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### Elijah

Glenn Block Director/Conductor  
*Illinois State University*

James Major Director

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Music Department  
Illinois State University

# ELIJAH

by

Felix Mendelssohn

ISU Symphony Orchestra

Glenn Block, *Music Director & Conductor*

ISU Concert Choir

ISU Civic Chorale

James Major, *Director*

*Elijah:* Donald Armstrong, *Baritone*

*An Angel:* Bonnie Pomfret, *Soprano*

*An Angel:* Kathleen Randles, *Alto*

*Obediah:* Alfonse Anderson, *Tenor*

*A Youth:* Jeff Holbrook, *Boy Soprano*

Rabbi John Spiro, *Narrator*

Braden Auditorium  
Sunday Afternoon  
October 29, 1995  
3:00 p.m.

Part One

Introduction—Recitative

Elijah: As God the Lord (I Kings 17:1)

Overture

Chorus—The People: Help, Lord! (Jeremiah 8:19,20; I Kings 17:7; Lamentations 4:4)

Duet (Soprano and alto) with Chorus.

The People: Lord, bow thine ear

Duet: Zion spreadeth her hand for aid (Psalm 76:1; Lamentations 1:17)

Recitative (Tenor)—Obadiah: Ye people, rend your hearts (Joel 2:12, 13)

Aria (Tenor)—Obadiah: If with all your hearts (Deuteronomy 4:29; Job 23:3)

Chorus—The People: Yet doth the Lord see it not (Deuteronomy 28:22; Exodus 20:5,6)

Recitative and Chorus

Elijah: As God the Lord of Sabaoth liveth

Ahab: Art thou Elijah?

The People: Thou art Elijah

Elijah: I never troubled Israel's peace

The People: And then we shall see whose God is God the Lord

Elijah: Rise then, ye priests of Baal

The People: Yea; and the God who by fire

Elijah: Call first upon your god (I Kings 18:1,15, 17-19, 22-25)

Chorus—Priests of Baal: Baal, we cry to thee (I Kings 18:26)

Recitative and Chorus

Elijah: Call him louder, for he is a god!

Priests of Baal: Hear our cry, O Baal! (I Kings 18:27)

Recitative and Chorus

Elijah: Call him louder!

Priests of Baal: Give and answer, Baal! (I Kings 18:28, 29)

Recitative and Air—Elijah: Draw near, all ye people: come to me! (I Kings 18:30, 36, 37)

Recitative

Elijah: O Thou, who makest Thine angels spirits (Psalm 104:4)

The People: The fire descends from heaven (I Kings 18:38, 39. Deuteronomy 5:7)

Air—Elijah: Is not His word like a fire (Jeremiah 23:29. Psalm 7:11, 12)

Arioso (Alto)—Woe unto them who forsake Him! (Hosea 7:13)

Recitative and Chorus

Obadiah: O man of God, help thy people!

Elijah: O Lord, Thou hast overthrown Thine enemies

The People: Open the heavens and send us relief

Elijah: Go up now, child, and look toward the sea

The Youth: There is nothing

Elijah: When the heavens are closed up

The People: Then hear from heaven, and forgive the sin!

Elijah: Go up again, and still look toward the sea

The Youth: There is nothing

Elijah: Hearest thou no sound of rain?

The Youth: No; there is nothing

Elijah: Have respect to the prayer of Thy servant

The Youth: Behold, a little cloud ariseth now from the waters

The People: Thanks be to God, for all His mercies!

Elijah: Thanks be to God (Jeremiah 14:22. 2 Chronicles 6:19, 26, 27. Deuteronomy 28:23. Psalms 28:1; 106:1. I Kings 18:43-45. Psalms 93:3.)

Chorus—The People: Thanks be to God! (Psalm 93:4)

*Intermission*

Part Two

Air (Soprano)—Hear ye, Israel (Isaiah 41:1, 18; 53:1; 41:10; 51:12, 13)

Chorus—Be not afraid, saith God the Lord (Isaiah 41:10. Psalm 91:7)

Recitative and Chorus—Elijah: The Lord hath exalted thee

Chorus—Woe to him

Recitative—Elijah: Tarry here, my servant (I Samuel 17:37)

Aria—Elijah: It is enough (Job 7:16. I Kings 19:4, 10)

Recitative (Tenor)—See now he sleepeth (I Kings 19:5. Psalm 34:7)

Trio—Angels: Lift thine eyes to the mountains (Psalm 121:1-3)

Chorus—Angels: He, watching over Israel (Psalm 121:4; 138:7)

Recitative

An Angel: Arise Elijah (I Kings 19:7, 8)

Elijah: O Lord, I have labored (Isaiah 49:4; 64:1,2; 63:17. I Kings 29:4)

