

BALTIMORE
CHORAL ARTS
SOCIETY

Anthony Blake Clark, Music Director

presents

Mendelssohn's
Elijah

SUNDAY, MAY 21, 2023 | 3 PM
Murphy Fine Arts Center
Morgan State University



Baltimore Choral Arts Society

Anthony Blake Clark

57th Season: 2022-23

Sunday, May 21, 2023 | 3 PM

Murphy Fine Arts Center, Morgan State University

Mendelssohn's *Elijah*

Anthony Blake Clark, *music director & conductor*

Leo Wanenchak, *associate conductor & organist*

Laura Choi Stuart, *soprano*

Linda Maguire, *mezzo-soprano*

Brian Giebler, *tenor*

Carl DuPont, *bass-baritone*

The Baltimore Choral Arts Orchestra

Elijah, Op. 70

Felix Mendelssohn

Part I

Introduction: As God the Lord

Overture

1. *Chorus: Help, Lord!*
2. *Duet with Chorus: Lord, bow thine ear*
3. *Recitative: Ye people, rend your hearts*
4. *Aria: If with all your hearts*
5. *Chorus: Yet doth the Lord*
6. *Recitative: Elijah, get thee hence*
7. *Double Quartet: For He shall give His angels*
Recitative: Now Cherith's brook
8. *Recitative: What have I do to with thee*
Recitative: Give me thy son
9. *Chorus: Blessed are all they that fear him*
10. *Recitative with Chorus: As God the Lord of Sabaoth*
11. *Chorus: Baal, we cry to thee*
12. *Recitative: Call him louder!*
Chorus: Hear our cry, O Baal!
13. *Recitative: Call him louder!*
Chorus: Baal! Baal!
14. *Recitative and Air: Draw near, all ye people*
15. *Chorus: Cast thy burden upon the Lord (Chorale)*
16. *Recitative: O Thou, who makest thine angels spirits*
Chorus: The fire descends
17. *Aria: Is not His word like a fire?*
18. *Recitative: Woe unto them who forsake Him!*
19. *Recitative: O man of God, help thy people!*
Recitative with Chorus: O Lord, Thou has overthrown thine enemies
20. *Chorus: Thanks be to God!*

Part II

21. *Aria*: Hear ye, Israel!
22. *Chorus*: Be not afraid
23. *Recitative with Chorus*: The Lord hath exalted thee
24. *Chorus*: Woe to him!
25. *Recitative*: Man of God
26. *Aria*: It is enough
27. *Recitative*: See, now he sleepeth
28. *Trio*: Lift thine eyes
29. *Chorus*: He watching over Israel
30. *Recitative*: Arise, Elijah
Recitative: O Lord, I have labored in vain
31. *Aria*: O rest in the Lord
32. *Chorus*: He that shall endure
33. *Recitative*: Night falleth round me
Recitative: Arise, now!
34. *Chorus*: Behold, God the Lord
35. *Recitative, Quartet and Chorus*: Holy is God the Lord
36. *Recitative*: I go on my way in the strength of the Lord
37. *Arioso*: For the mountains shall depart
38. *Chorus*: Then did Elijah
39. *Aria*: Then shall the righteous shine forth
40. *Recitative*: Behold, God hath sent Elijah
41. *Chorus*: But the Lord from the north
42. *Quartet*: O come, every one that thirsteth
43. *Chorus*: And then shall your light break forth

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Program Notes

This is film music. Or at least, the 1950's blockbuster epics with their roaring film scores (think Elmer Bernstein) come rushing to mind every time I rehearse this gloriously histrionic and rich piece. Mendelssohn's most famous oratorio romps from melodrama to unconditional sincerity from one instant to another in the most seamless of ways. The most overt quality that creates this association in my mind with the great film scores of Hollywood's Golden Age is Mendelssohn's uncanny talent for making the story of the prophet Elijah animate into technicolor life. The unique medium of choral music and our uniquely powerful tool of language brings the listener into the story with immediacy. *Elijah* is undoubtedly Mendelssohn's crowning achievement and seems to contain the entire spectrum of his capabilities as a composer coupled with his professorial command of the musical devices inspired by his love of the High Baroque era.

