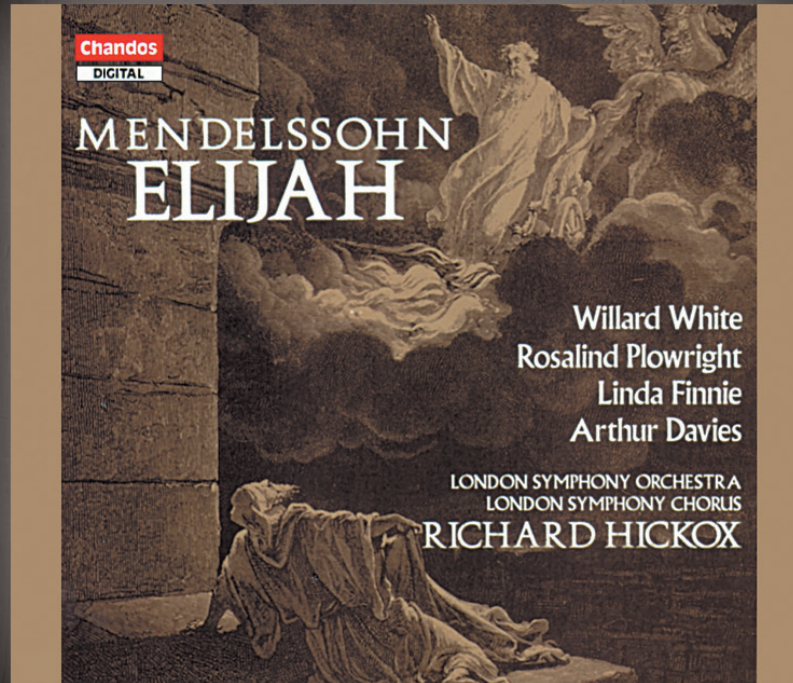


MENDELSSOHN ELIJAH



Rosalind Plowright soprano
Linda Finnie contralto
Arthur Davies tenor
Willard White bass

London Symphony Chorus
London Symphony Orchestra
Richard Hickox





Greg Barrett

Richard Hickox
(1948 – 2008)

Felix Mendelssohn (1809 – 1847)

Elijah, Op. 70

Oratorio for Four Solo Voices, Chorus, and Orchestra

Elijah **Willard White** bass
The Widow, Angel, Soprano Solos.....**Rosalind Plowright** soprano
Angel, The Queen, Contralto Solos.....**Linda Finnie** contralto
Obadiah, Ahab, Tenor Solos..... **Arthur Davies** tenor
The Youth.....**Jeremy Budd** treble

London Symphony Chorus
London Symphony Orchestra
Roderick Elms organ
Richard Hickox

COMPACT DISC ONE

First Part

[1]	Introduction. Recitative. Elijah: 'As God the Lord of Israel liveth' –	1:08
[2]	Overture –	3:25
[3]	1 Chorus. The People: 'Help, Lord! wilt Thou quite destroy us?' – Recitative. Chorus: 'The deeps afford no water' –	4:35
[4]	2 Duet with Chorus. The People: 'Lord! bow Thine ear to our prayer!' – Duet (soprano and contralto): 'Zion spreadeth her hands for aid' –	1:55
[5]	3 Recitative. Obadiah: 'Ye people, rend your hearts, and not your garments' –	0:45
[6]	4 Air. Obadiah: 'If with all your hearts ye truly seek Me' –	2:13
[7]	5 Chorus. The People: 'Yet doth the Lord see it not' –	4:04
[8]	6 Recitative. An Angel (contralto): 'Elijah! get thee hence, Elijah' –	0:59
[9]	7 Semi-chorus. Angels: 'For He shall give His angels charge over thee' –	
[10]	7a Recitative. An Angel (contralto): 'Now Cherith's brook is dried up' –	3:39
[10]	8 Recitative, Air, and Duet. The Widow (soprano): 'What have I to do with thee, O man of God?' –	5:38
[11]	9 Chorus: 'Blessed are the men who fear Him' –	3:41
[12]	10 Recitative. Elijah, Ahab, and Chorus: 'As God the Lord of Sabaoth liveth' –	3:55

13	11	Chorus. Priests of Baal: 'Baal, we cry to thee; hear and answer us!' –	3:24
14	12	Recitative. Elijah: 'Call him louder, for he is a god!' – Chorus. Priests of Baal: 'Hear our cry, O Baal!' –	1:09
15	13	Recitative. Elijah: 'Call him louder! he heareth not' – Chorus. Priests of Baal: 'Hear and answer, Baal!' –	1:59
16	14	Recitative and Air. Elijah: 'Draw near, all ye people: come to me!' –	3:33
17	15	Chorale. Angels: 'Cast thy burden upon the Lord' –	2:12
18	16	Recitative. Elijah: 'O Thou, who makest Thine angels spirits' – Chorus. The People: 'The fire descends from heaven' – Recitative. Elijah: 'Take all the prophets of Baal' – Chorus. The People: 'Take all the prophets of Baal' –	2:46
19	17	Air. Elijah: 'Is not His word like a fire' –	1:53
20	18	Arioso (contralto): 'Woe unto them who forsake Him!' –	3:15
21	19	Recitative with Chorus. Obadiah: 'O man of God, help thy people!' –	
	19a	Elijah: 'O Lord, Thou hast overthrown Thine enemies and destroyed them' –	5:44
22	20	Chorus. The People: 'Thanks be to God! He laveth the thirsty land!' –	3:58
			TT 66:03

