

September 20, 2018

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Pittsburgh Opera presents *Hansel & Gretel*, based on the beloved fairy tale

What:	<p>Hansel & Gretel</p> <p>Music by Engelbert Humperdinck, libretto by Adelheid Wette, based on the Grimm brothers' fairy tale</p>
Where:	Benedum Center for the Performing Arts, Downtown Pittsburgh
When:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saturday, November 3 - 8:00 PM • Tuesday, November 6 - 7:00 PM • Student Matinee- Thursday, November 8 - 10:30 AM • Friday, November 9 - 7:30 PM • Sunday, November 11 - 2:00 PM
Run Time:	1 hour and 54 minutes, including one intermission
Language:	Sung in English with English texts projected above the stage
Tickets:	<p>Single tickets for adults start at \$14 for all mainstage performances; tickets for children ages 6-18 are half-price. Call 412-456-6666 or visit pittsburghopera.org/tickets. Group Discounts available for groups of six or more.</p> <p>Student Matinee tickets are \$10, through our Education Department</p>
Media Events	<p>Photo Call (Oct. 22, 12:30 PM) – location TBA</p> <p>Full Dress Rehearsal (Nov. 1, 7:00 – 10:00 PM), Benedum Center</p>
Related Events	<p>Free Gingerbread House decorating contest (10/13)</p> <p>Opera Up Close (10/21)</p> <p>WQED Preview (10/27 & 11/2)</p> <p>Meet the Artists (11/6)</p> <p>Audio Commentary (11/6)</p> <p>Free Brown Bag concerts (10/13, 11/10)</p>

See pages 5-7 of this release.

Hansel & Gretel



Hansel & Gretel photograph by Scott Suchman for Washington National Opera

Pittsburgh, PA...

Pittsburgh Opera continues our 80th season with Engelbert Humperdinck's **Hansel & Gretel**.

Based on the classic fairy tale by the Brothers Grimm, **Hansel & Gretel** is a fantastical story of a young brother and sister who must navigate an enchanted forest full of twists, turns, and one wicked witch.

Siblings Hansel and Gretel are poor peasants whose mother sends them to forage for strawberries in a haunted forest. They get lost and spend the night in the woods. The next morning, they stumble upon a gingerbread house inhabited by a witch, played by Pittsburgh favorite [Marianne Cornetti](#), who imprisons them. It will take all their wits to escape before she eats them!

Since its premiere in 1893, this beloved opera has delighted millions. With Humperdinck's sweeping score, this whimsical operatic confection is sure to please both adults and children. Originally written in German, Pittsburgh Opera will be performing it in English.

Antony Walker conducts and Mt. Lebanon native Crystal Manich directs.

On stage November 3, 6, 9, & 11, **Hansel & Gretel** makes an equally good date night, girls' night out, and family outing.

Adult tickets start at just \$14 – children's tickets for those ages 6-18 are half-price, and start at just \$7. Season, group, and single tickets are now on sale and [available online](#).

In addition, Pittsburgh Opera's annual [Student Matinee](#) will introduce 2,500+ school children grades 3-12 to this lively, colorful opera on Thursday, Nov. 8th at the Benedum Center. Pittsburgh Opera's [Resident Artists](#) take lead roles in the Student Matinee, and are accompanied by the Pittsburgh Opera Orchestra. Tickets are \$10, and are reserved through Pittsburgh Opera's Education Department. For more information, please contact [Marilyn Michalka Egan, Ph.D.](#), Director of Education, at 412-281-0912, ext. 242.

Fun facts about *Hansel & Gretel*

1. In a proud endorsement of our superb artist training program, the entire cast is comprised of current or former Pittsburgh Opera [Resident Artists](#). Current Resident Artists [Ashley Fabian](#) (Gretel) and [Caitlyn Gotimer](#) (Dew Fairy/Sandman) join distinguished alums Marianne Cornetti (the Witch), [Corrie Stallings](#) (Hansel), [Leah Heater](#) (Mother), and [Craig Verm](#) (Father). In the Student Matinee performance, first-year Resident Artist [Antonia Botti-Lodovico](#) will sing the role of Hansel.
2. The composer Englebert Humperdinck probably never foresaw that, decades after his death, a struggling English lounge singer named Arnold George Dorsey would energize his career by changing his name to [Englebert Humperdinck](#). As "Humperdinck", Dorsey broke through with his 1967 hit "Release Me (And Let Me Love Again)", which sold more than a million copies.
3. Pittsburgh legend Marianne Cornetti has sung the role of the Witch numerous times to great acclaim. However, this will be the first time she is singing the role in English instead of German.
4. **Hansel & Gretel**, an opera about a brother and sister, was written by a brother and sister duo.

