

# Elijah: Mendelssohn's Masterpiece

John Gibbons · john@holdekunst.com · www.holdekunst.com

**Course Description:** Mendelssohn's consummate oratorio masterpiece, *Elijah*, combines baroque contrapuntal intricacy and grandiosity with a romantic style. One of the most entertaining works in the choral repertory, *Elijah*, while owing a significant debt to Bach and Handel, is a wholly novel and personal expression of Mendelssohn's sophistication and lyricism.

This Saturday seminar traces the evolution of the oratorio, both English and German, and places Mendelssohn's achievement in its proper context. With musical excerpts, analysis, and a look at relevant history and documents, students will come away ready to encounter this masterpiece.

**10:00 - 11:30 a.m. – Elijah, pt. 1 (1846)**

**11:30-11:50 – MOB Video**

**11:50-12:30 – History of the Oratorio, pt. 1 - Handel**

- *Messiah* (1741)
- *Israel in Egypt* (1739)
- *Saul* (1738)

**12:30-1:30 – Lunch (on your own)**

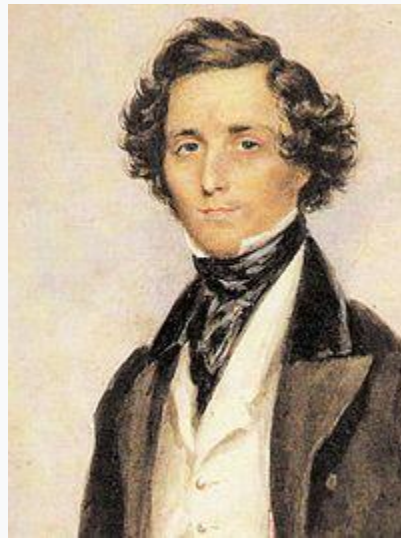
**1:30-2:30 – History of the Oratoria, pt.2**

- Bach: *Christmas Oratorio* (1788)
- Haydn: *Creation* (1798) & *The Seasons* (1801)
- Telemann: *The Last Judgment* (1761-1762)
- Mendelssohn: *Saint Paul* (1836)
- Walton: *Belshazzar's Feast* (1931)
- Tippett: *A Child of Our Time* (1941)

**2:30 – 4:00 – Elijah, pt. 2**

## *Elias aka Elijah*

Oratorio **by** Felix Mendelssohn  
Op. 70, MWV A 25



### *The composer in 1829*

Libretto: Julius Schubring

Language: German / English

First performed 1846: Birmingham (English)

**Scoring** Soloists: bass-baritone, soprano,  
alto, tenor  
SATB choir, Orchestra