Air (Alto)—An Angel: O rest in the Lord (Psalm 37:1, 4, 7)

Recitative (Bass and Soprano)—Night falleth round me

Chorus—Behold, God the Lord passed by

Arioso—Elijah: For the mountains shall depart (Isaiah 54:10)

Chorus—Then did Elijah the prophet break forth like a fire (Ecclesiastes 48:1, 6, 7. II Kings 2:1, 11)

Air (Tenor)—Then shall the righteous shine forth (Matthew 13:43. Isaiah 51:11)

Quartet—O come ev'ry one that thirsteth

Chorus—And then shall your light break forth (Isaiah 58:8. Psalm 8:1)

*Donald J. Armstrong*, baritone, has taught in the Department of Music faculty at Illinois State university since 1966. He was educated at Texas Tech University and the University of Texas, Austin. Dr. Armstrong has taught all facets of both vocal and choral music at ISU and has conducted virtually every type of choral organization at the University. He is presently Graduate Coordinator for the Department of Music, while teaching both studio voice and conducting, and supervising group instruction voice courses. A life member of the American Choral Directors Association, he has served that organization in several offices in both Illinois and the Midwest. Dr. Armstrong is also a member of NATS, and performs regular recitals at the University. He has performed the operatic roles of Scarpia (Tosca), Germont (La Traviata), and Gianni Schicchi. Oratorio performances have included all major works from Schütz to Walton.

*Bonnie Pomfret*, soprano, joined the voice faculty at ISU in 1986. With graduate degrees in vocal performance from Indiana University (DM), Boston Conservatory (MM), and an undergraduate degree in piano and voice from the conservatory at Freiburg, Germany (SMP), she is fluent in both German and Italian. Currently Dr. Pomfret pursues her interest in vocal health as a member of the Comprehensive Voice Evaluation team at Peoria Ear Nose and Throat Group, which has achieved national recognition in its use of a team approach to videostroboscopy in diagnosis and rehabilitation of vocal problems. In 1994 she was the recipient of a National Endowment of the Humanities Fellowship.

*Kathleen Randles*, Mezzo-Soprano, has sung professionally with such companies as Opera Theatre of St. Louis, Glimmerglass Opera, Dayton Opera, and the Columbus Symphony. As a recitalist, she has appeared across the country. She is well known for her Gilbert and Sullivan interpretations, having most recently appeared as Katisha in *The Mikado* with the Columbus Light Opera. A former radio broadcaster, she has a D.M.A. degree from The Ohio State University.

*Alfonse Anderson*, tenor, has performed throughout the United States with the opera companies of Houston, Minnesota, Arizona, Des Moines, Aspen, Opera North, Chicago Opera Theater and Oakland Opera to name a few. Additionally, he has appeared as a soloist with the National, Chataquagua, Arizona, AIMS and Illinois State University Symphony Orchestras, as well as in concerts in the Washington D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York metropolitan areas.

*Rabbi John Spiro*, narrator, is spiritual leader at Moses Montefiore Congregation and teaches part-time at Illinois Wesleyan and Illinois State Universities.

*Jeff Holbrook*, age 11, is a student at Metcalf Laboratory School where he has been featured in productions of *The Pirates of Penzance* and *Joseph and the Wonderful? Raincoat?*. He is active in sports and is an accomplished juggler.

*Glenn Block* is Director of Orchestras and Opera and Professor of Conducting at Illinois State University. In addition, he has served since 1983 as Music Director of the Youth Symphony of Kansas City. Block has been widely recognized as a teacher of conducting and is a frequent guest conductor, appearing in over twenty-seven states. He currently serves on the national Board of Directors of the American Symphony Orchestra League. He was educated at the Eastman School of Music. He received his Ph.D. from the University of California at San Diego.

## Program Notes

The oratorio began in Rome in the middle of the XVI. century when Filippo Neri inaugurated a special service order called **oratoriani** and provided a special building, the **oratorio**, where these popular services were conducted. No music is existent before Cavalieri's **Rappresentazione di anima e di corpo**, 1600. Other Italians developed the style until it reached a high point in the works of Carissimi, Draghi, Stradella and Alessandro Scarlatti.

Heirich Schutz wrote the first German oratorio in 1623. Bach and Haydn continued the series, but Mendelssohn reverted to the Handel tradition which was so greatly esteemed by English audiences.

Like Handel, Mendelssohn knew his Bible, and the texts he selected for musical setting lent themselves particularly to his type of dramatic treatment. At one point he made an arrangement with the musician Adolph Marx wherein each would write a text for the other's use. Mendelssohn fulfilled his bargain by writing text on the subject of Moses, which was never set, but Marx failed to produce his version of St. Paul as he had promised. So Mendelssohn selected his own words on that subject and this great work was presented in 1836.

