

Hailsham Choral



Elijah

Mendelssohn

with East Sussex Sinfonia

Saturday 29th March 2025, 7.30pm

All Saints Church
Grange Road
Eastbourne
BN21 4HE

Conductor
Jozik Kotz

Soloists
Noa Lachman
Louise Winter
James Beddoe
Matthew Nuttall

Orchestra Leader
Jonathan Truscott



IN MEMORY OF GEOFF ROWE

11th May 1935 -25th February 2025

Tonight's performance of Elijah is dedicated to the memory of Geoff Rowe who was a stalwart of our tenor section for 25 years.

Geoff's daughter continues the family tradition of singing in the choir and his son- in- law is our Musical Director and Conductor.

Elijah was one of Geoff's favourite pieces.



Felix Mendelssohn (1809 - 47) and the oratorio *Elijah*

In the first half of the 19th Century there was a surge of choral activity in Western Europe. Concert halls were built, choral societies were established, and composers were quick to exploit this new market for work. It was an age where big was beautiful – choirs numbering 200 or more became common – and so the age of the oratorio was born.



Felix Mendelssohn, who had already composed a great deal of choral music, was no exception to this burgeoning form of musical entertainment. He had composed his first oratorio, *St Paul*, in 1836, and buoyed by its success he was encouraged to seek a subject for an even greater and more dramatic choral work. By happy chance he was sent a libretto based on the story of the prophet Elijah by a Devon clergyman. Mendelssohn recognised the story's potential, but it was not until 1845 that he began work in earnest on *Elijah* – no doubt prompted by the fact that he'd been invited to write a new work for the 1846 Birmingham Music Festival. Consequently, the first performance of *Elijah* took place in Birmingham Town Hall on 26th August 1846, with Mendelssohn himself conducting.

Elijah was an immediate and tremendous success. Its great dramatic (some would say operatic) qualities, allied to its magnificent musical craftsmanship, appealed strongly to audiences and performers alike, and it has remained one of the most popular oratorios to perform to date. Some 14 months after that first performance, the musical genius that conceived this noble work, was himself for ever calmed in death but the legacy of his incredible work lives on.

Part One

The work commences in dramatic fashion as the principal soloist Elijah (Baritone) announces a recitative warning to the Israelites that, because of their infidelity to God, they will not have any rain “but according to my word.” This powerful beginning is followed by the expected Overture but what follows is a dark, relentless fugato in D Minor that not only heralds a sense of impending doom but sets the scene for its climactic end with the first chorus “Help, Lord! Wilt thou quite destroy us?”

There follows a series of highly charged movements in which the Israelites call upon the Lord for help and bewail the drought which is causing such great distress. Obadiah (Tenor) entreats them to be faithful to God in the aria “If with all your hearts” but in the ensuing chorus they express their fear of God the avenger, even though they know that “His mercies on thousands fall.”

Meanwhile Elijah flees into the desert at the bidding of an angel (Alto) where he drinks from Cherith's brook and ravens bring him food. A beautiful eight-part chorus "For he shall give his angels charge over thee" describes the ministering and protective angels. Next Elijah intercedes with God on behalf of the dying son of a widow (Soprano). The boy recovers and Elijah and the widow join in duet to praise God. Their cry is taken up by the chorus which sings of God's goodness in "Blessed are the men who fear him".

Elijah then returns to Israel and confronts the ungodly King Ahab, but the King (Tenor) leads the people against him. Elijah challenges the priests of Baal to prepare a sacrifice and to call down fire from heaven to consume it. This they endeavour to do, with the people crying to Baal in a series of choruses that depict initial confidence but growing desperation – all to no avail.

Elijah then calls the people to him and in the tender aria "Lord God of Abraham" prays to God to show them some great deed that they might once again believe in him. His plea is reinforced by a hymn-like chorus "Cast Thy Burden Upon the Lord" urging the believer and righteous person to trust in God. The people cry out in amazement as they see fire descending to consume the sacrifice, finally declaring their belief that the Lord is God. The scene ends with Elijah's triumphant and spectacular aria "Is not his word like a fire?" a powerful declaration of God's eternal wrath with those who worship false gods.



