. Elijah was then led out of hiding because they would lend themselves particularly well to treatment in a "Handelian" orchestra. Perhaps Elijah reflects the conflicts of the composer during his stormy youth. Particularly, the dark, slow, and mysterious quality of the music, such as St. Paul can be seen as an allegory of Mendelssohn's own family history. It might be Elijah's courage, strength, and perseverance that make it a fitting memorial for the composer.

Regrettably, Mendelssohn's last work was his last major composition, the oratorio "The Creation", which was composed during his stormy youth. Mendelssohn, like Elijah, was a scholar of the Bible and a student of the Hebrew language. His deeply religious nature and his focus on the possibility of redemption through faith were both reflected in his compositions.

"To the Noble Artist who, surrounded by the Baal-worship of debased art, has been able, by his genius and science, to preserve faithfully, like another Elijah, the worship of true art, and once more to accustom our era, amid the whirl of empty, frivolous, sounds, to the pure tones of sympathetic feeling and legitimate harmony for the Great Master, who makes us conscious of the unity of his conception, through the whole of his creation, from the soft whispering to the mighty raging elements. Inscribed in grateful remembrance at Albert."
rest in the Lord" has achieved great popularity with the public and leads to a relatively austere chorus that provides welcome contrast. At last God the Lord passes by Elijah on the mountain, accompanied by some chosen inhabitants of Eden, who are the only ones to have any claim to be considered the people of God. As a result, the Lord's voice is inaudible, and the only sound is the music of a strange, unidentifiable instrument, possibly the organ, which is played in the background. The scene is then transfigured by a sharp, starkly set musical piece, which is sung by the choir. The choir then sings the words of the text, "and Elijah was not alone, but was accompanied by an angel who refreshed and strengthened Elijah was sent back to the ever-unfaithful people of Israel with the message of an expansive laudatory hymn for women. This was done with great emphasis and solemnity. The words of the hymn were quite beautiful, and those who heard them were believed to have seen an increase in the power of God's presence.

Elijah then sends his servant to the Lord, who sends a rain of fire, and the fire consumes the offerings. This is a symbol of the Lord's presence and power, and it is in response to Elijah's prayer. The scene then returns to the mountain, where Elijah is shown in a cloud of glory, and the people are told to kneel and worship. The scene then ends with a musical piece, sung by the choir, which is a beautiful and solemn song of praise to the Lord, who has answered Elijah's prayer and given him the power to do great things.
rediscovered the enduring treasures of this magnificent oratorio: the creative and colorful orchestration, the freshness and forcefulness of the orchestral writing, and the grandeur and majesty of the choral passages. The power of the oratorio was an outpouring of love for the people, through the music they loved and the words they understood.

The unusual and highly dramatic opening of Elijah reveals the character of the oratorio: it is not confined to the usual operatic conventions but takes the form of a prologue. The opening chorus is a joyful celebration of the love for the people, and the love for the Elisha, that unites all the inhabitants of the land.

Elijah

The hand that helped orphans
Elijah, in his role as the leader of the oratorio, is portrayed as a man of great virtue and moral authority. He is characterized as a man of integrity, who is willing to go to great lengths to protect the people he loves.

Elijah's death is a turning point in the oratorio, as it marks the end of the glorious era of his leadership. The chorus sings of his passing, and the people of the land are left without a leader to guide them.

Conclusion

Elijah's death is a profound loss for the people, and his passing marks the end of an era. The oratorio is a powerful testament to the power of love and devotion, and to the importance of leadership in the face of adversity.

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Charus

Then did Elijah the prophet break forth like a fire; his words appeared like burning torches. Mighty kings by him were overthrown. He stood on the mountain of Sinai and heard and judged the judgment of the future, and in Horeb vengeantly. When the Lord would take him away from his house, 1103 he came a fiery chariot with fiery horses, and was taken up to heaven.

Arum — arbor

There shall be righteousness shining forth as the sun in Jacob and compassion shall blossom like sunflowers by the rivers of water. You shall walk forth, and every sorrow and mourning shall flee away for ever.

Aram — armon

Behold, God hath sent the prophet, before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers.

Chorus

The Lord from the north hath sent one, who from the rising of the sun shall dwell upon his throne, and come on princes. Behold, my servant and mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set up his kingdom; and his justice shall make speedy speed.

