

WIGMORE HALL

Wednesday 25 June 2025
7.30pm

The A-Z of Italian Baroque

La Serenissima

Adrian Chandler violin, director	George White viola
Oliver Cave violin I	Vladimir Waltham cello (continuo)
Simone Pirri violin I	Jacob Garside cello, viola da gamba
Camilla Scarlett violin II	Jan Zahourek double bass, viola da gamba
Jim O'Toole violin II	Reiko Ichise viola da gamba
Charlotte Amherst violin II	Lynda Sayce theorbo
Elitsa Bogdanova viola	Robin Bigwood harpsichord, organ

Neal Davies Ioram, Rè di Samaria (Joram, King of Samaria)

Hilary Summers Capitano di Ioram (Joram's Captain)

Alessandro Fisher Eliseo Profeta (The Prophet Elisha)

Julia Doyle Prima Donna (First Woman)

Mhairi Lawson Seconda Donna (Second Woman)

Attilio Ariosti (1666-1729)

La profezia d'Eliseo nell'assedio di Samaria (1705)

Sinfonia

Parte Prima

Interval

Parte Seconda



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Born in Bologna, 1666, Attilio Ariosti received his early musical education whilst serving as an altar boy at the Basilica of S. Petronio under the possible tutelage of the *Maestro di capella*, Giovanni Paolo Colonna. In 1688, he joined the Order of Servites and became a deacon in 1692. Referred to by his contemporaries as 'padre', he presumably went on to attain the rank of priest.

It was not uncommon to find priest-musicians in Italy – Vivaldi and Ariosti weren't unique – but Ariosti's diplomatic postings in Mantua, Berlin, Vienna, Paris and London were rather unusual. These endeavours, particularly his cosy bond with Berlin's Protestant court, annoyed the Catholic Church sufficiently that they ordered him to return to Italy; Ariosti had other ideas. He spent six years in Berlin and another seven in Vienna before finally returning home with airs, graces and secular attire; his large hat in particular, annoyed some.

Ariosti's homecoming was brief; he was soon on the move again, this time to serve the infant Duke of Anjou (who later became Louis XV) in France, before moving to London in 1716 where he died in 1729. It has long been suspected that he operated in England as a spy for the French; perhaps his performances on the organ, harpsichord, viola d'amore and cello were merely an effective cover.

Over the course of his career, he had borrowed freely to support his lifestyle. This trait prompted the London-based poet-librettist Paolo Rolli to supply the following as Ariosti's unflattering epitaph:

'Here lies Attilio Ariosti, he'd borrow still, could he accost ye. Monk to the last, whate'er betide, at other's cost, he lived – and died.'

Despite his moderate output, Ariosti's music possessed great talent and originality. The period best represented by extant scores is that of his stay in Vienna where he composed an opera, five serenatas, 23 cantatas and three oratorios including the present work.

Eliseo was performed in the Imperial Chapel during Lent, 1705. Giovanni Battista Neri's text, drawing on a grisly section from the Old Testament's Book of Kings (II, 6.24-7.20), was one of several Viennese librettos set between 1700 and 1710 whose action, inspired by the sieges of the War of the Spanish Succession (in which the Holy Roman Empire was heavily embroiled) takes place in a besieged city.

The scene in Samaria, the ancient capital of Israel, opens to a flourish of warlike trumpets. Surrounded by Ben-Hadad's Syrian army and with little food, the populace is starving to death. Two women are hatching a plan, whereby they agree to feed upon their own children, such is their hunger. Their discussion is interrupted by Ioram, king of the Israelites, and his military leader, Capitano.

Ioram bemoans the responsibilities of kingship whilst Capitano laments the doomed campaign. Cursing the prophets Elia (Elijah) and Eliseo for bringing famine to Israel (on separate occasions), Ioram orders Eliseo to be brought before him. Accused of bringing Israel to its

knees, Eliseo promises that Samaria will shortly be relieved and that a time of plenty will ensue. Mocked by Capitano who believes the prophet to be deluded, Eliseo adds that Capitano will soon die.

Returning to the women, we find Seconda Donna pleading with Prima Donna to spare the children. Part One concludes with Prima Donna committing infanticide, leaving Seconda Donna incredulous.

Seconda Donna's lamentations open Part Two; she is swiftly joined by Prima Donna, come to extract her pound of flesh as per the agreement. Seconda Donna refuses to kill her child and an almighty argument ensues. Ioram arrives and listens as Prima Donna states her case, weaving fact with fiction. Horrified, Ioram is then distracted as Capitano arrives with news that four lepers living in the city gates had gone to the enemy camp in search of food; on their arrival, they found the camp deserted, Ben-Hadad's army having fled, thanks to a heavenly vision of auxiliary and Egyptian reinforcements coming to relieve Samaria. Furthermore, huge quantities of gold, silver and grain have been abandoned. The lepers returned to Samaria to deliver the news to Capitano.

Fearing this to be a stratagem to encourage the Israelites to sally forth from the city walls, Ioram sends scouts to corroborate the information. Upon being reassured, he allows the people to go forth and bring back to the city whatever they can carry, whilst simultaneously sending Capitano to the gates to prevent confusion. Seconda Donna, supported by Eliseo, then presents her case to Ioram before Prima Donna celebrates the military victory, the matter of the baby now apparently resolved. News then arrives telling of Capitano's death, crushed by the tumult at the city gate. Eliseo's prophecies are complete, and the work draws to a close with a chorus praising God.

Neri's libretto was originally written for a performance in Modena, set by Colonna in 1686. Save for five arias and a small amount of recitative, the 1705 libretto remained largely unchanged. Ariosti may have chosen the libretto himself; we know he had worked with Neri on his *Erifile* (Venice, 1697) and due to his S. Petronio connection, he possibly knew Colonna's score. Additionally, the libretto's use of scenes and dramatic conventions would have appealed to his strengths as an operatic composer.