Elijah the prophet

Obadiah now pleads with Elijah to intercede with God and send rain to end the drought. Elijah and the people pray for relief and Elijah sends a youth to go to a high place and look towards the sea. Eventually the youth returns to announce he can see clouds approaching and the rain duly arrives, with Part One ending with a great outburst of rejoicing in the chorus "Thanks be to God" as the parched land is bathed in rain.

Part Two



Mendelssohn's Original score for part two

In an aria for Soprano, the Israelites are called upon to remember God's promises and to have no fear. The chorus takes up the sentiment in "Be not afraid" a spectacular section that is one of the oratorio's greatest glories. But King Ahab's foreign Queen Jezebel (Alto) again stirs up the Israelites by false accusations against Elijah and they, in their fickleness, call for his death. Obadiah warns him to escape, and he retires to the wilderness where, in the moving aria "It is enough" he longs for death. While he sleeps angels comfort him; here Mendelssohn provides two more jewels of his

craft, the matchless three-part female chorus "Lift thine eyes" and the following tutti chorus "He watching over Israel slumbers not nor sleeps", both based on lines from Psalm 121.

When Elijah awakes, he is bidden to go to Horeb (Mount Sinai, the holy mountain where Moses received the Ten Commandments). He is tired and despondent at the faithlessness of the Israelites but in the aria “O Rest in the Lord” the angel (Alto) consoles and strengthens him. Another hymn-like chorus “He that shall endure to the end” reinforces this sentiment. At Mount Sinai Elijah stands before the Lord and the chorus depicts the mighty storm, earthquake and fire that follow – but the Lord at last appears to Elijah in a “still, small voice”, commanding him to return to the Israelites for there are still among them people of faith and “knees that have not bowed to Baal”.

So Elijah returns, and the wonderful works he performs and his ascent into heaven in a fiery chariot and horses, are vividly depicted in the glowing chorus “Then did Elijah the prophet break forth like a fire”.

Finally, the Tenor aria “Then shall the righteous shine forth” heralds the joyful conclusion to the oratorio, with the great chorus of praise “Lord our Creator, how excellent thy name is” ending this majestic masterpiece.



Elijah slays the prophets of Baal



The first performance of Elijah in 1846 as part of the Birmingham Festival, with the composer conducting



THE TRANSLATION OF ELIJAH.

Gustav Dore - Elijah

Elijah: Part One

Prologue: As God the Lord of Israel	Bass Solo
Overture	Orchestra
1. Help, Lord!	Chorus
2. Lord, bow thine ear	Soprano, Alto, Chorus
3. Ye People, rend your hearts	Tenor
4. If with all your hearts	Tenor
5. Yet doth the Lord see it not	Chorus
6. Elijah, get thee hence	Alto
7. For He shall give His angels	Double Chorus
8. What have I to do with thee	Soprano & Bass
9. Blessed are the men who fear him	Chorus
10. As God the Lord of Sabaoth liveth	Bass & Tenor, Chorus
11. Baal, we cry to thee!	Chorus
12. Call him louder! For he is a god	Bass & Chorus
13. Call him louder! He heareth not	Bass & Chorus
14. Lord God of Abraham	Bass
15. Cast thy burden upon the Lord	Chorus
16. O Thou, who makes Thine angels	Bass & Chorus
17. Is not his word like a fire!	Bass
18. Woe, woe unto them	Alto
19. O man of God, help thy people	Soprano, Tenor, Bass & Chorus
20. Thanks be to God	Chorus