The story, in brief

Act I. In the house of a broom-maker deep in a German forest, Hansel and Gretel have been left by their parents, who are off in town. The children are supposed to be at work, making socks and brooms; instead, Gretel recites a nursery rhyme, which Hansel interrupts with complaints of hunger. Gretel teases her brother, calling him a complaining grump. She shows him a pitcher of milk hidden in the cupboard that their mother is saving for supper. To entertain her brother, Gretel teaches Hansel a folk dance. Suddenly Gertrude, their mother, comes home and angrily reproves them for playing when they should have been working. In her anger, the mother knocks over the pitcher of milk. When Hansel is caught grinning at this misfortune, his mother chases him out of the house and sends Gretel after him into the woods to find wild strawberries. The mother falls asleep just as the voice of her husband Peter is heard singing in the distance. Slightly tipsy when he arrives, he surprises Gertrude with all the food he has bought and tells her that he sold his brooms to a wedding party for the best price he has ever received. They celebrate their good fortune with a toast and he then asks where the children are. When Gertrude tells him that they have gone to the woods, he is horrified. He tells her about the Witch who lives there and who bakes children into bread. The two rush off to find Hansel and Gretel.

Act II. In a forest glade, Gretel sings another nursery rhyme and then begins making a wreath of wild flowers. Hansel picks the last of the wild strawberries. He offers his basket to Gretel, who eats one; as they start to leave, a cuckoo calls, and the children parrot the bird's call, eating strawberries all the while. As darkness falls, they realize they cannot refill the basket, and worse, that they are lost. Their fears multiply as they see visions of wild animals behind every tree. An old man appears, scattering gold sand and promising restful sleep. When the Sandman leaves, the two children kneel to say their prayers and quickly fall asleep. In their dream, Hansel and Gretel are surrounded by a host of children, who seem to have a message for them.

Act III. The Dew Fairy brings morning to the world of the forest. The children awake and find themselves still in the forest. They happen upon a magical house, filled with cakes and sweets. When Hansel breaks a piece off from the gingerbread house, the children hear a voice from somewhere inside the dwelling. An old lady comes out and offers them desserts of all kinds; when the children refuse her temptations, she puts a spell on them and locks Hansel in a cage. Gretel is released from the spell to help set the Witch's table. Gretel has overheard the Witch's plan to bake her, and while the Witch feeds Hansel to fatten him up, Gretel whispers the Witch's magic words, which break the spell on Hansel. Hungry for Gretel, the Witch calls her to the oven. Gretel cleverly asks the Witch to show her how to make the oven work. As the Witch leans in, Hansel and Gretel push her in and slam the door. The oven gets hotter and hotter until it explodes. Suddenly, the room is filled with other children. Hansel recites the Witch's spell and the children spring to life. As Peter and Gertrude rush in and embrace their children, a gingerbread cake of the Witch is found in the oven. Before eating, all join in giving thanks for their deliverance.

-Adapted from *Opera News*

For more complete plot information, plus videos, musical samples, and cast biographies, visit www.pittsburghopera.org/hansel.

Tickets and Group Discounts

- Tickets to all mainstage performances of **Hansel & Gretel** start at \$14; tickets for children ages 6-18 are half-price and start at just \$7. Call 412-456-6666, visit the Theatre Square Box Office, or [buy online](#).
- Student Matinee tickets are \$10, and are reserved through [Pittsburgh Opera's Education Department](#).
- All performances are at the [Benedum Center](#), 7th Street and Penn Avenue, in Pittsburgh's Cultural District.
- Group and student discounts are available. For discounted group tickets (6 or more), contact Regina Connolly at 412-281-0912, ext. 213

Sponsors

- [PNC](#) is the 2018-19 Pittsburgh Opera Season Sponsor
- [WQED-FM](#) is Pittsburgh Opera's Media Sponsor
- Tuesday sponsor: [Ambridge Regional Distribution and Manufacturing Center](#).
- [Eleven Contemporary Kitchen](#) is sponsoring the Gingerbread House contest
- The [Duquesne Club](#) is providing the gingerbread house for the Benedum lobby

Cast and Artistic Team: *Hansel & Gretel*

Cast

Hansel
Gretel
The Witch
Mother
Father
Dew Fairy/Sandman

[Corrie Stallings](#)**
[Ashley Fabian](#)*
[Marianne Cornetti](#)**
[Leah Heater](#)**
[Craig Verm](#)**
[Caitlin Gotimer](#)*

The Artistic Team

Conductor
Stage Director
Scenery Designer
Costume Designer
Lighting Designer
Wig and Make-up Designer
Stage Manager
Assistant Conductor
Chorus Master
Associate Coach/Pianist
Assistant Stage Director
Assistant Stage Manager
Assistant Stage Manager
Assistant Wig Master
Assistant Lighting Designer
Prop Master

[Antony Walker](#)
[Crystal Manich](#)
Robin Vest
Tim Burrow
Cindy Limauro
James Geier
Cindy Knight
[Glenn Lewis](#)
[Mark Trawka](#)
[James Lesniak](#)
Matthew Haney
Alex W. Seidel
Nick Garcia
Nicole Pagano
Todd Nonn
Johnmichael Bohach

+ Pittsburgh Opera debut

* Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist

** Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist alumni
Production owned by Washington National Opera

Related Events for *Hansel & Gretel*

Gingerbread House Decorating Contest

Saturday, October 13, 9:45 – 11:00 AM

Founders' Room, Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters, [2425 Liberty Avenue](#)

Parents and children 6 years and older, experience the fun and magic of **Hansel & Gretel** by participating in a free Gingerbread House Decorating Contest courtesy of Pittsburgh Opera and [Eleven Contemporary Kitchen!](#)

The contest will be held from 10:00-11:00 AM before our October Brown Bag Concert. You'll be able to take home your child's masterpiece, or enjoy it during the concert at noon. Check-in time for the contest starts at 9:45 AM.