In addition to the five vocal soloists, the score calls for two trumpets in the sinfonia, and three violas da gamba, symbolic of death, that are used with frequency – to great effect – to accompany the women. Ariosti also devises inspired ways of deploying the string group; of particular interest is the accompaniment of double bass in the final aria which sports a rare example (in an oratorio) of a harpsichord obligato. The skilful old-fashioned concluding Madrigale is particularly impressive, providing a fitting end to a remarkable oratorio.

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Attilio Ariosti (1666-1729)

La profezia d'Eliseo
nell'assedio di Samaria
(1705)

Dottore Giovanni Battista
Neri, Bolognese

Parte Prima

1a: Arioso
Prima Donna, Seconda Donna:
Oh, tiranna crudeltà.

1b: Recitativo
Prima Donna:
Da l'empia Siria Benadad
superbo
Con torrente d'acciaro
Vien di Samaria
Ad inondare il regno.

Seconda Donna:
Non v'è scampo alla fuga.

Prima Donna:
Toglie già
l'inumano
La speme al core, e al piè la
libertà.

1c: Arioso
Prima Donna, Seconda Donna:
Oh, tiranna crudeltà.

2a: Recitativo
Seconda Donna:
Mà per destin peggiore egli
non entra
A toglierci la vita;
Poiche di rado, e a
sorte
La tirannia dà per favor la
morte.
Con penuria inudita, ed
inumano
Terror d'orrida fame entro
gli alberghi
Assediati ci
tiene:
E noi madri
infelici
Qual daremmo alle
vene
Alimento che passi al sen de'
figli?
Se il forzato digiuno asciuga
in petto

The Prophecy of
Elisha at the Siege of
Samaria

First Part

1a: Arioso
First Woman, Second Woman:
Oh, cruel tyrant.

1b: Recitativo
First Woman:
From wicked Syria, proud
Ben-Hadad,
with violent streams of steel,
comes to flood
the kingdom of Samaria.

Second Woman:
There is no chance to flee.

First Woman:
Already the inhuman one
deprives the heart
of hope, and the feet of
freedom.

1c: Arioso
First Woman, Second Woman:
Oh, cruel tyrant.

2a: Recitativo
Second Woman:
But through worse fate he
does not come
to take away our life;
since rarely and only by
fate does
tyranny give the gift of
death.
With unprecedented
scarcity, and inhuman
terror of horrid
hunger
inside the besieged
lodgings he keeps us.
And us, unhappy mothers,
what would we
give to the veins as
nourishment that pass
to the breasts of our
children,
if forced fasting dries
up

Le poppe
contumaci,
E fin sù'l labbro inaridisce i
baci.

2b: Aria
Seconda Donna:
Prole tenera cessa di
piangere,
Che l'ira
frangere,
Nò, non si può.

Lascia, deh lascia à mè
Il lagrimar per tè
Che più di core almen' io
piangerò.

3a: Recitativo
Prima Donna:
Amica, in quai deliri
Di vana
tenerezza,
Così vil t'abbandoni? Ad
ogni sesso
Già certa è la ruina, e quella
morte,
Che abborrisce ogni sguardo,
Tù col pianto che
versi
La vuoi vicina a gli occhi?
Ah, folle ferma,
E almen di due
agonie
Una si cangi in
vita.

Seconda Donna:
E come, oh cieli,
Se il vivere è un tormento al
core oppresso,
E si cangia in martirio il
tempo istesso?

Prima Donna:
Tallora il precipizio
Guida alla libertade;
Et all'alme infelici
Dal destino abbattute
Spesso è salute il disperar
salute.

the swollen breasts in the
chest
and even saps the kisses
from the lips?

2b: Aria
Second Woman:
Tender offspring, cease
crying
so that your distress is
stemmed,
no, no, it can't be.

Leave, oh leave me
to weep for you
that at least I will cry even
more.

3a: Recitativo
First Woman:
Friend, in what frenzies
of vain tenderness do you
abandon yourself
so vilely? To each
sex
ruin is already certain,
and death,
that abhors every glance,
you, with the tears that
you shed,
do you want it near your
eyes? Ah, cease
your foolishness, and at
least of two
agonies, you change one
in life.

Second Woman:
And how, oh heavens,
if living is a torment to the
oppressed heart
and time itself turns to
martyrdom?

First Woman:
At times the chasm
leads to freedom;
and for the unhappy souls
stricken by destiny
it is often salvation to
despair of salvation.

Work continues overleaf. Please turn the page as quietly
as possible.

3b: *Aria*

Prima Donna:

Prendi il ferro, e del figlio,
sì,
Squarcia le viscere, lacera il
cor.

Fanne pasto al labro e
sangue
E nel sen tornando il
sangue
Di se stesso ei sia
vigor.

4: *Recitativo*

Seconda Donna:

Oh Dio! Che
parli?
E qual indegno
eccesso
Ti suggerì la crudeltà
pietosa?

Prima Donna:

Consulto il mal'estremo
Con l'ultimo rimedio.

Seconda Donna:

Al sol pensiero
Inorridisce il senso.

Prima Donna:

Eh, che sotto le
leggi
Necessità non vive: et a
gl'incontri
De' comuni
perigli
Salvansi pria le madri, e
poscia i figli.

Seconda Donna:

Ma nel tuo parto infante
Mostra tu pria le prove.

Prima Donna:

Pronta son'io, tu dopo l'opra
ancora
Giura ugal ardimento.

Seconda Donna:

Prometto alto coraggio.

Prima Donna:

Hora vedi s'ho
petto,
Che si sgomenti à lacerar...
mà giunge
Ioram il regge, e seco il
duce: altrove

3b: *Aria*

First Woman:

Take the sword, and of
your son, yes,
rip open the entrails,
lacerate his heart.

Let it be food for your
lifeless lips
and let the blood return
to your breast;
let the blood itself be your
strength.

4: *Recitative*

Second Woman:

Oh God! What are you
saying?
And what unworthy
excesses
did merciful cruelty
suggest to you?

First Woman:

I respond to the extreme evil
with the final remedy.

Second Woman:

Just the idea of it
horrifies the senses.

First Woman:

Ah, but necessity doesn't
live
under any laws; and in the
face
of common dangers, first
the mothers
are saved, and then the
children.