COMPACT DISC TWO

Second Part

[1]	21	Air (soprano): 'Hear ye, Israel; hear what the Lord speaketh' –	5:20
[2]	22	Chorus: 'Be not afraid, saith God the Lord' –	4:23
[3]	23	Recitative. Elijah: 'The Lord hath exalted thee from among the people' – Recitative with Chorus. The Queen: 'Have ye not heard he hath prophesied against all Israel?' –	3:26
[4]	24	Chorus: 'Woe to him, he shall perish; for he closed the heavens!' –	1:35
[5]	25	Recitative. Obadiah: 'Man of God, now let my words be precious in thy sight' –	2:08
[6]	26	Air. Elijah: 'It is enough; O Lord, now take away my life' –	5:15
[7]	27	Recitative (tenor): 'See, now he sleepeth beneath a juniper tree in the wilderness' –	0:40
[8]	28	Soprano and Alto Trio. The Angels: 'Lift thine eyes to the mountains, whence cometh help' –	2:09
[9]	29	Chorus. Angels: 'He, watching over Israel, slumbers not, nor sleeps' –	3:58
[10]	30	Recitative. The Angel (contralto): 'Arise, Elijah, for thou hast a long journey before thee' –	1:57

11	31	Air. The Angel (contralto): 'O rest in the Lord' –	3:28
12	32	Chorus: 'He that shall endure to the end, shall be saved' –	2:44
13	33	Recitative. Elijah: 'Night falleth round me, O Lord!' –	1:42
14	34	Chorus: 'Behold! God the Lord passed by!' –	3:43
15	35	Recitative (contralto): 'Above Him stood the Seraphim' –	3:41
16	36	Chorus: 'Go, return upon thy way!' – Recitative. Elijah: 'I go on my way in the strength of the Lord' –	1:22
17	37	Arioso. Elijah: 'For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed' –	2:20
18	38	Chorus: 'Then did Elijah the prophet break forth like a fire' –	2:13
19	39	Air (tenor): 'Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in their heavenly Father's realm' –	2:07
20	40	Recitative (soprano): 'Behold, God hath sent Elijah the prophet' –	1:05
21	41	Chorus: 'But the Lord from the north hath raised one' –	3:22
22	41a	Quartet: 'O come everyone that thirsteth, O come to the waters' –	2:43
23	42	Chorus: 'And then shall your light break forth as the light of the morning breaketh'	3:43
			TT 65:21

Mendelssohn: Elijah

The Birmingham Musical Festival in the nineteenth century was often distinguished by its enterprise in performing or commissioning new works, among them, for example, Dvořák's Requiem Mass and Elgar's *The Dream of Gerontius*. In 1837 Mendelssohn's *St Paul* was enthusiastically received (though it was not its premiere), and in 1845 the Festival committee approached Mendelssohn for a new oratorio for the next year. So *Elijah* was born.

In fact, immediately after the success of *St Paul*, Mendelssohn had written to his friend Carl Klingemann:

If only you would give thought to an
Elijah, or a *St Peter*, or even an *Og of Bashan*!

The idea of an *Elijah* persisted, and in 1837 Klingemann and Mendelssohn drafted a plan for the libretto. Klingemann's place was soon taken by Pastor Schubring, an old family friend, with whom, however, Mendelssohn did not always see eye to eye, as Schubring liked to emphasise the 'sacred' and 'meditative' elements, provoking this exasperated letter from Mendelssohn:

The dramatic element should predominate... The personages should act and speak as if they were living beings – for Heaven's sake let them not be a musical picture, but a real world, such as you find in every chapter of the Old Testament.

So Mendelssohn took over the compiling of the libretto himself, though he still sought Schubring's help in finding appropriate scriptural passages. The composition of the work, however, lay dormant, in the main, until the enquiry from Birmingham, which stimulated Mendelssohn to an intense period of work on the oratorio.

It was written, of course, in German, but Mendelssohn carefully prepared an English translation, relying heavily on the good sense of William Bartholomew, which involved providing alternatives in recitatives to accommodate the English Biblical text.

The first performance took place on 26 August 1846, given by a choir of two hundred and seventy-one, and an orchestra of one hundred and twenty-five under Mendelssohn's baton. *The Times* wrote:

Never was there a more complete triumph.

And Mendelssohn wrote to his brother:

It was quite evident at the first rehearsal that they liked it and liked to sing and to play it; but I own I was far from anticipating that it would acquire such fresh vigour and 'go' at the performance. If only you had been there!

Despite the great success, Mendelssohn was not entirely happy with the work – he was an inveterate reviser of his compositions – and immediately after the premiere he took the critic of the *Athenaeum* walking along the canal banks of Birmingham while discussing his criticisms. The substantially revised form of the work, as we know it today, was first given in London on 16 April 1847.

Since then, *Elijah* has remained a firm favourite in the choral repertoire, even if, latterly, it has no longer been thought the equal of *Messiah* or the Passions of J.S. Bach. Critical opinion has often turned against it, usually focussing on precisely those meditative movements which do tend to hold up the drama (as 'Cast thy burden upon the Lord'), and which perhaps Mendelssohn had included against his better judgement. He certainly made strenuous efforts to remove

'O rest in the Lord', only retaining it at the repeated entreaties of his friends.