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy was commissioned to write *Elijah* by the Birmingham Triennial Festival (UK) and was premiered there in 1846, just a year before the composer's severely premature death. Mendelssohn was a favorite of the festival, having enjoyed great success in 1837 when the festival premiered his *St. Paul* oratorio. The work is structured in a series of arias, choruses, and recitatives, with each section serving to advance the narrative of the story of Elijah as found in the books of Kings and Psalms and adapted by librettist Julius Schubring. Almost immediately, *Elijah* was a smash hit. No doubt the press helped propagandize the work – *The Musical World* publication printed even before the performance that “we expect that the forthcoming performance of this, his new and favorite work, under his immediate superintendence, will be his crowning triumph.” After the 26th of August triumphant premiere in Birmingham's Town Hall, the same publication published a 4-page review praising Mendelssohn's ingenuity, particularly the originality of placing the bass recitativo before the overture, an effect he found “highly impressive”. More compliments abound, describing choral movements as “grand and largely developed...the voicing shews consummate skill in counterpoint, and the instrumentation is picturesque and splendid.”

No doubt the praise heaped upon *Elijah* is more than merited. But what about this music stirs the heart so deeply and inspires so thoroughly? Why has this oratorio, which clocks in at over two hours long and is not easily executed, become so rooted in the repertory in professional and amateur music-making bodies alike? The answer is simple: drama married with expert musical form. The piece couples a great fidelity to the spectacle of this text found in the Hebrew Scriptures concerning the happenings of the prophet Elijah and the grandiosity of praise to God with precise and tight-knit musical forms Mendelssohn inherited from forerunners, both recent (Haydn, Beethoven) and distant (Bach, Handel). Indeed, it is the faithfulness to text and storytelling that inspires us the most; Mendelssohn's ability to get up close and personal with the widow who begs help from Elijah to save her ailing son, Elijah's sincere prayers to the Lord filled with orchestral warmth and luscious harmonic suspensions, all the way up to portraying cataclysmic events through the loudest choral-orchestral instrumentation – these scenes both loud and soft create spine-tingling dualities of sound. There are moments of teasing – Elijah mocks the prophets of the false God Baal in a contest between the idols and the God of Israel – one can hear the playground style intervals first sung by Elijah and echoed by the oboes. There are Wagnerian moments of ruthlessness (like when Elijah commands the nation of Israel to execute all the false prophets at the riverbank) followed by unadulterated praise to God, composed of the most sublime musical moments in

history. Just when as a listener one might grow weary of the exaggeration of it all, Mendelssohn sets the most sincere and transcendent choral meditations on the divine that utterly transports the listener.

Another answer for why this piece is so effective, for me, lies in Mendelssohn's utter lack of innovation. What do I mean by such a counterintuitive pejorative statement? It is well-known, not least of all because of his triumphant revival of Bach's *St. Matthew Passion* in 1829, that Mendelssohn was fundamentally inspired by the aesthetic ideals of the Baroque masters Handel and Bach. Karl-Heinz Köhler says, "he was a Romantic chiefly in his skillful use of literary and other extra-musical stimuli, and his Classical inclinations led him to embody these in music of traditional form and elegance", suggesting that the actual "notes on the page" hardly imbue Romanticism at all. Mendelssohn's deep interest in the music of the past, coupled with his living and working in Bach's Leipzig not quite 100 years after the Thomaskantor's death, resulted in Mendelssohn's intentional backward-looking approach to music. While many dismiss Mendelssohn for his traditionalism, the very act of reviving ideals of the Baroque are the very thing that make him innovative.

Lastly, *Elijah* has a tremendous amount of subtextual intrigue that is highly personal to Felix Mendelssohn. Curiosity about Mendelssohn the man and his relationship to Elijah the man has been exhaustively probed. To what extent did the Mendelssohn family's stifled Jewishness and new-found Christian identity inform the selection of Elijah as the subject of an oratorio? Did Mendelssohn see himself in the title role as the bringer of knowledge who was occasionally spurned by the public? Many theories abound regarding Mendelssohn's internal struggle between his Jewishness and his Christian identity. Jeffrey Sposato posits rightly that the oratorio's Christological attributes gives the work a Christian, or at least reconciliatory tone. Elijah as a messianic figure coupled with the future tense of the text of the final movement "*And Then Shall Your Light Break Forth*" could perhaps be putting Jewish Biblical history and the Christian expectant approach of the Advent season at odds with one another. The entire oratorio focuses on a Jewish hero, then the final movement is taken from the book of Isaiah, commonly known to be a prophetic book about the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ in the Christian belief system to which Mendelssohn was a subscriber. It is my firm conviction that dual identities are being explored in this oratorio, culminating with the transition of Hebrew Bible ideas to hints of New Testament ideas in this finale. Mendelssohn acknowledges his Jewishness and then pivots to his second identity as a Gentile.