INTERVAL

Elijah: Part Two

21. Hear ye, Israel!	Soprano
22. Be not afraid, saith God	Chorus
23. The Lord hath exalted thee	Alto and Bass, Chorus
24. Woe to him! He shall perish	Chorus
25. Man of God, now let my words	Tenor & Bass
26. It is enough, O Lord	Bass
27. See, now he sleepeth	Tenor
28. Lift thine eyes to the mountains	Semi-Chorus
29. He, watching over Israel	Chorus
30. Arise, Elijah	Alto & Bass
31. O rest in the Lord	Alto
32. He that shall endure to the end	Chorus
33. Night falleth round me, O Lord	Soprano & Bass
34. Behold, God the Lord passed by	Chorus
35. Holy, Holy, Holy	Semi-Chorus and Chorus
36. Go, return upon thy way	Chorus
37. For the mountains shall depart	Bass
38. Then did Elijah the prophet	Chorus
39. Then shall the righteous shine forth	Tenor
40. O come everyone that thirsteth	Solo Quartet
41. And then shall your light	Chorus

Noa Lachman – Soprano



Noa started her studies in Jerusalem, singing with the Rinat choir and the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra under conductors such as Levine, Barenboim and Mehta. She also performed several world premières as a soloist, and broadcast for Israeli TV and radio. Her studies continued in the UK at King's College London, Trinity College of Music

and the University of Sussex.

Since 2005, Noa has performed with her husband, pianist William Hancox, in Germany, Israel and the UK, with concerts for the London International Jewish Music Festival, Amnesty International, and the Reihe Siebzig Festival in Hanover. She has also recorded Ladino songs for BBC Radio 4's Women's Hour and performed oratorio in her local area.

As a co-founder and regular performer at Music Box Wealden, she came to see the importance of bringing music to her own community. A further eye-opener was working with the iconoclastic company, Opera Mayhem, experimenting with groundbreaking work with children.

Louise Winter – Mezzo Soprano

Born in Preston, Lancashire, Louise began her musical training at Chethams and the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester.

Louise has sung extensively worldwide in both Opera and on the concert platform and started at Glyndebourne Festival Opera. Her international solo career has taken her to Frankfurt for Wagner to the Royal Opera House, ENO, Garsington Opera, Grange Opera and Opera North. Recent engagements have included singing for Scottish Opera in David McVicar's celebrated production of Puccini's *Il Trittico*, as Frugola in *Il Tabarro*, Zita in Puccini's *Gianna Schicchi*, and *Mistress Quickly* in Verdi's *Falstaff*.



Concerts have included many prominent works by Elgar, Mahler, Handel and in recent years Louise sang in Mendelssohn's *Elijah* conducted by Edward Gardner.

Louise's other interests are now giving back to her profession as a teacher, a mentor for a charity called Singers Resound and proudly has created and is Artistic Director of the three-year-old Ashburnham English Song Awards held near Battle, here in East Sussex

James Beddoe – Tenor



James hails from Southwell, Nottinghamshire, and is an Artists Masters graduate from Guildhall School of Music and Drama and regularly performs as an oratorio soloist and Evangelist.

While this is his first performance of Elijah, he has recently performed Bruckner's Te Deum at York Minster, the UK premiere of Lidarti's Ester, Bach's St John Passion and B Minor Mass, Puccini's Messa Di Gloria, Britten's St Nicolas, and Haydn's Creation.

Recent operatic roles have included Enrico in Donizetti's Maria de Rudenz, The Duke in Lambert's The Duchess of Padua, Nemorino in Donizetti's L'elisir d'amore, three productions as Prince Ramiro in Rossini's La Cenerentola, the Schoolmaster in Janacek's The Cunning Little Vixen, Rodolfo in Pucinii's La Boheme, Lensky in Tchaikovsky's Eugene Onegin and Aeneas in Purcell's Dido & Aeneas.