Mendelssohn was no stranger to oratorio. He knew his Handel well, and had conducted *Samson*, *Israel in Egypt*, *Solomon*, and *Jephtha* at the Düsseldorf Festivals. He was equally familiar with Bach's Passions, after his famous 'revival' of the Passion According to St Matthew in 1829; and one can sense in *Elijah* a tension between the Handelian dramatic sweep and the desire to include the Bachian element of meditative interpolations. Generally, the Handelian influence predominates, and it is this dramatic impetus which drives the oratorio forwards with such vitality.

As often in the Handelian oratorio, there are here two protagonists, of which the first is Elijah. All the other characters are incidental instruments to the drama, but Elijah, the stern, unyielding prophet of God, is a fully rounded character. Mendelssohn's father, Abraham (himself the son of the great philosopher Moses Mendelssohn, and who once said: 'I was born the son of my father and am now the father of my son'), was a typical Jewish patriarch, stern but benevolent. He was also a perceptive critic of the music of his son, and urged Felix to write an oratorio, specifically *St Paul*, though he died before

it was finished. The character of Elijah clearly comes from deep within Mendelssohn's psyche, and it may not be fanciful to see Mendelssohn as discharging the debt of the composer both to his father and to his Jewish roots.

The other protagonist is the chorus of the Israelite people, whose role is conveyed in a series of powerfully dramatic choral movements which, again as in Handel, deploy an impressive variety of textures and formal procedures. They are entirely free of that
 musty science which is all that many who
 are reputed as grave and discreet thinkers
 have to display in the place of an idea,
 as Mr Chorley of the *Athenaeum* remarked,
 and their vitality makes the oratorio
 essentially a series of dramatic tableaux. The Israelites are fickle and wayward, as easily swayed by miracles ('The fire descends from heaven') as by Queen Jezebel's incitements. The mainspring of the drama is the tension between them and Elijah, and Mendelssohn's grasp of this fundamental point is shown by the placing of Elijah's three great arias: 'Lord God of Abraham' when Elijah is opposed to the people; 'Is not His word like a fire?' when he is master of them; and 'It is enough' when he is deserted by them.

Mendelssohn's first dramatic stroke is to have Elijah seize the stage at the very outset,

when after portentous wind chords he calls down a drought upon the land as punishment for the people's deserting the True God and worshipping Baal. Mendelssohn at first intended to forego an overture altogether, as Handel had apparently done in *Israel in Egypt*; but his placing the Overture *after* the opening recitative turns it from a conventional fugue into a powerful picture of the suffering of the people, leading into their desperate cries – 'Help, Lord!' Obadiah chides them for their sins, but they are not convinced that God is merciful ('Yet doth the Lord see it not: He mocketh at us'). An angel warns Elijah to flee under God's protection ('For He shall give His angels charge over thee' – a piece which shows Mendelssohn's mastery of vocal scoring).

There follows the quasi-operatic *scena* in which the widow's dead son is brought back to life. If this is not, paradoxically, one of the more dramatic parts of the work, it is not so much because of what Tovey called 'the all-too-lifelike tiresomeness of the widow', which might after all have been turned to advantage, as of the virtual impossibility of portraying so miraculous an event in musical terms.

The return of the wind sonority of the opening brings us back to the matter of the drought. Elijah confronts King Ahab and

challenges the priests of Baal to see 'whose God is God', by praying for fire from heaven. Goaded by a mocking Elijah, the people three times invoke Baal, in mounting desperation, but in vain: silence greets their last cries. Elijah, no longer mocking but superbly assured (a change of mood marked by a marvellous modulation at 'Draw near, all ye people'), solemnly invokes *his* God. His prayer is answered, to the amazement of the people ('The fire descends from heaven'), who are immediately won back to the True God. Instantly, Elijah has them slay the prophets of Baal and celebrates the inexorable justice of God in 'Is not His word like a fire...?', which inevitably recalls 'For He is like a refiner's fire' from *Messiah*.

Elijah now prays again to God to alleviate the drought, in a passage ('Look down on us from heaven, O Lord') remarkable for its sombre scoring for bassoons, horns, and *divisi* violas and cellos. Rain at length appears, and the First Part ends with the mighty chorus 'Thanks be to God!', the powerful harmonies of which, at 'But the Lord is above them', caused consternation at the first rehearsals.

The First Part is chiefly characterised by its powerful dramatic impetus; but the story does not allow such a consistent dramatic flow to the Second Part. It begins with words of reassurance which God delivers to his

people, in a passage the key and texture of which recall a similar place in the St Matthew Passion. But Elijah again confronts Ahab, and so provokes Jezebel to incite the people to turn against Elijah. Their parroting of her words exactly captures the behaviour of the mob. Elijah flees to the desert, where he despairs of his mission ('It is enough'). Again we are reminded of a piece by Bach, 'Es ist vollbracht' from the St John Passion, though there is no question of plagiarism. Angels comfort Elijah in the two exquisite and ever-popular numbers 'Lift thine eyes' and 'He, watching over Israel'.

An angel now summons Elijah to Mount Horeb, where he shall see God face to face, and the chorus describes how 'God the Lord passed by!' Again we may admire the inspired vocal scoring by Mendelssohn in 'Holy, holy, holy', even if the searing quality of this ineffable experience eludes him: even a Beethoven would have balked at it.

His courage restored, Elijah returns to his mission, and the chorus describes the vigour with which he then discharged it, before being taken up to Heaven in 'a fiery chariot'.

After so miraculous a consummation of Elijah's life, the problems of ending the oratorio satisfactorily must have been considerable, and at first the introducing of the prophecy of the

coming of the Messiah ('But the Lord from the north hath raised one') may seem far-fetched. But scripturally, Elijah as a prophet is a forerunner of the Messiah, and only in the coming of the Messiah is his mission finally complete.

