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GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL

Saul

RIAS Kammerchor Berlin, Concerto Köln, René Jacobs

2h30 2 CD HMY2921877.78 August 2015

The most dramatic of oratorios. Although oratorios are not intended to be staged, Handel's *Saul* is something of an exception – for one thing, it contains extremely precise stage directions which were printed in the wordbooks distributed at performances. Hence audiences at the first English oratorios could construct a form of mental theatre, aided by Handel's dazzling musical depiction of the action: as we listen, we can see Goliath's gigantic strides, the course of the Jordan, or Saul throwing his javelin.



Artists

- Henry Waddington
Bass
- Finnur Bjarnason
Tenor
- Michael Slattery
Tenor
- Rosemary Joshua
Soprano
- Emma Bell
Soprano
- Lawrence Zazzo
Countertenor
- Jeremy Ovenden
Tenor
- Gidon Saks
Baritone
- RIAS Kammerchor Berlin
- Concerto Köln
- René Jacobs
Conductor

Composers

- George Frideric
Handel

Contents

GEORGE FRIDERIC HANDEL [1685-1759]

SAUL

· **Symphony** Allegro - Larghetto - Allegro - Andante larghetto (8'00)

· ACT ONE

Scene I

1. **Chorus** *How excellent Thy name, o Lord* (2'37)

- 2. Air **Soprano** *An infant raised by thy command*
- 3. Trio **Alto, tenore, basso** *Along the monster atheist strode* (2'08)
- 4. **Soprano, alto, tenore, basso** *The youth inspired by Thee, o Lord*
- 5. **Chorus** *How excellent Thy name, o Lord* (3'55)
- **Scene II**
- 6. Recit & 7. Air **Michal** *He comes, he comes! - O God-like youth!*
- 8. Recitative **Abner, Saul, David** *Behold, o King, the brave, victorious youth* (3'38)
- 9. Air **David** *O king, your favours with delights*
- 10. Recitative **Jonathan** *Oh early piety!* (5'21)
- 11. Air **Merab** *What abject thoughts a prince can have!*
- 12. Recitative **Merab** *Yet think, on whom this honour you bestow* (2'13)
- 13. Air **Jonathan** *Birth and fortune I despise!* (4'56)
- 14. Recitative **High Priest** *Go on, illustrious pair!*
- 15. Air **High Priest** *While yet thy tide of blood runs high* (2'45)
- 16. Recitative **Saul, Merab** *Thou, Merab, first in birth, be first in honour*
- 17. Air **Merab** *My soul rejects the thought with scorn*
- 18. Air **Michal** *See, with what a scornful air*
- 19. Air **Michal** *Ah, lovely youth, wast thou designed* (3'19)
- 20. **Symphony** *Andante allegro*
- 21. Recitative **Michal** *Already see the daughters of the land*
- Scene III**
- 22. **Chorus** *Welcome, welcome, mighty king!* (2'47)
- 23. *Accompagnato* **Saul** *What do I hear?*
- 24. **Chorus** *David his ten thousands slew*
- 25. *Accompagnato* **Saul** *To him ten thousands*
- 26. Air **Saul** *With rage I shall start burst his praises to hear* (2'17)
- **Scene IV**
- 27. Recitative **Jonathan, Michal** *Imprudent women!*
- 28. Air **Michal** *Fell rage and black despair possessed* (2'58)
- 29. Recitative **High Priest** *This but the smallest part of Harmony*
- 30. *Accompagnato* **High Priest** *By thee this universal frame* (2'47)
- **Scene V**
- 31. Recitative **Abner** *Racked with infernal pains*
- 32. Air **David** *O Lord, whose mercies numberless* (3'51)
- 33. **Symphony** *Largo*
- 34. Recitative **Jonathan** *'Tis all in vain, his fury still continues* (2'14)
- 35. Air **Saul** *A serpent, in my bosom warmed*
- 36. Recitative **Saul** *Has he escaped my rage?* (2'22)
- 37. Air **Merab** *Capricious man* (3'38)
- **Scene VI**
- 38. *Accompagnato* **Jonathan** *O filial piety!*
- 39. Air **Jonathan** *No, cruel father, no!* (3'00)
- 40. Air **High Priest** *O Lord, whose providence*
- 41. **Chorus** *Preserve him for the glory of Thy name* (3'37)
- **ACT TWO**
- Scene I**
- 42. **Chorus** *Envy! Eldest born of hell!* (2'47)
- **Scene II**
- 43. Recitative **Jonathan** *Ah! dearest friend*

