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

| What: | **Hansel & Gretel**  
Music by Engelbert Humperdinck, libretto by Adelheid Wette, based on the Grimm brothers’ fairy tale |
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<td>Where:</td>
<td>Benedum Center for the Performing Arts, Downtown Pittsburgh</td>
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<td>When:</td>
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- 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: | 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.  
Student Matinee tickets are $10, through our Education Department |
| Media Events | Photo Call (Oct. 22, 12:30 PM) – location TBA  
Full Dress Rehearsal (Nov. 1, 7:00 – 10:00 PM), Benedum Center |
| Related Events | Free Gingerbread House decorating contest (10/13)  
Opera Up Close (10/21)  
WQED Preview (10/27 & 11/2)  
Meet the Artists (11/6)  
Audio Commentary (11/6)  
Free Brown Bag concerts (10/13, 11/10) |
Pittsburgh, PA…

Pittsburgh Opera continues our 80th season with Englebert 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](http://www.pittsburghopera.org).
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: Corrie Stallings**
- Gretel: Ashley Fabian*
- The Witch: Marianne Cornetti**
- Mother: Leah Heater**
- Father: Craig Verm**
- Dew Fairy/Sandman: Caitlin Gotimer *

**The Artistic Team**
- Conductor: Antony Walker
- Stage Director: Crystal Manich
- Scenery Designer: Robin Vest
- Costume Designer: Tim Burrow
- Lighting Designer: Cindy Limauro
- Wig and Make-up Designer: James Geier
- Stage Manager: Cindy Knight
- Assistant Conductor: Glenn Lewis
- Chorus Master: Mark Trawka
- Associate Coach/Pianist: James Lesniak
- Assistant Stage Director: Matthew Haney
- Assistant Stage Manager: Alex W. Seidel
- Assistant Stage Manager: Nick Garcia
- Assistant Wig Master: Nicole Pagano
- Assistant Lighting Designer: Todd Nonn
- Prop Master: Johnmichael Bohach

* Pittsburgh Opera debut
** Pittsburgh Opera Resident Artist alumni
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](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](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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