This may have been in Mendelssohn's mind when in the superb final 'Amen' to the last chorus the basses sing again, though triumphantly transformed, the descending 'curse motive' ('There shall not be dew nor rain') of Elijah's opening recitative.

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At the time of his untimely death at the age of sixty in November 2008, **Richard Hickox** CBE, one of the most gifted and versatile British conductors of his generation, was Music Director of Opera Australia, having served as Principal Conductor of the BBC National Orchestra of Wales from 2000 until 2006 when he became Conductor Emeritus. He founded the City of London Sinfonia, of which he was Music Director, in 1971. He was also Associate Guest Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra, Conductor Emeritus of the Northern Sinfonia, and co-founder of Collegium Musicum 90.

He regularly conducted the major orchestras in the UK and appeared many times at the BBC Proms and at the Aldeburgh, Bath, and Cheltenham festivals, among others. With the London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican Centre he conducted a number of semi-staged operas, including *Billy Budd*, *Hänsel und Gretel*, and *Salome*. With the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra he gave the first ever complete cycle of Vaughan Williams's symphonies in London. In the course of an ongoing relationship with the Philharmonia Orchestra he conducted Elgar, Walton, and Britten festivals at the South Bank and a semi-staged performance of *Gloriana* at the Aldeburgh Festival.

Apart from his activities at the Sydney Opera House, he enjoyed recent engagements with The Royal Opera, Covent Garden, English National Opera, Vienna State Opera, and Washington Opera, among others. He guest conducted such world-renowned orchestras as the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, Orchestre de Paris, Bavarian Radio Symphony Orchestra, and New York Philharmonic.

His phenomenal success in the recording studio resulted in more than 280 recordings, including most recently cycles of orchestral

works by Sir Lennox and Michael Berkeley and Frank Bridge with the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, the symphonies by Vaughan Williams with the London Symphony Orchestra, and a series of operas by Britten with the City of London Sinfonia. He received a Grammy (for *Peter Grimes*) and five *Gramophone* Awards. Richard Hickox

was awarded a CBE in the Queen's Jubilee Honours List in 2002, and was the recipient of many other awards, including two Music Awards of the Royal Philharmonic Society, the first ever Sir Charles Groves Award, the *Evening Standard* Opera Award, and the Award of the Association of British Orchestras.

Elijah

COMPACT DISC ONE

First Part

1 Introduction
Recitative
Elijah

As God the Lord of Israel liveth, before whom I
stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these
years, but according to my word.

1 Kings 17: 1

2 Overture

3 1. Chorus
The People

Help, Lord! wilt Thou quite destroy us? The
harvest now is over, the summer days are
gone, and yet no power cometh to help us!
Will then the Lord be no more God in Zion?

Jeremiah 8: 19, 20

Recitative
Chorus

The deeps afford no water, and the rivers are
exhausted! The suckling's tongue now
cleaveth for thirst to his mouth: the infant
children ask for bread, and there is no one
breaketh it to feed them!

1 Kings 17: 7; Lamentations 4: 4

4 2. Duet with Chorus

The People

Lord! bow Thine ear to our prayer!

Duet

Soprano, Contralto

Zion spreadeth her hands for aid; and there is
neither help nor comfort.

Psalms 86: 1; Lamentations 1: 17

5 3. Recitative
Obadiah

Ye people, rend your hearts, and not your
garments, for your transgressions the
Prophet Elijah hath sealed the heavens
through the word of God. I therefore say
to ye, Forsake your idols, return to God; for
He is slow to anger, and merciful, and kind
and gracious, and repenteth Him of the evil.

Joel 2: 12, 13

6 4. Air
Obadiah

If with all your hearts ye truly seek Me, ye shall
ever surely find Me. Thus saith our God.
Oh! that I knew where I might find Him, that I
might even come before His presence.

Deuteronomy 4: 29; Job 23: 3

7

5. Chorus

The People

Yet doth the Lord see it not: He mocketh at us;
 His curse hath fallen down upon us; His
 wrath will pursue us, till He destroy us!
 For He, the Lord our God, He is a jealous God;
 and He visiteth all the fathers' sins on the
 children to the third and the fourth
 generation of them that hate Him. His
 mercies on thousands fall – fall on all them
 that love Him, and keep His commandments.

Deuteronomy 28: 22; Exodus 20: 5, 6

8

6. Recitative

An Angel

Contralto

Elijah! get thee hence, Elijah; depart and turn thee
 eastward: thither hide thee by Cherith's
 brook. There thou shalt drink its waters; and
 the Lord thy God hath commanded the
 ravens to feed thee there: so do according
 unto His word:

1 Kings 17: 3, 4

9

7. Semi-chorus

Angels

For He shall give His angels charge over thee; that
 they shall protect thee in all the ways thou
 goest; that their hands shall uphold and
 guide thee, lest thou dash thy foot against a
 stone.

Psalms 91: 11, 12

7a. Recitative

An Angel

Contralto

Now Cherith's brook is dried up, Elijah, arise
 and depart, and get thee to Zarepath; thither
 abide: for the Lord hath commanded a
 widow woman there to sustain thee. And
 the barrel of meal shall not waste, neither
 shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that
 the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.