44. Air **Jonathan** *But sooner Jordan' stream, I swear* (2'36)

· 45. Recitative **David, Jonathan** *Oh strange vicissitude!*

46. Air **David** *Such haughty beauties rather move* (5'07)

SAUL

· 47. Recitative **Jonathan** *My father comes*

Scene III

48. Recitative **Saul, Jonathan** *Hast thou obeyed my orders* (0'42)

· 49. Air **Jonathan** *Sin not, o king, against the youth*

50. Air **Saul** *As great Jehovah lives*

51. Air **Jonathan** *From cities stormed, and battles won* (4'54)

· **Scene IV**

52. Recitative **Jonathan, Saul** *Appear, my friend*

53. Air **David** *Your words, o king, my loyal heart*

54. Recitative **Saul** *Yes, he shall wed my daughter!* (1'49)

· **Scene V**

55. Recitative **Michal** *A father's will has authorised my love*

56. Duet **Michal, David** *O fairest of ten thousand fair*

57. **Chorus** *Is there a man* (4'18)

· 58. **Symphony** Largo - Allegro (4'35)

· **Scene VI**

59. Recitative **David** *Thy father is as cruel*

60. Duet **David, Michal** *At persecution I can laugh* (1'37)

· **Scene VII**

61. Recitative **Michal, Doeg** *Whom dost thou seek*

62. Air **Michal** *No, no let the guilty tremble* (2'14)

· **Scene VIII**

63. Recitative **Merab** *Mean as he was, he is my brother now*

64. Air **Merab** *Author of peace, who canst controul* (3'32)

· **Scene IX**

65. **Symphony** Allegro (1'06)

· 66. Accompagnato **Saul** *The time at length is come*

Scene X

67. Recitative **Saul, Jonathan** *Where is the son of Jesse?* (1'29)

· 68. **Chorus** *Oh fatal consequence of Rage* (4'46)

· **ACT THREE**

Scene I

69. Accompagnato **Saul** *Wretch that I am*

70. Recit - Accompagnato **Saul** *'Tis said, here lives a woman* (3'15)

· **Scene II**

71. Recitative **Witch, Saul** *With me what would'st thou*

72. Air **Witch of Endor** *Infernal spirits* (2'50)

· **Scene III**

73. Accompagnato **Samuel, Saul** *Why hast thou forced me from the realms of peace* (2'42)

· 74. **Symphony** Allegro (0'33)

· **Scene IV**

75. Recitative **David, Amalekite** *Whence comest thou?*

76. Air **David** *Impious wretch, of race accurst!* (2'52)

· 77. **March** Grave (3'03)

· **Scene V**

78. **Chorus** *Mourn, Israel* (3'27)
- 79. Air **High Priest** *Oh let it not in Gath be heard* (2'07)
- 80. Air **Merab** *From this unhappy day* (2'39)
- 81. Air **David** *Brave Jonathan is bow never drew*
82. **Chorus** *Eagles were not so swift as they* (2'09)
- 83. Air **Michal** *In sweetest harmony they lived!*
84. Solo **David and Chorus** *O fatal day!*
85. Recitative **Abner** *Ye men of Judah, weep no more!* (9'06)
- 86. **Chorus** *Gird on thy sword, thou man of might* (5'01)