

LE PROPHETE

Music by Giacomo Meyerbeer

Libretto by Eugène Scribe

First Performance: Opéra, Paris, April 16, 1849

Jean of Leyden joins the Anabaptists after Count Oberthal threatens to kill his mother Fides unless Jean relinquishes his fiancée Berthe. Because of his resemblance to King David, Jean acquires power and is named a prophet of God. He triumphs over the rabble he leads in spite of plots of the Anabaptists, who now believe he has assumed too much authority. In fact, he has himself crowned Emperor at Munster. Fides, who has been told he is dead, imperils his new status by proclaiming him her son. However, he stillness her by invoking her loyalty, and promises her full repentance. The German Emperor pardons the Anabaptists if they will betray Jean. Berthe seeks him out, believing that he has killed her lover, but recognizes him, too late, for she has set the palace afire, and kills herself. In the midst of his enemies, Jean dies in the holocaust, his mother beside him.