In 2025, he is joining Hurn Court Opera for a reprise of his previous role in Rossini's La Cenerentola, Stanley Arts for a revival of Samuel Coleridge Taylor's Dream Lovers as Manuel, Cantata Dramatica for Mander's The Dowager's Oyster as Christopher, and – on the 250th anniversary of Jane Austen's birth – he will appear as Edward Ferrars in a new production of Sense and Sensibility by Neil Hampton and Jeffrey Haddow.

Matthew Nuttall – Baritone

British baritone Matthew Nuttall is a graduate of the Royal Northern College of Music. During his studies, he received numerous awards, including the Joyce and Michael Kennedy Award for the Singing of Strauss, the Frederic Cox Award, the Alexander Young Singing Prize, and the James Martin Oncken Prize.

Matthew joined the Glyndebourne Chorus in 2018 and has performed with them every season since. His roles with the company include Monsieur Javelinot in Dialogues des Carmélites, the Notary in Don Pasquale, and the Customs Officer in La Bohème. He has also covered roles such as Moralès in Bizet's Carmen, Pritschitsch in Lehár's The Merry Widow, the Hunter in Dvořák's Rusalka, the Second Prisoner in Beethoven's Fidelio, Le Surintendant des Plaisirs in Massenet's Cendrillon, and the Commissioner in Verdi's La Traviata. For



Wexford Festival Opera, he recently performed as the Herald in Dvořák's *Armida* and Otho/the title role in Cellier's *The Spectre Knight*.

A regular oratorio soloist, Matthew's performances include Bach's *St John Passion*, Handel's *Messiah* and *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato*, Mozart's *Vespers K.339*, Beethoven's *Mass in C*, Haydn's *Nelson Mass*, Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*, Dvořák's *Mass in D*, Fauré's *Requiem*, Vaughan Williams' *Serenade to Music*, and Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. He has performed Chilcott's *Christmas Oratorio* under the baton of the composer himself and reprised the work at Beverley Minster in December 2024.

Matthew regularly performs with English National Opera as an extra chorister and recently appeared in Sir Jonathan Miller's *Rigoletto*. He is currently performing in Annabel Arden's production of *The Flying Dutchman* with Opera North and looks forward to returning to Glyndebourne as part of the chorus for their 2025 season.

The role of the Youth and the soprano solo in item 35 'Holy, Holy, Holy' is sung by Edie Behr.

Jozik Kotz - Conductor and Musical Director



Jozik was born in Oxford of Polish-Australian parents. After reading music at the University of York and singing as a lay-clerk at York Minster, he won a post-graduate scholarship to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, where he was a finalist in the Kathleen Ferrier, Royal Overseas League and Richard Tauber competitions. In 1993 he was the winner of the South East Arts competition, which led to his debut at the Wigmore Hall.

Jozik subsequently performed operatic roles with English National Opera, Glyndebourne, Opera Factory, Garsington and Grange Park, as well as in Paris, Vienna, Zurich, Madrid, Aix-en-Provence and Lisbon. He has appeared as a soloist at the BBC Proms and with the BBC Symphony, London Philharmonic, Philharmonia and English Chamber Orchestras. His CD recordings include baroque cantatas for Hyperion, Turnage's *The Silver Tassie* and Gavin Bryar's *Dr Ox's Experiment* for Deutsche Grammophon, and Paray's *Mass* with the Scottish National Orchestra, which was nominated for a Grammy Award.

Jozik has been our Musical Director since 2006. In 2019 he stepped down to pursue other interests but returned in 2021 to again take up the baton – and we were delighted to welcome him back.

William Hancox

Rehearsal and Concert Accompanist

William Hancox has been our rehearsal and concert accompanist for the past three years. He has a great depth of experience, performing as a soloist, chamber musician and accompanist throughout the UK and internationally. He has played in many major venues, broadcast for Classic FM and the BBC and made a number of CD recordings. He has held staff positions at London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama, Trinity College of Music and the Britten-Pears School in Aldeburgh.



In Europe, William has given concerts in Spain, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, and Iceland. Several trips to China have involved masterclasses, song recitals, solo recitals and concerts in the Forbidden City Concert Hall, Beijing.