1 Kings 17: 7, 9, 14

10

8. Recitative, Air, and Duet

The Widow

Soprano

What have I to do with thee, O man of
 God? art thou come to me to call my sin unto
 remembrance? – to slay my son art thou come
 hither? Help me, man of God! my son is sick!
 and his sickness is so sore, that there is no
 breath left in him! I go mourning all the
 day long; I lie down and weep at night. See
 mine affliction. Be thou the orphan's helper!
 Help my son! there is no breath left in him!

Elijah

Give me thy son. Turn unto her, O Lord my
 God, O turn in mercy; in mercy help this
 widow's son! For Thou art gracious, and full
 of compassion, and plenteous in mercy and
 truth. Lord, my God, let the spirit of this child
 return, that he again may live!

The Widow

Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? There is no
breath in him!

Elijah

Lord, my God, let the spirit of this child return,
that he again may live!

The Widow

Shall the dead arise and praise thee?

Elijah

Lord, my God, O let the spirit of this child
return, that he again may live!

The Widow

The Lord hath heard thy prayer, the soul of my
son reviveth!

Elijah

Now behold, thy son liveth.

The Widow

Now by this I know that thou art a man of God,
and that His word in thy mouth is the truth.
What shall I render to the Lord for all His
benefits to me?

Both

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, love Him with
all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with
all thy might. O blessed are they who fear Him!

1 Kings 17: 17 – 19, 21 – 24; Job 10: 15;

Psalm 38: 6; Psalm 6: 6; Psalm 10: 14;

Psalm 86: 15, 16; Psalm 88: 10; Psalm 116: 12;

Deuteronomy 6: 5; Psalm 128: 1

11 9. Chorus

Blessed are the men who fear Him: they ever walk
in the ways of peace.

Through darkness riseth light to the upright. He
is gracious, compassionate: He is righteous.

Psalm 128: 1; Psalm 112: 1, 4

12 10. Recitative

Elijah

As God the Lord of Sabaoth liveth, before whom
I stand, three years this day fulfilled, I will
show myself unto Ahab; and the Lord will
then send rain again upon the earth.

Ahab

Art thou Elijah? art thou he that troubleth Israel?

Chorus

Thou art Elijah, he that troubleth Israel!

Elijah

I never troubled Israel's peace: it is thou, Ahab,
and all thy father's house. Ye have forsaken
God's command: and thou hast followed
Baalim! Now send and gather to me the whole
of Israel unto Mount Carmel: there summon
the prophets of Baal, and also the prophets of
the groves, who are feasted at Jezebel's table.
Then we shall see whose God is the Lord.

Chorus

And then we shall see whose God is God the
Lord.

Elijah

Rise then, ye priests of Baal; select and slay a
bullock, and put no fire under it; uplift your
voices, and call the god ye worship; and I then
will call on the Lord Jehovah: and the God
who by fire shall answer, let him be God.

Chorus

Yea: and the God who by fire shall answer, let
him be God.

Elijah

Call first upon your god: your numbers are many:
I, even I, only remain, one prophet of the
Lord! Invoke your forest-gods and mountain-
deities.

1 Kings 18: 1, 15, 17 – 19, 22 – 25

13. Chorus

Priests of Baal

Baal, we cry to thee; hear and answer us! Heed
the sacrifice we offer! Baal, O hear us, and
answer us!

Hear us, Baal! Hear, mighty god! Baal, O answer
us! Baal, let thy flames fall and extirpate the
foe! Baal, O hear us!

14. Recitative

Elijah

Call him louder, for he is a god! He talketh; or he
is pursuing; or he is on a journey; or,
peradventure, he sleepeth; so awaken him:
call him louder.

Chorus

Priests of Baal

Hear our cry, O Baal! now arise! wherefore
slumber?

15. Recitative

Elijah

Call him louder! he heareth not. With knives and
lancets cut yourselves after your manner:
leap upon the altar ye have made: call him
and prophesy! Not a voice will answer you:
none will listen, none heed you.

Chorus

Priests of Baal

Hear and answer, Baal! Mark! how the scorner
derideth us! Hear and answer!

1 Kings 18: 26 – 29

16 14. Recitative and Air
Elijah
 Draw near, all ye people: come to me!
 Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel! this
 day let it be known that Thou art God; and
 I am Thy servant! O show to all this people
 that I have done these things according to Thy
 word! O hear me, Lord, and answer me; and
 show this people that Thou art Lord God; and
 let their hearts again be turned!

1 Kings 18: 30, 36, 37

17 15. Chorale
Angels
 Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall
 sustain thee. He never will suffer the righteous
 to fall: He is at thy right hand. Thy mercy,
 Lord, is great; and far above the heavens. Let
 none be made ashamed that wait upon Thee.

Psalms 55: 22; Psalm 16: 8;
 Psalm 108: 4; Psalm 25: 3

18 16. Recitative
Elijah
 O Thou, who makest Thine angels spirits; Thou,
 whose ministers are flaming fires, let them
 now descend!

Psalms 104: 4

Chorus
The People
 The fire descends from heaven; the flames
 consume his offering! Before Him upon your
 faces fall! The Lord is God: O Israel, hear!
 Our God is one Lord; and we will have no
 other gods before the Lord!

1 Kings 18: 38, 39; Deuteronomy 5: 7;
 Deuteronomy 6: 4

Recitative
Elijah
 Take all the prophets of Baal; and let not one of
 them escape you: bring them down to
 Kishon's brook, and there let them be slain.

Chorus
The People
 Take all the prophets of Baal; and let not one of
 them escape us: bring all, and slay them!