Second Woman:

But in your own infant
you show the proof first.

First Woman:

I am ready, and you, after
the deed
will still swear fortitude.

Second Woman:

I promise great courage.

First Woman:

Now, you will see if I have
a breast that is
distressed in tearing... But
here comes
Joram the king, and with
him, the captain;

N'udirai il
tenore.

Seconda Donna:

Oh stelle, oh stelle
A che sforzate un disperato
core.

5: *Aria*

Ioram:

O' corona, ò scettro, ò
soglio
Deh lasciate in pace un rè.

Perch'io provi hore
inquieta

Sò che siete

E catena, e peso, e scoglio
Alla fronte, al braccio, al
piè.

6a: *Recitativo*

Ioram:

Porpore, che di raggi il sen
cingete
Se vi good
lucenti
Vi provo ancor pesanti: onde
se il fato
Vicende sì diverse in voi
produce,
Io che il peso non vuò lascio
la luce.
Già l'urgenze del
regno
Mi fan pari alla plebe, e se
distinto
Par che mi renda il barbaro
furore,
Sol diverso è il mio duol
perch' è maggiore.

Capitano:

Sire, noi siam perduti.
Hormai sì grande
E la fame commun, che
ancor si è resa
Famela la
morte:
Mentre di mille, e
mille
Divorate
falangi
Sazia non è per anco, anzi
piu fiera
Vibra il dente, mordace,
E quanto più divora, e più
vorace.

elsewhere you will hear of
the advice.

Second Woman:

Oh stars, oh stars,
to what you force a
desperate heart.

5: *Aria*

Joram:

Oh crown, oh sceptre, oh
throne,
leave a king in peace.

So that I feel the restless
hours

I know that you are
a chain, a weight, a rock
at my forehead, my arms
and my feet.

6a: *Recitative*

Joram:

Royal purple, that with
rays you girdled my
breast; though I enjoy
your shine, still I
rather feel your
heaviness. So, if fate
makes in you such
diverse courses,
I, not wanting the weight,
leave the light.
Already the urgencies of
the kingdom
make me equal to the
plebs, and if
the barbaric fury seems
to distinguish me,
my grief is only different
as it is greater.

Captain:

Sire, we are lost. Now so
great
is the common hunger,
that even
death has become
ravenous.
While thousands upon
thousands
of devoured squadrons
are not enough to
satisfy it, so its teeth
gnash
even more fiercely, biting,
devouring again, becoming
more voracious.

6b: *Aria*

Capitano:

L'istessa speranza
Ci fà disperar.

Da ogn'alma più forte
La morte si chiede,
Se fede e costanza
Dan' esca al penar.

7a: *Recitativo*

Ioram:

Troppo mi è noto, e queste
Son de' nostri Profeti
Le tirannie zelanti.
Già nel regno
deserto
D'Acab il genitore Elia
crudele
Per toglier l'onde all'
assetate genti
Rese impietrito il
cielo;
Ed hor nel regno mio, per
torre il cibo
Al popolo che
langue
Il barbaro Eliseo
Rendi indurato il suolo: oh
d'Israele
Gloria precipitata! Oh di
Samaria
Abbattuta fortuna! E chi
permise,
Che incrudeliti à
torto
Sfogassero il tirannico
consiglio.
Elia col padre, et Eliseo col
figlio?

7b: *Aria*

Ioram:

Armato sdegno
Sorgi vendetta
Scuotiti
Svegliati
Ira, e furor.

S'un barbaro indegno
Mi spopola il regno
Nemica saetta
Gli laceri il cor.

8a: *Recitativo*

Capitano:

Sì, sì, un nembo
d'acciaro
Piombi sopra Eliseo, che se
repugna

6b: *Aria*

Captain:

Even hope
makes us despair.

By every stronger soul,
death is invoked,
if faith and constancy
act as bait to suffering.

7a: *Recitative*

Joram:

Too much I know, and these
are the zealous tyrannies
of our prophets.
Already, in this deserted
kingdom
of Ahab, the cruel father,
Elijah, in order to
take the waters away
from the thirsty
people, he made the
skies harden like
stone; and now in my
kingdom, to take food
from the people that
languish,
barbarous Elisha
solidifies the soil. Oh,
Israel's
fallen glory! Oh,
Samaria's
destroyed fortune! And
who allowed them,
that once angered, they
wrongfully give vent
to their tyrannical
counsel?
Elijah and his father,
Elisha and his son?

7b: *Aria*

Joram:

Scorn, arm yourself,
vengeance, arise
shake yourself,
wake yourself,
anger and fury.

If an unworthy barbarian
raids my kingdom
an enemy arrow
may tear his heart.

8a: *Recitative*

Captain:

Yes, yes, a storm of steel
will fall heavily
upon Elisha, so that if he
refuses

D'impetrarne sostegno, e
par che solo
Di negarci alimento abbia
diletto,
Trovi cibo il rigore entro il
suo petto.

Ioram:

Vanne, mio fido Duce, e del
tuo brando
L'ira giusta, et
acerba
Fulmini in petto umile alma
superba.

8b: *Aria*

Capitano:

Se si deve per sempre
penar
Almen per momenti si goda,
sì, sì.

Quell' empio inumano,
Si sveni,
s'uccida
Che tanti tormenti
All' anime ordì.

9a: *Recitativo*

Eliseo:

Ferma, che il molle
riso
Talor non passa il labro. E
quel pensiero,
Che si ordisce
gigante
Spesso in fasce s'uccide, e
more infante.
Qual mal nato ardimento
Traman le vostre voglie?

Ioram:

Ah, spietato Profeta!

Capitano:

Ah, nemico Eliseo, de nostri
mali
Origine, e
fomento.

Ioram:

E perche nieghi
Conforto à tanti
affanni?

Capitano:

Se favelli col caso,

entreaties for support, he
only seems to
gain delight in denying us
food, may he find
the hardness of his heart
as food.

Joram:

Go, my faithful captain,
and let your sword,
with anger, just and
bitter, strike
the humble breast and
the haughty soul.