Hailsham Choral Society

Musical Director	Jozik Kotz
Assistant Musical Director	Barbara Edwards
Rehearsal Accompanist	Will Hancox
Chair	Milly Clark
Secretary	Julie Mitchell

Information about the choir can be found on our website www.hailshamchoral.org

East Sussex Sinfonia

Violin 1

Jonathan Truscott-leader
Liz Norton
Christine Tuson

Violin 2

Craig Stratton
Shereen Godber
Anna Cooper

Viola

James Hogg
Dan Manente

Cello

Rachel Firmager
Daniel Burrowes

Double Bass

Sophie Meikle

Organ

William Hancox

Flute

Anne Hodgson
Sue Gregg

Oboe

Helen Pye
Clare Worth

Clarinet

Philip Edwards
Linda Atkinson

Bassoon

Ian Glen
Neil Allen

Trumpet

Andrew Baxter
Neal Bland

Horn

John Peskett
David Hills
Emma Laurens
Pip Landsown

Trombone

Chris Schmidt
Phil Baxter
Phil Laybourne

Timpani

Dennis Chanter

The Choir

Soprano 1

Jane Allen
Trish Brown
Janet Butterworth
Kim Charles
Pat Collingwood
Pru Ford-Crush
Liz Furlong
Nancy Gillio-Terry
Helen Kotz
Susan Lahache
Anne McNamee
Lynn Petit
Marion Ponting
Maria Webzell

Soprano 2

Christine Baelz
Janet Cox
Carole Deschamps
Catriona Dunbar
Barbara Edwards
Jacqueline Good
Hilary Hartley
Valerie Hyland
Susan Lewis
Penny Livermore
Mary Reilly

Lis Turner
Iris Warren
Sue White

Alto 1

Milly Clark
Pam Cornish
Dot Evans
Liz Fitzpatrick
Aruna Green
Julie Mitchell
Rosie Page
Sue Simpson
Liza Stewart
Caroline van den Burg

Alto 2

Jane Allcorn
Susan Cowling
Sheila Fox
Barbara Fry
Jean Hill
Fiona Koops
Sarah Owen
Rosalind Taylor-Byrne
Fiona Tilley
Ann Walker

Tenor 1

Paul Carter
David Gillham
Nick Gosman

Tenor 2

Nigel Baelz
Rob Slater
Eckard Petersen

Bass 1

Richard Barrow
Adam De Belder
Ian Collins
Peter Gilbert
Ed Griffiths
Walter Hare
Simon Marsden
Chris Taylor

Bass 2

Robin Hooper
Graham Keeley
Tony Pittman
Jonathan Statter

If you are interested in singing with the choir, or would like more information, please contact our membership secretary:

hcsjoin@hailshamchoral.org

Rehearsals are held during term time on Thursday evenings from 7.30p. – 9.30pm in the Community Hall, Hailsham. We normally perform four concerts a year.

Future events with Hailsham Choral Society

Summer Concert Saturday 5th July 2025 7.30pm

Hailsham Community Hall, Vicarage Lane Hailsham BN27 2AX

Following our highly successful collaboration with Eastbourne Symphony Orchestra & Choir in performing Verdi's Requiem last year, another exciting joint venture is being planned for Spring 2026 when we will perform Elgar's great masterpiece, The Dream of Gerontius.

Did you know? Eastbourne Choral Society, with Eastbourne Sinfonia, will perform Mozart Requiem and Haydn's Nelson Mass on Saturday 12th April at 7pm., All Saints Church, Eastbourne.

If you would like to be kept informed of forthcoming concerts, you can become a Friend of the choir. Please fill in your details below and hand this programme to a steward or choir member and we will add you to our email list.

Name:.....

Email:.....

Member of Making Music -The National Federation of Music Societies
Member of Eastbourne & District Choirs Association
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www.hailshamchoral.org