In June, 1845, the committee of the Birmingham Musical Festival invited the composer to conduct all of the performances of their next festival, and to provide a new oratorio, or other music, for the occasion.

Intensive work on the new oratorio was postponed until the following spring. By late May, 1846, the first part was completed in Leipzig, where Mendelssohn directed the new Conservatory and conducted the Gewandhaus Concerts, and sent to London to be translated. His work was periodically interrupted in order for him to participate in various events: the Lower Rhine Festival at Aix-la-Chapelle; the festival at Liege where the first performance of his hymn "Lauda Sion" was given; and the first festival of the German-Flemish Association at Cologne for which he has composed "To the Sons of Art" on Schiller's poem.

By July the remainder of the new oratorio, "Elijah," was sent to London. The first choral rehearsals were entrusted to Moscheles, the famous piano virtuoso, while Mendelssohn continued to work on the orchestral parts at Leipzig. The completion date indicated on the score was August 11, 1846.

The first performance of "Elijah" was given on the morning of August 26th at the Town Hall of Birmingham. Its success was spectacular. Four choruses and four arias were enthusiastically encored. The same evening the composer wrote to his brother:

"No work of mine ever went so admirably at the first performance, or was received with such enthusiasm both by musicians and the public, as this. I never in my life heard a better performance—no, nor so good, and almost doubt if I can ever hear one like it again."

In spite of its glorious acceptance Mendelssohn immediately undertook some revisions. In April of the following year he returned to London for the tenth and last time and conducted four performances of the revised oratorio for the Sacred Harmonic Society at Exeter Hall. The Queen and Prince Albert attended the second presentation. On that occasion the Prince wrote a note in his program book addressing Mendelssohn as the second Elijah, faithful to the worship of true Art.

The story of Elijah, the greatest and sternest of the Hebrew prophets, appears in Kings I and II and he is mentioned in the New Testament also. The name comes from the Hebrew **eliuah** (or **eligahu**) meaning "my God is Yahweh."

It was Elijah who insisted on the single divinity of Yahweh and who repudiated the cult of any other God. In the legends of Elijah comes the belief that he would return for the restoration of Israel. Both Jesus and John the Baptist rejected the idea that they were Elijah, but speculation as to his reappearance continues to the present day.

The overture follows a brief introduction by Elijah who announces the forthcoming lack of dew and rain and in the first chorus the people invoke the Lord to help them in their sorry plight. Elijah confronts Ahab, ruler of Israel (9th century B.C.), and challenges him to an ordeal to see whether the heathen God Baal or Yahweh will bring relief. The contest takes place on Mt. Carmel. The prophets of Baal appeal by ritual dances and other exhortations, but to no avail. Elijah's supplication to Yahweh is answered when a bolt of lightning consumes his sacrifice and rain comes from the sea. This episode, with Elijah's taunting remarks and the stirring choral drama, makes one of the most effective scenes in all musical literature.

There is great contrast between music of a contemplative nature, as in the arias "If with all your hearts (tenor)," and "Hear ye, Israel (soprano)," as opposed to the dynamic power of such sections as the Baal choruses. Throughout the work the characterization of the prophet is intensely maintained in his recitations and arias. The greatest appeal, however is in the varied choral numbers such as "Thanks be to God," "Be not afraid," and "He, watching over Israel," whose effectiveness is eternally retained by virtue of the composer's realistic exploitation of vocal and instrumental resources and his eloquent interplay of melodic and contrapuntal expressions.

Irwin Spector

*ISU Symphony Orchestra Personnel*  
Glenn Block, *Music Director and Conductor*

*Violin*

Francisco Marchan, *Concertmaster*  
Jennifer Smith, *Principal*

*Second Violin*

Kristine Callas  
Stephane Deimer  
Mary Giesler  
Elizabeth Japel  
Travis McGuire  
Rebecca Mertz  
Sarah Gentry  
Colleen Moss

*Viola*

Matthew Barwegen, *Principal*  
Kate Hamilton  
Jason Warner

*Cello*

Jenny Holtman, *Principal*  
Douglas Cresto  
Brian Gaona  
Greg Hamilton  
Nate Johnson

*String Bass*

Ian Solomon, *Principal*  
Patrick Egan  
Clifford D. Hunt  
Steve Polzin  
Ben Sullivan

*Flute*

Jennifer Torbeck, *Principal*  
Randa Lyn Martin

*Oboe*

Maryann Flock, *Principal*  
Deana Rumsey

*Clarinet*

Jamian Green, *Principal*  
Rebecca Parker

*Bassoon*

Christopher Harrison, *Principal*  
Laura Maland

*Horn*

Eric Kaiser, *Principal*  
Brandon Sinnock  
Katie Lunzman  
Vic Pesavento  
Brian Rous