1 Kings 18: 40

19 17. Air
Elijah
 Is not His word like a fire: and like a hammer
 that breaketh the rock into pieces?
 For God is angry with the wicked every day: and
 if the wicked turn not, the Lord will whet
 His sword; and He hath bent His bow, and
 made it ready.

Jeremiah 23: 29; Psalm 7: 11, 12

20 18. Arioso

Contralto

Woe unto them who forsake Him! destruction
shall fall upon them, for they have
transgressed against Him. Though they are
by Him redeemed, yet they have spoken
falsely against Him, from Him have they fled.

Hosea 7: 13

21 19. Recitative with Chorus

Obadiah

O man of God, help thy people! Among the idols
of the Gentiles, are there any that can
command the rain, or cause the heavens to
give their showers? The Lord our God alone
can do these things.

19a

Elijah

O Lord, Thou hast overthrown Thine enemies
and destroyed them. Look down on us
from heaven, O Lord; regard the distress of
Thy people: open the heavens and send us
relief: help, help Thy servant now, O God!

The People

Open the heavens and send us relief: help, help
Thy servant now, O God!

Elijah

Go up now, child, and look toward the sea. Hath
my prayer been heard by the Lord?

The Youth

There is nothing. The heavens are as brass, they
are as brass above me.

Elijah

When the heavens are closed up because they have
sinned against Thee, yet if they pray and
confess Thy Name, and turn from their sin
when Thou dost afflict them: then hear
from heaven, and forgive the sin! Help! send
Thy servant help, O God!

The People

Then hear from heaven, and forgive the sin!
Help! send Thy servant help, O Lord!

Elijah

Go up again, and still look toward the sea.

The Youth

There is nothing. The earth is as iron under me!

Elijah

Hearest thou no sound of rain? – seest thou
nothing arise from the deep?

The Youth

No; there is nothing.

Elijah

Have respect to the prayer of Thy servant,
O Lord, my God! Unto Thee will I cry,
Lord, my rock; be not silent to me; and Thy
great mercies remember, Lord!

The Youth

Behold, a little cloud ariseth now from the
waters; it is like a man's hand! The heavens are
black with the clouds and with wind: the
storm rusheth louder and louder!

The People

Thanks be to God, for all His mercies!

Elijah

Thanks be to God, for He is gracious, and His
mercy endureth for evermore!

22 **20**

The People

Thanks be to God! He laveth the thirsty land!

The waters gather, they rush along; they
are lifting their voices! The stormy billows
are high, their fury is mighty. But the Lord is
above them, and Almighty!

Jeremiah 14: 22; 2 Chronicles 6: 19, 26, 27;
Deuteronomy 28: 23; Psalm 28: 1; Psalm 106: 1;
1 Kings 18: 43 – 45; Psalm 93: 3, 4

COMPACT DISC TWO

Second Part

1 **21. Air**

Soprano

Hear ye, Israel; hear what the Lord speaketh: 'Oh,
hadst thou heeded my commandments!'

Who hath believed our report: to whom is
the arm of the Lord revealed?

Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, and
His Holy One, to him oppressed by Tyrants:
thus saith the Lord: 'I am He that comforteth;
be not afraid, for I am thy God, I will
strengthen thee. Say, who art thou, that thou
art afraid of a man that shall die; and
forgettest the Lord thy Maker, who hath
stretched forth the heavens, and laid the
earth's foundations? Be not afraid,
for I, thy God, will strengthen thee.'

Isaiah 48: 1, 18; Isaiah 53: 1;
Isaiah 49: 7; Isaiah 41: 10; Isaiah 51: 12, 13

2 **22. Chorus**

Be not afraid, saith God the Lord. Be not afraid!
thy help is near. God, the Lord thy God,
sayeth unto thee, 'Be not afraid!'

Though thousands languish and fall beside thee,
and tens of thousands around thee perish yet
still it shall not come nigh thee.

Isaiah 41: 10; Psalm 91: 7

3 **23. Recitative**

Elijah

The Lord hath exalted thee from among the
people: and o'er His people Israel hath made
thee king. But thou, Ahab, hast done evil to
provoke Him to anger above all that were
before thee: as if it had been a light thing for
thee to walk in the sins of Jeroboam. Thou

hast made a grove and an altar to Baal, and
served him and worshipped him. Thou hast
killed the righteous, and also taken
possession. And the Lord shall smite all
Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water; and
He shall give Israel up, and thou shalt know
He is the Lord.

1 Kings 14: 7, 9, 15; 1 Kings 16: 30 – 33

Recitative with Chorus

The Queen

Have ye not heard he hath prophesied against
all Israel?

Chorus

We heard it with our ears.

The Queen

Hath he not prophesied also against the king
of Israel?

Chorus

We heard it with our ears.

The Queen

And why hath he spoken in the name of the
Lord? Doth Ahab govern the kingdom of
Israel while Elijah's power is greater than
the king's? The gods do so to me, and more; if,
by tomorrow about this time, I make not
his life as the life of one of them whom he
hath sacrificed at the brook of Kishon!

Chorus

He shall perish!

The Queen

Hath he not destroyed Baal's prophets?

Chorus

He shall perish!

The Queen

Yea, by the sword he destroyed them all!

Chorus

He destroyed them all!

The Queen

He also closed the heavens!

Chorus

He also closed the heavens!

The Queen

And called down a famine upon the land.

Chorus

And called down a famine upon the land.

The Queen

So go ye forth and seize Elijah, for he is worthy
to die; slaughter him! do unto him as he hath
done!