Quartet

Everyone, then, that thirsteth, O come to the waters; O come unto the river of life, and your souls shall live for ever.

*chorus* — arioso

The second London performance of Mendelssohn's Elijah is described in the journals of Edward Balffy, a prominent London conductor.

April 23rd [1847]: "Went to Exeter Hall and heard Mendelssohn's new opera of Elijah performed. He himself conducted the performance. He is a tall, thin man, under 40 years of age, and very intellectual in conversation. The Queen and Prince Albert were there, and almost everybody being in full dress, the effect was very fine. The National Anthem was beautifully sung. The oratorio itself is a most splendid composition. The pieces encored were the themes of 'Isaia we cry thee', the 'Lift thine eyes and see', and 'beautifyfully sung by Misses Kirkham, Duvall, and Dolby, and 'O rest in the Lord' by Miss Dolby. Many other pieces would have been encored had it not been for the respect to the Queen. The other solo singers were Philips, Miss Birch, Novello, and Lockey. The oratorio is quite worthy of Handel. Mendelssohn was tremendously chords. The performances were over at 12 past 10 o'clock. I was in the Area Reserved Seats, very near the centre. I should have been very sorry not to have her present."

Prolific as well as extremely precocious, Felix Mendelssohn's youthful genius as a composer, conductor and pianist made him the most successful musician of the 19th century. He experienced few of the personal tragedies, career vagaries, financial difficulties, and physical ailments that beset most composers. It may well be, however, that his ceaseless efforts to meet the musical demands of his public contributed to his early death. His music displays the influences of Bach (fugal technique), Handel (sharp and harmonious progressions), Mozart (dramatic characterization, form, and musical textures), and Beethoven (involuntary technique). He wrote exquisite melodies, and made skillful use of orchestral color and of musical effects from the baroque, classic, and popular songs and compositions he taught at the conservatory, editing, and performing on the piano and organ.

When his beloved older sister, Fanny, also an excellent pianist and composer, and always his closest friend and confidante, died suddenly on May 14, 1847, Mendelssohn's own heart and health broke also. Hoping to recover from his grief and illness, he traveled to Switzerland, where, as a talented painter and draftsman, he produced watercolors and drawings of the Swiss landscape. On September 7, he returned to Leipzig, and then went to Berlin to supervise an upcoming performance of Elijah. It is said that while in Berlin he was taken to "the room where his sister was attacked by the fit of which she died. One of his Walpurgisnacht Choruses still remained. He had devoted three pages to this piece when she was playing. Nothing had been moved since he had left, either in the room or where she died. They showed him both. He was excessively agitated, his grief burst out afresh, or more even than before. He told the King that it was impossible for him to superintend Elijah, and he returned to Leipzig." On November 4, 1847, at the age of 38, Mendelssohn succumbed to a stroke.

While composing an opera throughout his life, but never did so. Instead, he wrote two oratorios that drew musical inspiration from Bach and Handel: *St. Paul*, premiered in 1836, and *Elijah*, which ran for many years just below *Handel's Messiah* as the world's most popular oratorio. In the year of *St. Paul's* first performance, Mendelssohn began to contemplate a subject for a new oratorio, finding especially congenial the life of the volcanic Old Testament prophet, Elijah, described in 1 Kings 17-19 (which tells of the disastrous results of
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1809-1847

INTERMISSION

Part II

Please connect dial-up, satellite, or cellular telephones. Thank you.

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Kyle DeRerem
Nancy Dilworth
Richard & Judy Doff
Daniel & Kathleen Dow
Robert & Lynne Dowdy
William & Revielle Dunlop
Bryan & Halsey Eng fewer
David Franklin
Phyllis Froi
Karen Fuhr
Gian & Shanaa Ghazan
Farhad Gharan
Gay Griffin
Clifford & Mary Grinnell
Richard & Susan Hall
N. Michael & Memoreen Hansen
David & Cassandra Holmes
Charlotte Hood
Peggy & Rich Hudson
Reina Lumun & Thomas Richard
Kristin Jemerson
Marie & Joyce Jennings
Sylvie Johnson
Oo Gikin
William & Ruth Kratzke
Gerard & Barbara Laughlin
Aline Leighton
Timothe Lunde
Litia MacMillan
Howard & Audrey Monti
Christine Moss
Lemmy & Isaac Namiko
Chad & Ferne Pierce
John Reed