8b: *Aria*

Captain:

If one must always suffer,
at least
there are moments one
can enjoy, yes, yes.

That wicked, inhuman one,
let us injure him, let him
kill himself,
he who has ordered
so many torments for souls.

9a: *Recitative*

Elisha:

Stop, because sometimes
the gentle smile
does not pass the lips.
And that thought,
that is woven as a giant,
often kills itself in
swaddling clothes, and
dies an infant.
What ill-born deeds
do your wishes plot?

Joram:

Ah, merciless Prophet!

Captain:

Ah, enemy
Elisha,
origin and stimulator of
our evils.

Joram:

And why do you deny
comfort to so many
troubles?

Captain:

If you speak with chance...

*Work continues overleaf. Please turn the page as quietly
as possible.*

Ioram: Se interroghi la sorte.	Joram: ...if you enquire of destiny...	Di Gerico i racemi, e tutti i fiumi Che col miele, e col latte Bagnando van di Canaam l'arene Ne men di ciò che parli Succedere l'intento.	the branches of Jericho, and all the rivers of honey and of milk, that bathe the sands of Canaan, nothing less than what you say would happen.
Capitano: Se stringi il fato.	Captain: ...if you hold to fate...		
Ioram: E s'hai in man le stelle.	Joram: ...and if you have the stars in your hand.		
Capitano: Perche meno crudel.	Captain: Why less cruel...		
Ioram: Perche pietoso.	Joram: ...why merciful...		
Capitano: Non fai più mite il Cielo?	Captain: ...don't you make the heavens meeker?		
Ioram: L'ira di Dio, non freni?	Joram: Why do you not break God's wrath?		
Eliseo: E che? Forse son'io De sovrani voleri arbitro eletto?	Elisha: And what? Perhaps am I the elected arbitrator of the divine will?		
Ioram: Eh ch'ogni tuo consiglio Move l'onnipotenza.	Joram: Ah, that every one of your counsels stirs omnipotence.		
Eliseo: Un' eccesso di fede Merta premio eccedente. Hor nel mio labro Ecco i divini accenti.	Elisha: An excess of faith merits an excessive reward. Now from my lips hear the divine accents.		
<i>9b: Aria & Recitativo</i> Eliseo: Se già sterile in grembo alle spume Il pallido lume Il sol sepeli. Coronato di spiche feconde Trarra fuor dell' onde Più lucido il dì.	<i>9b: Aria & Recitative</i> Elisha: If, already in the bosom of the foam, the sun hid the pale light. Crowned with fertile ears of corn will draw forth from the waves a brighter day.		
Capitano: Troppo Eliseo prometti. Fin d'un arida foglia Oggi avaro è il terren, come dimani Fia prodigo di frutti? Eh, che se Dio Trapportasse in Samaria	Captain: Too much Elisha promises. Even a dry leaf, today the earth will not produce, how tomorrow will it be excessive with fruit? Ah, but if God brought to Samaria		
		Eliseo: Se incredulo ti rendi Converà poiche il giuri, e all'hor che il caso Di pingue pasto, e di tesori, e gemme Sarà abbondante fabro, Vedrà il tuo ciglio, e nol godrà il tuo labro.	Elisha: If you give yourself up to incredulity, since you agree to swear it, whenever the chance of fine foods, treasures, and jewels is supplied in plenty, your eyes will see it, but your lips will not taste it.
		<i>9c: Ritornello</i>	<i>9c: Ritornello</i>
		<i>9d: Aria</i> Eliseo: Chi col senso, e col pensiero Per opporsi à un nume vero Arma il cor d'infedeltà.	<i>9d: Aria</i> Elisha: He, who with sense and thought opposes a true god, he arms the heart with infidelity.
		Del tonante il giusto Impero Di Lucifero il sentiero In istante ei calcherà.	To the thundering mighty empire of Lucifer, he will tread the path in an instant.
		<i>10a: Recitativo</i> Prima Donna: Hor che sole, e neglette Non abbiám ch'ci senta, e ch'ci veda Fuorche le nostre doglie, ei nostri affanni; Per riparar à i danni Dell' affamato dente, hormai la destra Armo d'acciaro, e al figlio...	<i>10a: Recitative</i> First Woman: Now, that neglected and alone, there is nobody to hear or see us except for our grief and our worries; to repair the damages of our hungry mouths, now my right arm I fortify with steel, and to my son...
		Seconda Donna: Oh cieli! E a questo nome Pietà non ti comove?	Second Woman: Oh heavens! And at this mention of him, does pity not move you?
		Prima Donna: I primi moti Di pietoso desio Deve l'alma a sè stessa Alzo il colpo...	First Woman: The main stirrings of piteous affection the soul must give to itself, I strike the blow.

Seconda Donna:
Deh ferma,
E di pascere il labro
Pensa più giuste forme.

Prima Donna:
Ne' dubbj della vita
La dimora è una morte
Già pronta ho risoluto, e tu
pur' anco
Così mi promettesti: ecco lo
sveno...

Seconda Donna:
Nò, per momenti, ò cara
Compagna al mio dolor
senti, deh, senti.

10b: Aria
Seconda Donna:
Salva il figlio,
E al seno mio
Volgi irata
Il tuo furor.

Se di sangue hai sol desio
L'empie brame
D'aspra fame
Sacierai con questo
cor.

11a: Recitativo
Prima Donna:
Nò, nò, non vuol consiglio
Sconsigliato disegno. Alma
rifiuta
Il titolo di madre, e tutta
foco...

*11b: Recitativo
accompagnato*
Prima Donna:
Ahime! Trema la destra,
Vacilla il piede, e mi
s'abbaglia il guardo:
Chi l'animo codardo
Si repente mi rende? Ah, sì
voi siete
Moti d'interno
affetto.
Vive, sì, sì, restate
Viscere del cor mio, ch'io qui
non posso...
Eh, che più
dell'amore
La penuria mi rode: hor non
v'è scampo;
Chiudo gl'occhi, e
m'accieco,
Per far più fiero... Ei
piange,

Second Woman:
Please, stop,
in order to feed our lips,
think of more just ways.