*Trumpet*

Troy McKay, *Principal*  
Sharon Slote

*Trombone*

Grant Dawson, *Principal*  
Charlie Plummer  
Steve Fox, *Bass Trombone*

*Tuba*

Andrew Rummel

*Timpani*

Michael Mercer

*Organ*

Patricia Foltz

*Staff*

Jenny Holtman, *Manager/Librarian*  
Jon Feller, *Assistant Conductor*  
Maryann Flock, *Assistant Conductor*

*Orchestra Committee*

Brandon Sinnock, *Chair*  
Rebecca Mertz, *Round Table Representative*  
Jennifer Holtman  
Troy McKay  
Ian Solomon

Organ courtesy of David Horine and *Horine's Pianos Plus*.

*Concert Choir*  
James Major, *Conductor*  
Gabriella Fodor, *Piano*

John Davis, *Assistant Conductor* Julie Reed, *Assistant Conductor*

*Soprano*

Kristin Egan  
Alison Hoelscher  
Amy Jackson  
Rosemary Koziel  
Monica Ludwig  
Tara McCullum  
Michele Marlow  
Mindy Maves  
Charlotte Ritter  
Jane Schurter  
Alison Trego  
Kristin White

*Alto*

Jenna Avery  
Tina Buckley  
Amy Butters  
Elizabeth Dirksen  
Karen Harpel  
Jessica Ireland  
Krista Koske  
Megan Poulos  
Kristine Ragonese  
Julie Reed  
Karen Tucka  
Kimberly Woodson

*Tenor*

Nate Edwards  
Jeff Glogowski  
Nick LaPaglia  
Cliff Runyard  
Rob Scott  
Steve Peter  
Andrew Sogor  
Clay Turner  
Steve Wallace  
Steve Wilmert

*Bass*

Tony Barton  
Tony Bergbower  
Ed Corpus  
Ben Cubberly  
Jonathan Dann  
John Davis  
Mathew Flanigan  
Chris Fuller  
Cory Jones  
Harry Pratt

*ISU Orchestral Instrument Faculty*

Max Schoenfeld, *Flute* Judith Dicker, *Oboe*  
Aris Chavez, *Clarinet* Michael Dicker, *Bassoon*  
Joe Neisler, *Horn* Amy Gilreath, *Trumpet*  
Stephen Parsons, *Trombone* Ed Livingston, *Tuba*  
David Collier, *Percussion*  
Sarah Gentry, *Violin* Arthur Lewis, *Viola*  
Greg Hamilton, *Cello* William Koehler, *String Bass*

Next ISU Orchestra Concert:

Sunday, November 19 7:00 p.m.

Braden Auditorium

ISU Holiday Concert with ISU Choral Department.

Tickets at Braden Box Office (309) 438-5444

Next ISU Chamber Orchestra Concert:

Thursday, November 9 8:00 p.m.

Kemp Recital Hall

*Civic Chorale*

Louise Andrew  
Jennifer Bair  
Carolyn Bartusek  
Nancy Beasley  
Barbara Bethard  
Glenn Beyer  
Margaret Bratcher  
Judy Brown  
Owen Brummet  
Jane Brummet  
Lillian Bucher  
Hilary Buck  
Carol Campbell  
Nick Chatterton  
Min-Ah Cho  
Christopher Cooper  
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Lola DeVore  
Christy Lynn Dubra  
Peg Dudzik  
Jan Farkas  
Michelle Francis  
Carly Garcia  
Anne Garrett  
Jacob Gourley  
Barb Green  
Jessica Gruener  
Sara Guetzlaff  
Ellen Hagen  
Dick Hanson  
Karen Harris  
Eric Heerwagen  
John Hensley  
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Doug Lamb  
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Bea Lowery  
Kristen Lyeht  
Connie Malecki  
Heidi Malmberg  
Michele Marlow  
Nicole Maubach  
Kay Mays  
Jerry McGinnis  
JoAnn Meiser  
Karen Monroe  
William Morgan  
Ray Morrison  
Marge Mosier  
John Nebgen  
Ted Nicholson  
Penny Noble  
Ted Noth  
Fern Noth  
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Susan Palmer  
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Maxine Rogers  
Judith Ronan  
Pai Rosenbaum  
Alicia Rybenski  
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Elizabeth Schaefflein  
Sharon Schroeder  
Dawn Sedgwick  
Mary Selk  
Alissa Semanko  
Anya Shoemaker  
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Kim Snyder  
Ann Sokan  
Leslie Sompong  
Rebecca Stevig  
John Stutzman  
Tiffany Taylor  
Jennifer Tennyson  
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Richard Trefzger  
Nancy Vallella  
Jennifer Vallella  
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