Nonetheless, the pure and impressive musical content is what should be chiefly admired more than any possible conjecture and subtextual intrigue. From moments of great power to tender contemplation, this work explores a wide range of chill-inducing musical feeling. This spiritually dense contrast is most clearly displayed in a Chorus from Part 2; in it, the chorus and orchestra commandingly declaim "Behold the Lord passed by... and the earth was shaken, but the Lord was not in the earthquake..." this transitions to the calm and stunning setting of "And after...there came a still small voice, and in that still voice, onward came the Lord."

Anthony Blake Clark

Baltimore Choral Arts Society and Music Director Anthony Blake Clark

The Baltimore Choral Arts Society builds a stronger, more connected, more inspired community by celebrating the joy of choral music through exceptional performances and diverse educational and artistic partnerships.

The Baltimore Choral Arts Society, now in its 57th season, is one of Maryland's premier cultural institutions. The Symphonic Chorus, Chorus, and Chamber Singers perform throughout the Mid-Atlantic region, as well as in Washington, D.C., New York, and in Europe. Music Director Anthony Blake Clark has established new, large-scale collaborative performances with Maryland Institute College of Art, Maryland State Boychoir, and Peabody Youth Orchestra. In January of 2020, Choral Arts went on its first tour of England, with a prestigious invitation to perform with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra.

The Baltimore Choral Arts Society provides several thoughtful and impactful music education programs that serve youth in and around Baltimore. These programs include CoroLAB, a partnership with Overlea High School and Baltimore City College's choral music programs; Vocal Fellows, an expanded professional development program for early-career singers; Student Composer Project, a competition for high-school and college composers; and *Christmas for Kids*. Through these four primary educational programs, Choral Arts serves the very young to early-career adult musicians.

For the previous 25 years, WMAR Television, the ABC network affiliate in Maryland, featured Choral Arts in an hour-long special, *Christmas with Choral Arts*, which won an Emmy Award in 2006. In 2022, *Christmas with Choral Arts* was broadcast on Maryland Public Television, bringing the performance to new audiences. The ensemble has been featured frequently on *The First Art* (Public Radio International), *Performance Today* (National Public Radio) and VOX (XM Radio). In Europe, Choral Arts was featured in a program devoted to the music of Handel broadcast on Radio Suisse Romande.

In 2010, under the direction of then-Music Director Tom Hall, Choral Arts released *Christmas at America's First Cathedral* on Gothic Records, recorded at the Baltimore Basilica, which includes familiar Christmas favorites as well as premieres by Rosephanye Dunn Powell and James Lee, III. A recording with Dave Brubeck, featuring Brubeck's oratorio, *The Gates of Justice*, was released internationally on the NAXOS label in 2004; Choral Arts is also featured on *Introducing the World of American Jewish Music* on Naxos. Choral Arts has two other recordings in current release: *Christmas with Choral Arts* and a live recording of the Rachmaninoff *All-Night Vigil* and will soon celebrate the release of their newest album, *Dreamer*, featuring Mozart's *Requiem* and *Dreamer* by Jasmine Barnes. Recent awards and recognitions include the 2020 Chorus America/ASCAP Alice Parker Award, the 2020 American Prize in Community Chorus Conducting (Anthony Blake Clark), and the 2020 Emmy Award nomination for the 2019 *Christmas with Choral Arts* broadcast.



Anthony Blake Clark is a leading voice among his generation of choral conductors. He is in demand by both amateur and professional musicians because of his intense musicality and his conviction that musicians and audiences experience life-changing inspiration by participating in classical music.