Each child participant must have a responsible adult chaperone during the contest. Each participant will be given a delicious, pre-made edible gingerbread house courtesy of [Eleven Contemporary Kitchen](#) to decorate with icing and candies. At 10 AM, decorating begins!

Afterwards, we will have a photographer take pictures of each house. The houses will be posted on Pittsburgh Opera's Facebook page for friends, family, and the Pittsburgh community to vote on their favorite! A winner will be determined via social media votes and will receive four free tickets to **Hansel & Gretel** and a backstage tour of the Benedum. Isn't that sweet?

Space is limited, so please [make your reservation today](#). Reservations can be made [online](#) or by calling 412-281-0912 ext. 215.

Opera Up Close: *Hansel & Gretel*
Sunday, October 21, 2:00 - 3:30 PM
Founders' Room, Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters, [2425 Liberty Avenue](#)

Join Robert Boldin, Manager of Artistic Administration, and special guests from the production, for an in-depth look at the music and story of Englebert Humperdinck's [Hansel & Gretel](#).

Admission is \$5; free to members of [FRIENDS of Pittsburgh Opera](#) and \$50+ donors. Handicapped parking is available by reservation. For more information: 412-281-0912 or <https://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/opera-up-close-hansel-gretel> .

***Hansel & Gretel* Previews on WQED-FM 89.3 and WQED.ORG**
Saturday, October 27, 12:30-1:00 PM
Friday, November 2, 7:00-7:30 PM

Hosted by WQED's Anna Singer, and broadcast over the airwaves on WQED-FM 89.3 as well as the WQED website, WQED's preview of Humperdinck's [Hansel & Gretel](#) gives listeners an engaging introduction to the singers, music, and story of the opera. For more information: <https://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/wqed-preview-hansel-gretel>

Pre-opera Talks for *Hansel & Gretel*
One hour prior to each performance
Benedum Center

Ticketholders are invited to attend a free [Pre-Opera Talk](#) one hour before each performance's curtain in the Main Floor/Orchestra section of the Benedum Center. Learn about the composer, the story, and some juicy details about the opera!

Pre-Opera Talks are free to all ticketholders at all performances.

Audio Commentary: *Hansel & Gretel*
Tuesday, November 6, 7:00 PM
Benedum Center

Ticketholders with visual impairments are invited to use [Pittsburgh Opera's Audio Description service](#) at our Tuesday performances. Trained volunteers describe the supertitles, scenery, costumes, and stage action. The listeners hear these descriptions via assistive listening devices. Those wishing to use Audio Description should reserve seats to the Tuesday, November 6th performance by contacting Regina Connolly at 412-281-0912, ext. 213 or groups@pittsburghopera.org. Braille and large-print programs are also available.

Meet the Artists of *Hansel & Gretel*
Tuesday, November 6, immediately following the performance
Benedum Center Lower Lobby

Ticketholders for the Tuesday, November 6th performance of [Hansel & Gretel](#) are invited to gather in the Benedum Lower Lobby immediately following the performance when [General Director Christopher Hahn](#) interviews the stars of the opera. This event is free to all Tuesday performance ticketholders. Learn more at <https://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/meet-the-artists-hansel-gretel>

November Brown Bag concert
Saturday, November 10, Noon - 1:00 PM
George R. White Opera Studio, Pittsburgh Opera Headquarters, [2425 Liberty Avenue](#)

You're invited to Pittsburgh Opera's free November Brown Bag concert. The program includes some of our 2018-19 Resident Artists' favorite selections. The concert is free and open to everyone. Bring a friend and bring a lunch! Meet the Resident Artists afterward at an informal reception.

Doors open at 11:30 AM. Handicapped parking is available by reservation. For more information: 412-281-0912 or <https://www.pittsburghopera.org/calendar/detail/november-brown-bag-concert3>

COMING UP NEXT for Pittsburgh Opera:

[afterWARds](#), Mozart's *Idomeneo* Reimagined, January 2019

Pittsburgh Opera celebrates its 80th season in 2018-19. Established by five intrepid women in 1939, Pittsburgh Opera is viewed as one of the most vibrant opera organizations in the U.S., with a rich artistic tradition, outstanding educational programs, an acclaimed artist training program, and a progressive outlook toward the future. Its green initiative culminated in LEED® Silver certification for its Strip District headquarters, and its capacity as a true community partner has increased significantly under General Director Christopher Hahn's leadership.

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