First Woman:
In the doubts of life
waiting is a death
to which I am already
resolved, and you too
promised me this: here, I
strike him...

Second Woman:
No, for a moment, oh dear
friend, to my grief, please,
listen...

10b: Aria
Second Woman:
Save the child,
and to my breast
direct thy wrathful
fury.

If you only desire blood,
the ungodly desires
of bitter hunger,
you will satisfy with this
heart.

11a: Recitativo
First Woman:
No, no, no advice is needed
from such a wild plan.
The soul refuses
the title of mother, and I
am all fire...

*11b: Accompanied
recitative*
First Woman:
Alas! My right arm trembles,
my feet stagger and my
eyes are blinded.
What makes my mind so
cowardly all of a sudden?
Ah, yes, you are
the reasons of internal
affection.
Remain alive, yes, yes,
bowels of my heart, that
here, I can't...
Ah, and yet more than
love, scarcity
gnaws at me; now there is
no escape;
I close my eyes and blind
myself
in order to make myself
more merciless...

M'intenerisce, oh
Dio!
E pria, che il cor gli sveni, ci
frange il mio.
Mà che risolvo? E ancor mi
trattenete
Tiranniche potenze?
Fato, ciel, figlio, sorte;
Disperata, agitata
Risoluta à i furori
Prendo il ferro, nò. Sì...
T'uccido, mori.

11c: Aria à 2
Secondo Donna:
Che facesti,
cruda?

Prima Donna:
Vieni, e taci
Saziati pur con me.

Secondo Donna:
Così audaci avrò ancor io
I sensi miei?
È pentita la mia fè.

Prima Donna:
Al detto mio
Promettesti al tua fè.

Parte Seconda

12: Aria/Arioso
Seconda Donna:
Nel più eupo del
Baratro orribile
Si nasconda
L'immonda empietà.

A recarmi spavento terribile
L'ombra infante gigante si
fà.

13a: Recitativo
Seconda Donna:
Con quel dente
ch'impresse
Dell' altrui parto al sen morsi
tiranni,
Qui sbranerò del mio
Ogni fibra
innocente?
Io promisi, e giurai,
E alle promesse, e al
giuramento unita
È la fame che cresce.

He cries, I feel for him, oh
God!
But, before I kill his heart,
he breaks mine.
But what do I do? And yet
you still hold me
back, tyrannical powers?
Fate, heavens, child, destiny;
distressed, agitated,
steadfast to the furies
I take the dagger, no.
Yes... I kill you. Die.

11c: Duet
Second Woman:
What have you done,
cruel one?

First Woman:
Come, be quiet,
eat your fill with me.

Second Woman:
Will I still have such
courageous feelings?
My faith is penitent.

First Woman:
At my words,
you promised your faith.

Second Part

12: Aria/Arioso
Second Woman:
In the deepest part of the
bottomless pit
hides
the polluted wickedness.

To bring me terrible fear,
the infant shadow
becomes gigantic.

13a: Recitativo
Second Woman:
With that mouth which
took tyrant bites
from the breast of
another's child,
here, will I tear apart
every innocent fibre of
mine?
I promised, I swore an oath,
and the promises and the
oath are united
with the growing hunger.

*Work continues overleaf. Please turn the page as quietly
as possible.*

Già pegl' infetti /immondi
avanzi
D'un estinta colomba
D'uopo è versar tesori, e il
teschio/capo solo
D'un putrido
giumento
Impoverisce un regno.
Apransi dunque
Le vene al figlio, e pria
ch'estenuata
lo fuor di lui mi mora, egli
inghiottito
Viva dentro me stessa.
Oh cieli! E dirà il
mondo
Che in Samaria le madri
Porgono à figli il latte
Con usura di sangue? E sarà
forza
Per non mancar di
fedè
Mancar alla pietade?
Oh esecrando impegno,
Promessa horenda, e
giuramento indegno.

13b: Aria

Seconda Donna:

Viscere care, e
belle
Sì, sì, vivete, sì.

Cadano in rie
procelle
Sciolte, dal ciel le stelle
Pria ch'io vi tolga il dì.

14a: Recitativo & Arioso à 2

Prima Donna:

Del famelico labro
Io vengo amica à satollar le
brame
In quel pasto, che al mio
Già promettesti
uguale.

Seconda Donna:

Oh Dio!

Prima Donna:

Perche sospiri?

Seconda Donna:

Penso all' horror che
spargerà funesta
Della fama la
tromba,
Col dir ch'io fui d'un figlio, e
culla, e tomba.

Already, for the infected
remains
of an extinct dove,
it is necessary to pour out
treasures, and
the skull of only a rotten
donkey
impoverishes a kingdom.
Let therefore
the veins of the son be
cut, and before I
die exhausted outside of
him, let him,
swallowed up, live inside me.
Oh heavens! And will the
world say
that in Samaria the mothers
offer their children milk
in exchange for blood?
And will it be
necessary in order not to
fail in faith,
to fail in godliness?
Oh, execrable pact,
horrific promise and
unjust oath.

13b: Aria

Second Woman:

Dear and beautiful fruit of
my entrails,
yes, yes, you live, yes.

May the stars fall in
terrible storms,
released from the sky
before I take away your day.

14a: Recitative & Duet

First Woman:

With hungry lips
I come, friend, to satiate
my desires
in that meal, equal to mine
that you have already
promised.

Second Woman:

Oh God!

First Woman:

Why do you sob?

Second Woman:

I think of the horror that
will be spread
by Fame's trumpet saying
that
I was for a child both a
crib and a tomb.

Prima Donna:

Taci, che se di
madre
Essa il pregio t'invola,
Dirà ancor, che all' ardir non
fosti sola.
Mà la mensa gradita
Dove, e quando
l'esponi?

Seconda Donna:

Eccola tosto.

Prima Donna:

E così mi dilleggi?
Lacerato, e diviso
In minuti fragmenti il mio
godesti
E con sì franco
ardire
Vivo il tuo mi
presenti?

