

SAMSON ET DALILA

SAT, OCT 20

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SAMSON

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HIGH PRIEST OF DAGON

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ABIMÉLECH

Elchin Azizov

AN OLD HEBREW

Dmitry Belosselskiy

ACT I *Gaza, 1150 BCE.* The enslaved Israelites accuse God of breaking the Holy Covenant. Samson exhorts them to bless God's name. Abimélech mocks the captives for trusting in a god who is powerless compared to the great Philistine god Dagon. Samson rouses the Israelites to revolt, before striking down Abimélech. The High Priest of Dagon enters and curses the race of Israel and their leader. As dawn breaks, Dalila and a group of Philistine maidens enter with flowers. Seeking to revive a past love, she urges Samson to follow her to her home.

INTERMISSION

ACT II Dalila anxiously awaits Samson's arrival. The high priest appears. He promises wealth as a reward for Samson's capture, but she rejects the offer scornfully and says that all she seeks is revenge. Samson arrives. Dalila pleads with him not to resist her love. Samson finally reaffirms that he still loves her. Dalila commands that he must reveal the secret of his God-given strength. Ultimately, Samson gives in to her. Philistine soldiers enter. Dalila calls for them, and Samson cries out that he has been betrayed.

INTERMISSION

ACT III Stripped of his power, Samson turns a mill wheel in a dungeon in Gaza. He prays that God may spare his people and punish him alone. At dawn, the Philistines revive their worship of Dagon. The high priest mocks the fallen hero, and Dalila reminds Samson of their night of passion. Samson prays to God and, with his strength restored, brings the temple crashing down.

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