Clark has performed with some of the most important ensembles in legendary venues throughout the USA and Europe. He has prepared choral ensembles for prestigious orchestras such as the Rundfunkchor Berlin with the Berliner Philharmoniker, Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Vienna Radio Orchestra, Dallas Symphony Orchestra, and the Richmond Symphony for esteemed conductors such as Marin Alsop, Sir John Eliot Gardiner, Fabio Luisi, Mirga Gražinytė-Tyla, and Simon Halsey. He and his choirs have performed at the Berlin Philharmonie, the Vienna Konzerthaus, Symphony Hall Birmingham(UK), St. Martin-in-the-Fields London, The Kennedy Center, and the Washington National Cathedral, among others.

Currently in his sixth season at the helm of Baltimore Choral Arts, he has expanded subscription concert offerings while building a robust community outreach and education initiative. He has consistently received rave reviews, both for work on the podium and as chorusmaster for performances with the Baltimore Symphony and other area partners. His work in Baltimore has been recognized with an American Prize in Choral Conducting and a second nomination for best community ensemble, as well as the Chorus America/ASCAP Alice Parker Award. He annually conducts and produces the celebrated *Christmas with Choral Arts* television concert, first on ABC2 and now on Maryland PBS, for which the ensemble has received a regional Emmy nomination. Clark has secured invites to several important festivals and collaborations; in 2020 they launched a sold-out and enthusiastically received UK tour which culminated in a residency with the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra and Chorus for performances of Mahler's 8th Symphony. Recently, Clark and Baltimore Choral Arts made their Berlin Philharmonie debut with the Freie Universität Orchester. On the same tour, BCAS collaborated with the Vienna Singakademie to perform with the Vienna Radio Orchestra in the Konzerthaus Wien under Marin Alsop.

Clark has been named as the next Artistic Director of Bach Vespers in New York. In residence at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in mid-town Manhattan, the Bach Choir and Players are composed of some of the finest early music professionals in the nation. Their mission is to present the works of Bach using historically informed practices within the liturgical context of a Vespers service. In 2022 he was called upon to serve as the James Erb Choral Chair Director of Choruses for the Richmond Symphony. He prepares the RSO Chorus for masterworks concerts with the orchestra under Maestra Valentina Paleggi and is eager to expand the activities of the choir in the vibrant city of Richmond.

Anthony Blake Clark is equally adept in the orchestral field and made his Baltimore Symphony debut in 2021. He has also appeared as cover conductor for the National Symphony Orchestra, assisting conductors such as Ton Koopman, Gianandrea Noseda, Christoph Eshenbach, and Manfred Honeck, and has assisted Marin Alsop at the Baltimore Symphony. He will make his Richmond Symphony debut this season.

Maestro Clark is a passionate teacher and served as Director of Choral Activities at The George Washington University in DC. His university choirs performed at the Kennedy Center, National Cathedral, and Music Center at Strathmore during his tenure and sang with ensembles such as the Washington Chorus, Baltimore Choral Arts, Naval Academy Glee Club, Baltimore Symphony, and Annapolis Symphony. He is proud of the three-fold expansion of the program during his tenure. Recently

he was Guest Conductor/Lecturer for the Westminster Choir College Symphonic Choir. He regularly leads workshops and clinics for school and community ensembles.

In 2021 he began his doctoral studies in orchestral conducting at the Peabody Institute where he is a student of Marin Alsop. Mr. Clark completed a master's degree under three-time Grammy Award winner Simon Halsey CBE at the United Kingdom's University of Birmingham. During his time in the UK, he entrenched himself in the choral life of the university and sang in the famed City of Birmingham Symphony Chorus under the batons of Sir Simon Rattle, Edward Gardiner, and Andris Nelsons as well as having opportunities to conduct the London Symphony Chorus and other area choirs. Other teachers include Simon Carrington (Yale Norfolk Festival, Sarteano Conducting Workshop) and Lynne Gackle (Baylor University).

An active composer and arranger, Anthony Blake Clark's music has been performed in Washington DC, London, Oxford, Texas, and at Prague's Dvořák Museum Concert Hall. Most recently, his music has been premiered by the National Philharmonic Chamber Singers and Baltimore Choral Arts. In 2022 his new performance edition of Mozart's Requiem will be performed and recorded by Acis Records.