4 24. Chorus

Woe to him, he shall perish; for he closed the heavens! And why hath he spoken in the Name of the Lord? Let the guilty prophet perish! He hath spoken falsely against our land and us, as we have heard with our ears. So go ye forth; seize on him! He shall die!

Jeremiah 26: 9, 11; 1 Kings 18: 10;
1 Kings 21: 7; Ecclesiasticus 48: 2, 3

**5 25. Recitative
Obadiah**

Man of God, now let my words be precious in thy sight. Thus saith Jezebel: 'Elijah is worthy to die.' So the mighty gather against thee, and they have prepared a net for thy steps; that they may seize thee, that they may slay thee. Arise, then, and hasten for thy life; to the wilderness journey. The Lord thy God doth go with thee: He will not fail thee, He will not forsake thee. Now begone, and bless me also.

Elijah

Though stricken, they have not grieved! Tarry here, my servant: the Lord be with thee. I journey hence to the wilderness.

2 Kings 1: 1, 3; Jeremiah 5: 3; Jeremiah 26: 11;
Psalm 59: 3; 1 Kings 19: 3, 4; Deuteronomy 31: 6;
Exodus 12: 32; 1 Samuel 17: 37

**6 26. Air
Elijah**

It is enough; O Lord, now take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers!

I desire to live no longer: now let me die, for my days are but vanity! I have been very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts! for the children of Israel have broken Thy covenant, and thrown down Thine altars, and slain all Thy prophets – slain them with the sword: and I, even I, only am left; and they seek my life to take it away.

Job 7: 16; 1 Kings 19: 4, 10

**7 27. Recitative
Tenor**

See, now he sleepeth beneath a juniper tree in the wilderness: but the angels of the Lord encamped around all them that fear Him.

1 Kings 19: 5; Psalm 34: 7

**8 28. Soprano and Alto Trio
The Angels**

Lift thine eyes to the mountains, whence cometh help. Thy help cometh from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. He hath said, thy foot shall not be moved: thy Keeper will never slumber.

Psalm 121: 1 – 3

9 29. Chorus

Angels

He, watching over Israel, slumbers not, nor sleeps.
Shouldst thou, walking in grief, languish, He will
quicken thee.

Psalm 121: 4; Psalm 138: 7

10 30. Recitative

The Angel

Contralto

Arise, Elijah, for thou hast a long journey before
thee. Forty days and forty nights shalt thou
go to Horeb, the mount of God.

1 Kings 19: 7, 8

Elijah

O Lord, I have laboured in vain; yea, I have spent
my strength for nought! O that Thou wouldst
rend the heavens, that thou wouldst come
down; that the mountains would flow down
at Thy presence, to make Thy name known
to Thine adversaries, through the wonders of
Thy works! O Lord, why hast Thou made
them to err from Thy ways, and hardened
their hearts that they do not fear Thee? O that
I now might die!

Isaiah 49: 4; Isaiah 64: 1, 2;
Isaiah 63: 17; 1 Kings 19: 4

11 31. Air

The Angel

Contralto

O rest in the Lord; wait patiently for Him, and
He shall give thee thy heart's desires.
Commit thy way unto Him, and trust in Him,
and fret not thyself because of evil doers.

Psalm 37: 1, 4, 7

12 32. Chorus

He that shall endure to the end, shall be saved.

Matthew 24: 13

13 33. Recitative

Elijah

Night falleth round me, O Lord! Be Thou not far
from me! hide not Thy face, O Lord, from
me; my soul is thirsting for Thee, as a thirsty
land.

The Angel

Soprano

Arise, now! get thee without, stand on the mount
before the Lord; for there His glory will
appear and shine on thee! Thy face must be
veiled, for He draweth near.

Psalm 143: 6, 7; 1 Kings 19: 11, 13

14 34. Chorus

Behold! God the Lord passed by! And a mighty
wind rent the mountains around, brake in
pieces the rocks, brake them before the
Lord: but yet the Lord was not in the tempest.
Behold! God the Lord passed by! And the sea
was upheaved, and the earth was shaken: but
yet the Lord was not in the earthquake. And
after the earthquake there came a fire: but
yet the Lord was not in the fire. And after the
fire there came a still small voice; and in that
still voice, onward came the Lord.

1 Kings 19: 11, 12

15 35. Recitative
Contralto –
Semi-chorus and Chorus

Above Him stood the Seraphim, and one cried to
another: Holy, holy, holy is God the Lord –
the Lord Sabaoth! Now His glory hath filled
all the earth.

Isaiah 6: 2, 3

16 36. Chorus

Go, return upon thy way! For the Lord yet hath
left Him seven thousand in Israel, knees
which have not bowed to Baal: go, return
upon thy way; thus the Lord commandeth.

1 Kings 19: 15, 18

Recitative

Elijah

I go on my way in the strength of the Lord. For
Thou art my Lord; and I will suffer for
Thy sake. My heart is therefore glad, my glory
rejoiceth, and my flesh shall also rest in hope.

Psalms 71: 16; Psalm 16: 9

17 37. Arioso
Elijah

For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be
removed; but Thy kindness shall not depart
from me, neither shall the covenant of Thy
peace be removed.

Isaiah 54: 10

18 38. Chorus

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 mount of Sinai, and heard
the judgements of the future; and in Horeb,
its vengeance. And when the Lord would
take him away to heaven, lo! there came a
fiery chariot, with fiery horses; and he went
by a whirlwind to heaven.