Seconda Donna:

E ancor non sei
Sazia di masticar carne
innocenti?

Prima Donna:

Ben' è ragion, se del mio
figlio il sangue
À te già tinse il
labro.

Seconda Donna:

Sì, mà da un cibo
horrendo,
Benche l'urgenza il fè soave,
e grato,
Il cor non imparò d'esser
spietato.

Prima Donna:

Mi promettesti.

Seconda Donna:

Il caso
Fù d'oggetto improvviso.

Prima Donna:

Giurasti.

Seconda Donna:

Il mio volere
Necessità costrinse.

Prima Donna:

Ebbi la fede.

First Woman:

Be silent, for if your
mother's honour is
stolen, it will also be said
that you were not alone in
your daring.
But when and where do you
set forth your welcome
table?

Second Woman:

It will be here presently.

First Woman:

And so you mock me?
Lacerated and torn
into minute fragments
you enjoyed mine
and with such blunt
audacity
you present yours to me,
alive?

Second Woman:

Are you not yet
satiated from chewing on
innocent flesh?

First Woman:

I have good reason if the
blood of my son
has already stained your
lips.

Second Woman:

Yes, but although the
necessity made it
sweet and pleasing, the
heart did not learn
to be merciless from such
a horrible food.

First Woman:

You promised me.

Second Woman:

The need
was of an unusual nature.

First Woman:

You swore.

Second Woman:

Necessity forced
my will.

First Woman:

I had a promise.

Seconda Donna: Hor torna A ripigliarla il senno.	Second Woman: Now she starts to come to her senses.
Prima Donna: Ah, scelerata, Dunque avrai del mio figlio Divorata gran parte; e poscia al fine Con semplice querele Tu sarai la pietosa, io la cru dele.	First Woman: Ah, villain, therefore you will have devoured a large part of my son; and then in the end, with simple complaints you become the merciful one, and I the cruel.
Seconda Donna: S' à svenar le tue prole Tù nudristi nel seno alma d' inferno Io non sono una Furia.	Second Woman: If to kill your child, you nourished an infernal soul in your heart, I am not a Fury.
Prima Donna: Mendicato pensier.	First Woman: Base thought.
Seconda Donna: Saggio consiglio.	Second Woman: Wise counsel.
Prima Donna: Cedi il mal nato figlio.	First Woman: Submit your ill-born child.
Seconda Donna: Ferma.	Second Woman: Stop.
Prima Donna: Lascialo indegna.	First Woman: Leave him, unworthy one.
Seconda Donna: Empia, che tenti?	Second Woman: Evil one, just you try it.
Prima Donna: Vedrai.	First Woman: You'll see.
Seconda Donna: Sei folle.	Second Woman: You're crazy.
Prima Donna: Apri quel petto.	First Woman: Wound that chest.
Seconda Donna: Taci.	Second Woman: Quiet.
Prima Donna: O[r] ' ch'io lo svenerò.	First Woman: Now I will cut his veins.
Seconda Donna: Nò, nò, nol lascerà.	Second Woman: No, no, I won't leave him.
Prima Donna: Sì, sì, l'ucciderò. Estinto.	First Woman: Yes, yes, I'll kill him. Dead.

Seconda Donna: Vivente.	Second Woman: Alive.
Prima Donna: In pasto l'avrò.	First Woman: I will have him as a meal.
Seconda Donna: Per sempre l'avrò.	Second Woman: I will have him forever.
Ioram: O' là femine vili in qual contesa Pende quì la ragione?	Joram: Oh, there, vile women, in what dispute is reason being put to the test here?
Prima Donna: O mio Signor, mio Rege, Odi d' orrendo eccesso Racconto miserabile, mà vero.	First Woman: Oh my Lord, my King, hear the wretched story of horrendous excess, but it's all true.
Ioram: Dite, misere, dite, Che già pur troppo avezzo È l'orecchio à i lamenti, il ciglio à i mali.	Joram: Speak, wretches, speak, for already too accustomed to such things are my ears to laments and my eyelashes to evils.
Prima Donna: Tiranneggiati in tante guise i sensi Hà la fame crudel, che indotte à forza Hà due troppo infelici alme di madri In sì strani perigli A divorar, oh cieli, i propri figli.	First Woman: The senses have been tyrannised in so many ways by cruel hunger, which has driven by force two most unhappy souls of mothers, in such strange circumstances, oh heavens, to devour their own children.
Ioram: Che ascolto? I propri figli? Oh, in quali Estremi s'agita un cor regnante?	Ioram: What do I hear? Your own children? Oh, to what extremes is a ruling heart stirred?
Prima Donna: Ma senti. Irresolute Dd'effettuare il pasto Costei sforzò il mio dente. A dar nel mio li primi morsi...	First Woman: But listen. Irresolute, in order to carry out the meal, she forced my mouth. In order to take the first bites of mine...
Seconda Donna: Mente, Che fù dettame indegno Di sue barbare voglie.	Second Woman: She lies, it was an unworthy instruction of her barbaric desires.

Song continues overleaf. Please turn the page as quietly as possible.

Prima Donna: Essa die il ferro...	First Woman: ...she took the sword...
Seconda Donna: O che menzogne!	Second Woman: Oh, such fabrications!
Prima Donna: A questa destra, e tosto Spinse il colpo...	...and by this right arm, fast, she struck the blow...
Seconda Donna: Che fingi?	Second Woman: What are you playing at?
Prima Donna: Sù'l petto all' innocente...	First Woman: ...on the innocent breast...
Seconda Donna: E falso.	Second Woman: It's not true.
Prima Donna: Mà pria giurò che con ugal ardire...	First Woman: But first swearing with equal boldness...
Seconda Donna: E ancor t'inoltri?	Second Woman: And still you continue?
Prima Donna: Sì che tù primiera...	First Woman: ...that you, being the first...
Seconda Donna: Nò, perfida.	Second Woman: No, treacherous one.
Ioram: Tacete. Che qual si sia del caso L'ordine quà descritto è sempre orrendo.	Joram: Silence. Whatever the case, the order described here is horrendous.
<i>14b: Aria</i> Ioram: A un fulmine sì fier di tanto orror O' regio cor Resisterai?	<i>14b: Aria</i> Joram: Will you resist a lightning bolt so proud, of such horror, oh royal heart?
Empia sorte Sà che morte Daria fine à miei lamenti E frà stenti Di tormenti Fà crudel che il suo gel non venga mai.	Wicked fate knows that death would give an end to my laments, and in hardships with torments, acts cruelly so that his icy hand never comes.