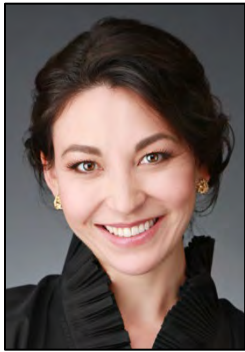


Leo Wanenchak enjoys a fulsome career as conductor, pianist, organist, vocalist, composer, narrator, clinician, and teaching artist. This is his 21st year with the Baltimore Choral Arts Society. He studied conducting with its founder, Theodore Morrison. In 2016 he was named Associate Conductor. In addition to preparing and performing with the chorus in the acclaimed Choral Arts Concert Series and outreach, He has prepared the chorus for performances with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra under the batons of Marin Alsop, Jack Everly, John Storgårds and Yuri Temirkanov.

Community outreach and education are hallmarks of Leo's métier. He is the director of "The Larks," a women's vocal ensemble, community service project of the Junior League of Baltimore, bring the gift of song to the underserved. He developed and is director of "ParkinSonics" choral ensemble for the Johns Hopkins Hospital Department of Neurology in conjunction with the Johns Hopkins Center for Music and Medicine. This past year members of ParkinSonics were featured in a Kennedy Center webinar with Reneé Fleming, "Music and the Mind Live" and participated in the Iowa State University Neuromotor Lab Virtual Singing Festival with Parkinsons singers worldwide.

He has served as Director of The Maryland Camerata at the University of Maryland Baltimore County, the Children's Chorus of Maryland, and on the faculty of the Peabody Preparatory as Director of Arts for Talented Youth, Chair of the Piano Department and member of the Dean's Council. Formerly the Academic Dean and Director of the Walden School Choral Program, Leo is a devoted advocate of new music. During his over 35 years at Walden and the Peabody, he mentored over 1,000 young composers and world premiered over 1,500 of their works. His students have been awarded by the Music Teacher's National Association and Broadcast Music Incorporated. With the founding generation of The Walden school, he founded Avivo.com, creative, comprehensive, and customized education for musicians.

Mr. Wanenchak's appearances include performances at Carnegie Hall, Riverside Church, and Grace Cathedral. He has also performed in England, France, Greece, The Netherlands and Romania. He is a sought-after clinician and maintains a large private teaching studio in Bolton Hill, Baltimore.



Hailed as “a lyric soprano of ravishing quality” by the Boston Globe, **Laura Choi Stuart**’s solo appearances this season include Elijah with Baltimore Choral Arts, Dona Nobis Pacem with Washington Master Chorale, a debut with Bach Vocal Artists of Orlando, The Enlightenment Festival with Seraphic Fire, and Poulenc Gloria and Mendelssohn Lobgesang with the State College Choral Society as well as a return to Washington National Cathedral for Messiah, Poulenc’s Sept répons des ténèbres and the Monteverdi Vespers.

Recent season highlights include Mozart Requiem and Handel Israel in Egypt and Messiah, also at Washington National Cathedral, Christmas Oratorio with Washington Bach Consort, Brahms Requiem with The Washington Chorus and Fauré Requiem with The Choral Arts Society.

In opera, she has appeared on the mainstage with Boston Lyric Opera, Opera Boston, Annapolis Opera, Lake George Opera, the In Series, and Opera North in roles including Musetta, Adina, Gilda, Pamina, and Frasquita, and in premieres of new American works with Washington National Opera as part of the American Opera Initiative.

Laura was honored for art song performance at both the 2010 and 2012 National Association of Teachers of Singing Artist Awards and as one of the 2009 Art Song Discovery Series winners for the Vocal Arts Society. Laura is a passionate teacher and serves as Head of Vocal Studies at Washington National Cathedral. She shares clear (fun) voice education for adult choral singers at TheWeeklyWarmUp.com.

She received her training at The Santa Fe Opera Apprentice Program for Singers, Opera North, and Berkshire Opera, as well as The New England Conservatory (Presidential Scholar) and Dartmouth College (Summa Cum Laude).



Mezzo-soprano **Linda Maguire** is a renowned vocal artist having an extensive resume in concert, recital, and opera, live broadcasts and CD recordings. A recognized specialist in Handel, Mozart and Rossini, Linda performed regularly in both major opera houses and symphonic halls including Dallas, Houston, London, Glyndebourne, Toronto, Montreal, Vancouver and with orchestras including Tafelmusik, Les Musiciens du Louvre, I Virtuosi di Praja, and Les Violons du Roi. Her solo recordings include labels such as Collins Classics, Deutsche Grammophon and Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC Label), which feature great masterworks including Berlioz’ Les Nuit d’Ete, Wagner’s Wesendonklieder, Verdi’s Requiem, Handel’s La Resurrezione and Floridante. Her contemporary

recordings include Timothy Sullivan’s Magic Casement, Soft and Golden Fire, Irish Songs, Maxwell Davies’ biblical opera, Job and others.