Hugh & Susan Reichenbach
Pamela Roselle
Leslie Ruff
Gregor N. Round
Anne Roset
Valerie Ross
H. L. A. Rowland
John & Ruth Rugh
Brien Russell
Roger & Mary Sackett
Richard & Polly Sanders
Ericka & Hedgerad Schorn
Fritz & Ruth Schultz
Gary & Beverly Shepherd
George & Monica Shuman
Naive & Janet Sedar
Charles Simmel & Deborah Giles
Hedra Stallon
Nancy Vede

Sandra & Albert Smith
Frank Stansburay
William & Kathleen Trier
Melissa Underhill

Harry Vye
Rob & Lorraine Wetzelin
Ann Wilkins
Wayne & Helen Wilson
Nancy & Jerry Worship
Wilson & Barbara Wyman

PANDO ($500-$999)

Phyllis Airport
Roberto & Marisa Azzulbo
Stephen & Joan Andrewes
David Barnes

Michael & Diane Beaumont
Ted & Ruth Back
Victor Bennett

Kurt Brownell, MD
Jerry & Joyce Dunn
Peter & Heather Cannon
C. R. & Marion Chadwick
Robert & Patricia Mische
Barry Creedy
Red Comstock
Vernie & Glenn Comstock
Del & Mary Jane Ellett

Marc Fichette
Lisa Frustual & Gene Fregge
David & Jeanerica Fisher

Earl Groz
Donald & Rebecca Gurke
Kristin Hansen
James & Florence Harris
Linda Haffeld
Peter Henry
Peter & Jane Hesselt
Shorea Haggard

Norman Hollinghead
Kent Holmbe
Heather Houston & Robert Gibbs
William & Susan Hudson

Alan Jones & Eleanor Crawford
J. Michael Keach
Donnla & Joyce Leak

Pattic & Sean Mann
Gwen Maletsid
Dan & Cynthia McCallie
Pamela McElroy & William Halligan

Shannon & Carol Merrell
Christine Moss
Leslie & Isaac Namiko
Chad & Ferne Pierce
John Reed

Lora & Louis Reebke
Joan Scott
Kevin & Marie Silk
Amy Stephenson & Brian Repeal
Valerie Ann Taylor
Robert Thompson
Kathleen Turner & John Wedgwood
Mary Van Gunten
Gertrude Volpe

Stephen Wilen
Judith Wirth
Frank & Gaye Woz
Douglas & Susan Woods

PAUNITO ($1,000-$999)
Julie Adberg
James & Judi Apelis
Rashel Bard
Benjamin Bogli
Bob Bortz
Sidney Bounce & Charles Faerster
Catherine & Michael Bresse
Clayton & Carol Cook

Sara Elter
Eleanor Thompson & Beulah Fuller
Beverley Gliaaer & Ed Parker

Maia Gun
Anne Marie Henschelberg
Barbara Hannah
Anne Haugan
Gerold & Gel Hawe
Nannette Heintz
Mareota Holden
Judith Howard
Clifford & Mary Jensen
Cynthia Johnson
Jana Marten

Carrie McFarlane
Diane McQuiston
Mary Meersohn

Linda Meneitz
Arbiter Mouzakiti & Gregory Martin
Adrian & Amanda Muntian

Henry Noble
Dan Nord
Carol Owens
Greg O'Hara & Lori McCarty
Marilyn Perry

Don & Elizabeth Pound
William & Lu Proctor
Lewrence & Lisa Reid

Jean Adella Rickert
Marie Rockefeller
Barbara Schi
Carol Scott
Maureen Singletary

Diana Sherry
Stephen Smith

Dick Stortz
John Stevens
Stemy & Charlotte Surriale
Carlos Vega & Gama de Soto
Oscar & Christina Viges

Old Wuckerer

James & Donna Weller

Julie White

Hank White
Shannon Wolf

Sue Wrong

Alberto Youngblood

GWATES IN HONOR OF

Vera Clarke

Anne Roberts Engalad

Cara & Arlen Engalad

Nancy Woyhawk

IN MEMORIAM

Georgia Curtiss

Dobby Ennenbach

Roy & Julie Dierksen

Roy & Lottie Stephenes