<i>15a: Recitativo</i> Capitano: Sire, del Rè nemico L'essercito assediante Precipito la fuga. E i suoi tesori Timido abbandonando, à noi rimase Prezioso il terreno, ove in quest'hora Al nostro piè la libertà s'indora.	<i>15a: Recitative</i> Captain: Sire, the besieging army of the enemy king takes flight! And his treasures they fearfully abandon. To us is left the precious territory where in this hour, liberty lies covered in gold.
Ioram: Gran Duce, oh che rapporti! Al suon delle tue voci S'addormenta l'affanno; Mà temo, che in momenti Non lo sveglino poi contrari accenti.	Joram: Great Captain, oh, such news! At the sound of your voices my anguish is laid to rest; but I fear that in a moment, differing noises will then awaken it.
Capitano: Così fedel narrò turba mendica, Che spinta dà un' estremo Famelico delirio A cercar frà nemici ò cibo, ò morte, Questa scoperse inaspettate sorte.	Captain: Thus it was faithfully related by a beggarly mob who, being driven by an extreme ravening hunger to search among the enemies for food, or death, this unexpected fortune they did discover.
Ioram: Oh pregiate notizie! Entrino dunque In Samaria gli erari; e corra tosto Entro un torrente d'oro A dissetarsi il Popolo giulivo. Sì pasca al primo arrivo Il più misero volgo, e diano al fine Le Siriache spoglie Superbia contenuta alle mie soglie. Tù vanne in tanto, e forma De' tumulti al periglio Argine con il braccio, e col consiglio.	Joram: Oh, precious news! So, let the treasures enter into Samaria, and let the jubilant people run quickly among streams of gold in order to quench their thirst. Allow the most miserable of the rabble to be the first to feed at the first arrival, and finally the Syrian spoils may confer sober pride on the royal throne. You go ahead now, and procure a strategy against the danger of unrest, with your might and counsel.

15b: Aria

Capitano:

Il desio dà l'ali al
core,
Mà il timor dà i lacci al
piè.

Un mi guida, un mi
trattiene,
E frà sproni, e frà
catene
Vacillante è la mia fè.

16a: Recitativo

Prima Donna:

Hà sì gran corpo il
caso,
Che distinguer non puote
Poc' ombra di
credenza.
Sì sarà vero, hor vanne,
Che teco anch' io mi porto,
E ad arricchir nell'
abbondante suolo
La povertà de' sentimenti io
volo.

16b: Aria

Prima Donna:

Se la gioia fà l'eco verace
Gradita pace
Trionferà.

E se certa risuona di
giubilo
Samaria libera
Esulterà.

16c: Ritornello

17a: Recitativo

Seconda Donna:

Hor che l'empia crudel portò
lontano
La fellonia col passo, ascolta
il vero.

Ioram:

Assai cò vostri accenti
Deturpaste l'udito.

Seconda Donna:

Almen sia noto
Ch'io non ebbi
dell'alma
Sì barbaro ardimento.

Ioram:

Essa già disse
I termini del fatto.

15b: Aria

Captain:

Desire gives wings to the
heart,
but fear gives snares to
the feet.

One guides me, one holds
me back,
and between spurs and
chains,
my faith wavers.

16a: Recitative

First Woman:

The event bears such
importance,
that it cannot ascertain
even a small shadow of
credibility.
Yes, it might be true, now go,
that I also come with you,
as I fly to enrich in the
fertile soil
the misery of my
feelings.

16b: Aria

First Woman:

If joy makes a true echo,
welcome peace
will triumph.

And if it resounds with
jubilation,
free Samaria
will rejoice.

16c: Ritornello

17a: Recitative

Second Woman:

Now the ungodly cruel
woman has carried
her sins away with her
steps, hear the truth.

Joram:

With too much of your talk
you have afflicted my ears.

Second Woman:

At least let it be known that
I did not have such
barbaric courage
in my soul.

Joram:

She already laid out
the details of the act.

Seconda Donna:

E da tè merta fede
Un esecrando
labro,
Che di bambina strage è
ancor fumante?
Eliseo, dove sei, tu che de'
cori
Interpreti gli
arcani.

Eliseo:

Ecco il mio ciglio
Che non veduto vide; ecco la
lingua
Ch'asserisce i tuoi gesti; ed
ecco Iddio
Che ti consola hormai col
labro mio.

17b: Aria

Eliseo:

Sì, sì, consolati
Madre dolente
Non disperar.

Verrà repente
Un' aura placida
Il cielo torbido
A serenar.

18a: Recitativo

Seconda Donna:

Volgi Ioram le luci
E ciò che in me t'ù
nieghi
Fuori di me
conferma.
Eccoti il figlio mio
Agonizzante sì, ma non
estinto.
Ecco la di lui vita
Che bench' estenuata è però
vita.
Credi ch'io ben
distinsi
Frà disperate
brame
Amor di madre, e tirannia di
fame.

18b: Aria

Seconda Donna:

Dica se mai si può
Cangiar il cor in
sen
Chi l'hà ripien d'un ver
Materno affetto.

Second Woman:

And does her accursed lip
deserve your faith, she
who still reeks of the
slaughter of a
child?
Elisha, where are you, you
who
interprets the secrets of
peoples' hearts?

Elisha:

Here are my eyes,
that saw what was unseen;
here my tongue
that affirms your actions;
and here is God
who now consoles you
with my lips.

17b: Aria

Elisha:

Yes, yes, console yourself
sorrowful mother,
do not despair.

Suddenly a placid breeze
will come
to clear the clouded
heavens.