Ecclesiasticus 48: 1, 6, 7; 2 Kings 2: 1, 11

19 39. Air

Tenor

Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in
their heavenly Father's realm.
Joy on their head shall be for ever lasting, and all
sorrow and mourning shall flee away for ever.

Matthew 13: 43; Isaiah 51: 11

20 40. Recitative

Soprano

Behold, God hath sent Elijah 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 unto their fathers; lest the Lord
shall come and smite the earth with a curse.

Malachi 4: 5, 6

21 41. Chorus

But the Lord from the north hath raised one,
who from the rising of the sun shall call
upon His Name and come on princes. Behold,
my servant and mine elect, in whom my soul
delighteth! On him the spirit of God shall
rest: the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of might and of counsel, the spirit of
knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. Thus
saith the Lord: 'I have raised one from the
north, who from the rising, on My Name shall
call.'

Isaiah 41: 25; Isaiah 11: 2

22 41a. Quartet

O come everyone that thirsteth, O come to the
waters: O come unto Him. O hear, and your
souls shall live for ever.

Isaiah 55: 1, 3

23 42. Chorus

And then shall your light break forth as the
light of the morning breaketh; and your
health shall speedily spring forth then; and
the glory of the Lord ever shall reward you.
Lord, our Creator, how excellent Thy Name is
in all the nations! Thou fillest heaven with
glory. Amen.

Isaiah 58: 8; Psalm 8: 1



The premature death of Richard Hickox on 23 November 2008, at the age of just sixty, deprived the musical world of one of its greatest conductors. The depth and breadth of his musical achievements were astonishing, not least in his remarkable work on behalf of British composers. An inspiring figure, and a guiding light to his friends and colleagues, he had a generosity of spirit and a wonderful quality of empathy for others.

For someone of his musical achievements, he was never arrogant, never pompous. Indeed there was a degree of humility about Richard that was as endearing as it was unexpected. He was light-hearted and, above all, incredibly enthusiastic about those causes which he held dear. His determination to make things happen for these passions was astonishing – without this energy and focus his achievements could not have been as great as they were. He was able to take others with him on his crusades, and all in the pursuit of great music.

Richard was a completely rounded musician with a patience, kindness, and charisma that endeared him to players and singers alike. His enthusiasm bred its own energy and this, in turn,

inspired performers. He was superb at marshalling large forces. He cared about the development of the artists with whom he worked and they repaid this loyalty by giving of their best for him.

An unassuming man who was always a delight to meet, Richard was a tireless musical explorer who was able to create a wonderful sense of spirituality, which lifted performances to become special, memorable events. For these reasons, Richard was loved as well as respected.

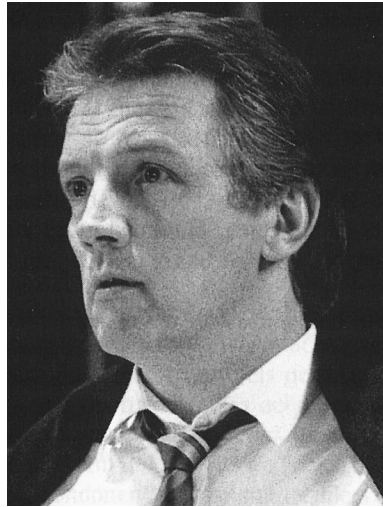
The Richard Hickox Legacy is a celebration of the enormously fruitful, long-standing collaboration between Richard Hickox and Chandos, which reached more than 280 recordings. This large discography will remain a testament to his musical energy and exceptional gifts for years to come. The series of re-issues now underway captures all aspects of his art. It demonstrates his commitment to an extraordinarily wide range of music, both vocal and orchestral, from the past three centuries. Through these recordings we can continue to marvel at the consistently high level of his interpretations whilst wondering what more he might have achieved had he lived longer.



Rosalind Plowright

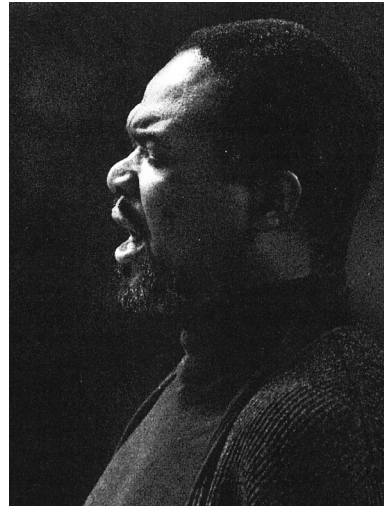


Linda Finnie



Fritz Curzon

Arthur Davies



Fritz Curzon

Willard White

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Fritz Curzon

Recording 'Elijah' at St Jude's Church, London

MENDELSSOHN: ELIJAH – Soloists/LSC/LSO/Hickox

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2-disc set **CHAN 241-48**

Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847)

Elijah, Op. 70

Oratorio for Four Solo Voices, Chorus, and Orchestra

Elijah **Willard White** bass
The Widow, Angel, Soprano Solos **Rosalind Plowright** soprano
Angel, The Queen, Contralto Solos **Linda Finnie** contralto
Obadiah, Ahab, Tenor Solos **Arthur Davies** tenor
The Youth **Jeremy Budd** treble

London Symphony Chorus
London Symphony Orchestra
Roderick Elms organ
Richard Hickox

COMPACT DISC ONE

1–22 First Part (Introduction – Overture – Nos 1–20)
TT 66:03

COMPACT DISC TWO

1–23 Second Part (Nos 21–42)
TT 65:21

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MENDELSSOHN: ELIJAH – Soloists/LSC/LSO/Hickox

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