A true recording artist, Linda is featured in 80+ live vocal radio broadcasts in major works broadcast by the CBC, BBC, NPR and others. Her solo performances at The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts include Mendelssohn’s Elijah, Handel’s Messiah, Rossini’s Stabat Mater, Beethoven’s Symphony No. 9, Mahler’s Symphony of a Thousand, Bach’s Cantata BWV 79, Amy Beach’s Canticle of the Sun and others. Recent appearances in Washington DC include Tom Beveridge’s “Yitzkor Requiem” with New Dominion Chorale, Jonathan Dove’s “Monster in the Maze” with Baltimore Choral Arts (Anthony Blake Clark, conducting), Verdi’s “Requiem”, Hamer/Azrael’s “Lost Childhood” with National Philharmonic Orchestra, guest soloist with the US Army Chorus singing Schubert, Gershwin and Scribner’s “Ode to St. Cecelia”, Roy Harris’ “Abraham Lincoln Walks at Midnight” and many other local solo performances.

Linda lectures regularly on the effects of Singing and Music in Health and Aging Health paradigms and recently received her PhD ('20) in Aging Brain Health and the use of Music as Medicine. She continues to sing professionally in the local area and also teaches/coaches singers in the local DC-Baltimore area.
Email: maguire.usa@gmail.com



Praised for his “lovely tone and deep expressivity” by *The New York Times*, GRAMMY® nominated tenor **Brian Giebler** radiates “shine and clarity” (*Opera News*) using “his high-placed tenor with great skill” (*Opera Magazine*). His debut solo album *a lad’s love* garnered praise from *Gramophone* and *Opera News*, and earned him a GRAMMY® Award nomination for Best Classical Solo Vocal Album. Selected highlights include Handel’s *Semele* with The English Concert; Stravinsky with The Cleveland Orchestra; Monteverdi’s *Poppea* with Boston Baroque; Bach’s *St. Matthew Passion* (Evangelist) with Trinity Wall Street; Bach’s *B Minor Mass* at Carnegie Hall with the Oratorio Society of NY; Bach Cantatas with the Grand Rapids Symphony and Handel & Haydn Society; Handel’s *Messiah* with Music of the Baroque (available on recording); Haydn’s *Creation* with Santa Fe Pro Musica; and on stage with Boston Modern Orchestra Project, Apollo’s Fire at Ravinia and Caramoor, and Handel’s *L’Allegro, il Penseroso* with Mark Morris Dance Group. www.briangiebler.com



Carl DuPont is an artist, innovator, and educator dedicated to *Transformational Inclusion* and *Care of the Professional Voice*. His “rich, nuanced baritone” (Columbus Underground) has held center stage in performances at the Glimmerglass Festival, Opera Carolina, Opera Columbus, First Coast Opera, Toledo Opera, Opera Saratoga, Sarasota Opera, Cedar Rapids Opera, El Palacio de Bellas Artes, Opera Company of Brooklyn, The IN Series, Carnegie Hall, the Kennedy Center, and Leipzig Opera. Recent roles include Hawkins Fuller in *Fellow Travelers*, Don Basilio in *The Barber of Seville*, and Leporello in *Don Giovanni*. His articles can be found in *The Laryngoscope* and the *Voice and Speech Review*. DuPont can be heard on the world premiere recordings of the *Caldara Mass in A Major*, *The Death of Webern*, and his solo album, *The Reaction*.

A graduate of the Eastman School of Music (BM), Indiana University (MM), and the University of Miami (DMA), he currently serves on the faculties of the Johns Hopkins University’s Peabody Institute and the Executive Education division of the Carey School of Business. DuPont also teaches at the Hawaii Performing Arts Festival and is the artistic director for the Kennedy Center’s Washington National Opera Institute. This season he joined Annapolis Opera Company as Stephen Kumalo in *Lost in the Stars* and sang the baritone solo in Beethoven’s 9th Symphony with the Brazos Valley Symphony Orchestra. He will return to Bach in Baltimore in the *St. John’s Passion* and reprise the title role in Mendelssohn’s *Elijah* for the Baltimore Choral Society.