18a: Recitative

Second Woman:

Turn your eyes, Joram,
and that in me which you
deny,
is confirmed by external
evidence.
Here is my son,
agonising, yes, but not
dead.
Here is his life
which although worn out,
is still life.
Believe me, I clearly
distinguished among
the desperate yearnings
between the
love of a mother, and the
tyranny of hunger.

18b: Aria

Second Woman:

Tell me if one can ever
change the heart in one's
breast
if it has been filled with a true
maternal affection.

*Work continues overleaf. Please turn the page as quietly
as possible.*

L'istessa crudeltà
Si tramutò in pietà
Allor che si trovò
Co' figli al petto.

19a: *Recitativo*

Ioram:

Qual sia la rea, qual sia
l'error lo sveli
Veridico Eliseo, ch'io mi
confondo
Nell' esecrando
eccesso,
E con passi d'horror fuggo
me stesso.

Eliseo:

Ioram, se da tuoi
cenni
Spinto già il Duce al campo
andò repente
Di Benadad
fugace
A rimarar l'abbonanate
spoglie.
Con qual sferza di doglie
Flagelli il cielo, a li di cui
misteri
Stolta è ben quella mente
Che v'innalza i
pensieri;
Poiche di cupi arcani alle
vicende
Saggio è sol chi rimira, e non
intende.

Ioram:

Ah, grand' uomo di Dio, tù
ben ravvisi
Un' alma tormentata, in cui
di breve
E semplice quiete à gran
fatica
S'introduce la
speme.

Eliseo:

Sperate, sì, sperate,
Che non avran più
luce
Da fameliche Aurore i vostri
giorni;
Mà il sole avrà per sempre
A commune
ristoro
Da fecondo Oriente i raggi
d'oro.

The same cruelty
was turned into pity
when she found herself
with children at her breast.

19a: *Recitative*

Joram:

Whoever is guilty,
whatever the error,
may truthful Elisha reveal
it, that I become
confused by this
atrocious excess
and with horrified steps I
fly from myself.

Elisha:

Joram, if by your orders
the captain was
already prompted and
went at once to the
enemy camp to take hold
of the abandoned
spoils of fleeing Ben-
Hadam,
with what a scourge of pain
you lash the heavens, to
whose mysteries
a really foolish mind
dares to think; regarding
stories of dark
secrets, the one who
watches and does not
understand, is
wise.

Joram:

Ah, great man of God, you
clearly identify
a tormented soul, to
which with great
difficulty, hope is
introduced
to achieve brief and
simple quiet.

Elisha:

Hope, yes, hope,
that your days will no
longer see the light
of famished
dawns;
but from the fertile East,
the sun will forever have
the common
refreshment of golden
rays.

19b: *Aria*

Ioram:

Non è che dopo i lacci
Cara la libertà.

E lacerato il velo
Delle sue nubi il Cielo
Vie più seren si
fà.

19c: *Ritornello*

20: *Recitativo*

Ioram:

Mà sentasi la voce
Di costei, che festante
Volge ver noi, le piante.

21: *Aria*

Prima Donna:

Ai trionfi venite, volate
Il crin coronate
Di palme e d'allor.

Hor che in seno à dolce
pace
Guerriera face
Smorzò l'ardor.

22a: *Recitativo & Arioso*

Prima Donna:

Parve all'occhio
nemico
Giunto il Geta, e l'Egizio à
porger forza
Alle nostre
difese,
E trasse in un
momento
Da imaginario duol vero
spavento.
Ratto fuggì
lasciando
Tante di gemme, e
d'oro
Masse doviziose à nostre
voglie;
Che ciò ch' ebbe in
tributo
Un cumulo d'argento, oggi, è
rifiuto.

Ioram:

Torna il suo moto al cor. Mà
perche teco
A me non venne il
Duce?

19b: *Aria*

Joram:

It is just after the snares
that liberty is dear.

And having torn the veil
of its clouds,
the heavens become
more serene.

19c: *Ritornello*

20: *Recitative*

Joram:

But let us hear the voice
of this woman, who joyfully
turns her feet towards us.

21: *Aria*

First Woman:

Come to the triumphs, fly,
your hair crowned
with palms and laurels.

Now that in the bosom of
sweet peace,
the warrior torch
has died away.

22a: *Recitative & Arioso*

First Woman:

It seemed to the enemy's
eye
that Geta had arrived, and
the Egyptian
had reinforced our
defences,
and in a moment,
imaginary woe
turned to real
fear.
He fled swiftly, leaving
behind
so many gems and an
abundant mass of
gold for our
desires;
so that the pile of silver
that had been given
in tribute, today, is
waste.

Joram:

The heart regains its
beat. But why did the
captain not come with
you to me?

Prima Donna:

Ei frà la folta
 Turba tumultuante
 Che tutt' impeto penetra le
 porte,
 Trovò prima il sepolcro, e
 poi la morte.
 E ciò che senza legge
 Giva portando il rozzo volgo,
 e scabro
 Vide il suo ciglio, e nol godè
 il suo labro.

First Woman:

He, among the numerous
 and tumultuous crowd
 that had forcibly
 penetrated the gates,
 found first the tomb, and
 then death.
 And that which the lawless,
 rough and crude mob
 carried away,
 his eyes saw it, but his
 lips did not enjoy it.

Ioram:

Profezia d'Eliseo.

Joram:

The prophecy of Elisha.

Prima Donna:

Forza de' suoi accenti.

First Woman:

The strength of his words.

Seconda Donna:

Gloria del nome suo, ch'oggi
 all'oblio
 Manda la
 noia.

Second Woman:

Glory be to his name, that
 today
 sends tediousness to
 oblivion.

Eliseo:

E lode sol di Dio.

Elisha:

And praise be to God alone.

22b: Madrigale

Tutti:

Vittoria rimbombi
 Trionfi pietà.
 Al Dio d'Israele
 Samaria fedele
 Per sempre sarà.

22b: Madrigal

Tutti:

Victory resounds
 and mercy triumphs.
 Samaria will forever
 be faithful
 to the God of Israel.