Program Text

Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, Op. 70

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. *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?

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!

2. *Duet with Chorus* — *The People*: Lord, bow thine ear to our pray'r. — *Soprano and alto duet*: Zion spreadeth her hands for aid; and there is neither help nor comfort.

3. *Recitative* — *Obadiah (tenor)*: 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.

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!

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.

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

7. *Double Chorus* — *The 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.

Recitative — *An Angel (alto)*: 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.

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! — *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! — *Widow*: Shall the dead arise and praise Thee? — *Elijah*: Lord, my God, let the

spirit of this child return, that he again may live!
— *Widow*: The Lord hath heard thy prayer; the soul of my son reviveth! — *Elijah*: Now behold, thy son liveth! — *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, render 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!

9. *Chorus*: Blessed are all they that fear Him; they ever walk in the ways of peace. Through darkness riseth light to the upright. He is gracious, compassionate; He is righteous.

10. *Recitative — Elijah, Ahab and Chorus — 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 (tenor)*: Art thou Elijah? Art thou he that troubleth Israel? — *The People*: 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. — *The People*: 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. — *The People*: 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.

11. *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!

12. *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?

13. *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!

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!

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.

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

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! *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!

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.

18. *Arioso (alto):* Woe unto them who forsake Him! Destruction shall fall upon them, for they have transgressed against Him. Though they are by Him redeemed, yet have they spoken falsely against Him; from Him have they fled.

19. *Recitative — Obadiah, Elijah, Youth, 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. — *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 (treble):* 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 didst 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 I will 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 clouds and 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 forevermore!

20. *Chorus — 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!

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."

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.

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. — *Recitative with Chorus — Jezebel (alto):*

Have ye not heard he hath prophesied against all Israel? — *Chorus — The People*: We heard it with our ears. — *Jezebel*: Hath he not prophesied also against the king of Israel? — *The People*: We heard it with our ears. — *Jezebel*: 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! — *The People*: He shall perish! — *Jezebel*: Hath he not destroyed Baal's prophets? — *The People*: He shall perish! — *Jezebel*: Yea, by the sword he destroyed them all! — *The People*: He destroyed them all! — *Jezebel*: He also closed the heavens... — *The People*: He also closed the heavens... — *Jezebel*: ... and called down a famine upon the land. — *The People*: ... and called down a famine upon the land. — *Jezebel*: So go ye forth and seize Elijah, for he is worthy to die; slaughter him! Do unto him as he hath done!

24. *Chorus — The People*: 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!

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.

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.

27. *Recitative — An Angel (tenor)*: See, now he sleepeth beneath a juniper tree in the wilderness; and there the angels of the Lord encamp around about all them that fear Him.

28. *Soprano and Alto Chorus — 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.

29. *Chorus — The Angels*: He, watching over Israel, slumbers not, nor sleeps. Shouldst thou, walking in grief, languish, He will quicken thee.

30. *Recitative — An Angel (alto)*: Arise, Elijah, for thou hast a long journey before thee. Forty days and forty nights shalt thou go to Horeb, the mount of God.

— *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!

31. *Air — An Angel (alto)*: 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.

32. *Chorus*: He that shall endure to the end, shall be saved.

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.

— *An 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.

34. *Chorus*: Behold! God the Lord passed by! And a mighty wind rent the mountains around; break in pieces the rocks, break 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.

35. *Recitative, Quartet and Chorus — An Angel*: Above Him stood the Seraphim, and one cried to another: — *The Angelic Host*: Holy, holy, holy is God the Lord — the Lord Sabaoth! Now His glory hath filled all the earth.

36. *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.

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.

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 judgments 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.

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 everlasting, and all sorrow and mourning shall flee away forever.

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.

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."

— *Quartet*: O come everyone that thirsteth, O come to the waters; O come unto Him. O hear, and your souls shall live forever.

42. *Chorus*: And then shall your light break forth as the light of the morning breaketh; and your health shall speedily spring forth also; and the glory of the Lord ever be thy rereward. Lord, our Creator, how excellent Thy Name is in all the nations! Thou fillest heaven with thy glory. Amen.

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