

SEATTLE OPERA.

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Hansel & Gretel: Seattle Opera's fairy tale with a twist

Engelbert Humperdinck's masterpiece returns after 23 years

**Oct. 15-30, 2016
McCaw Hall**

SEATTLE – You can never be too grown-up for the magic of a Brother's Grimm fairy tale. That's very clear from Seattle Opera's upcoming *Hansel and Gretel*, which comes from the vivid imagination of French stage director **Laurent Pelly**. This edgy version of Engelbert Humperdinck's masterpiece presents a thrilling quest ending not in a gingerbread house, but in a supermarket with a checkout lady from hell!

"*Hansel and Gretel* is a remarkable opera, but its well-known storyline is just the tip of the iceberg," said **Seattle Opera General Director Aidan Lang**. "The whole work is supported by an orchestral score of Wagnerian sumptuousness that combines the simplicity of folksongs with passages of thrilling splendor. It is a feast for the ears and the eyes."

In this 21st century tale of temptation and excess, Hansel and Gretel live in a giant cardboard box set against a toxic sky, go searching for strawberries for their family

meal, and then get lost in a forest of dead trees and litter. After being captured, they must go head-to-head with a Witch, the one who presides over a free-for-all supermarket packed with high-sugar treats. There's a happy outcome for all, save for the one intent on fattening up little children!

Included in the two outstanding casts of *Hansel and Gretel* are five former Young Artists whose careers began at Seattle Opera, as well as one artist making his company debut, and the return of beloved singers who've previously performed at McCaw Hall.

Ashley Emerson returns to Seattle as Gretel following her debut as Young Amelia in the world premiere of *Amelia* (2010). The frequent performer at Metropolitan Opera performs opposite **Sasha Cooke** as Hansel, who made her mainstage debut as Meg Page in *Falstaff*, 2010. The other cast stars Issaquah, Wash. native, **Anya Matanovic** as Gretel, who most recently performed at McCaw Hall as Marzelline in *Fidelio*, 2012. She sings opposite **Sarah Larsen** as Hansel. Larsen last performed here as The Composer in *Ariadne auf Naxos*, 2015.

In the role of the Witch is **John Easterlin**, a Grammy and Emmy Award winner and professional magician, who comes to McCaw Hall after recently performing in *Phantom of the Opera* on Broadway; as well as **Peter Marsh**, star of European opera houses making his company debut. All performances include **Marcy Stonikas** (*Ariadne*, *Ariadne auf Naxos*; Tosca in *Tosca*) as Gertrude the mother; **Mark Walters** (*Don Giovanni*, *Don Giovanni*) as Peter, the father; and **Amanda Opuszynski** (*Barbarina*, *The Marriage of Figaro*) as Sandman/Dew Fairy.

Maestro **Sebastian Lang-Lessing** returns to conduct this masterpiece following *The Flying Dutchman*. The rest of the creative team: stage director/costume designer **Laurent Pelly**; set designer **Barbara De Limburg**; and Lighting Designer **Joël Adam** make company debuts.

Hansel and Gretel premieres Saturday, Oct. 15, and runs through Sunday, Oct. 30. Tickets are available online at seattleopera.org or by calling 206.389.7676 or 800.426.1619. Tickets may also be purchased at the box office by visiting 1020 John Street (two blocks west of Fairview), Monday-Friday between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Ticket prices start at \$25. Groups save at least 20 percent: 206.676.5588 or groups@seattleopera.org. Seattle Opera Ticket Office: 206.389.7676/800.426.1619. Online orders: seattleopera.org.

In September, Seattle Opera offers free public-preview talks on *Hansel and Gretel* at libraries throughout the Puget Sound. For a full list, go to seattleopera.org/calendar.

Hansel & Gretel

Music by Engelbert Humperdinck
Libretto by Adelheid Wette

In German with English captions

Marion Oliver McCaw Hall

Performances: October 15, 16m, 19, 22, 26, 28, 29, & 30 2016

Approximate Running Time: 2 hours and 15 minutes with 1 intermission

Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m., matinee at 2:00 p.m.

Premiere: December 23, 1893 in Weimar, Germany

Previous Seattle Opera Performance: 1994

Cast:

Gretel	Ashley Emerson (Oct. 15, 22, 28, & 29) Anya Matanovic† (Oct. 16m, 19, 29 & 30)
Hansel	Sasha Cooke† (Oct. 15, 22, 26 & 29) Sarah Larsen† (Oct. 16m, 19, 29 & 30)
Witch	John Easterlin (Oct. 15, 22, 26 & 29) Peter Marsh* (Oct. 16m, 19, 29 & 30)
Gertrude	Marcy Stonikas†
Peter	Mark Walters
Sandman/Dew Fairy	Amanda Opuszynski†

Conductor	Sebastian Lang-Lessing
Director	Laurent Pelly*
Set Design	Barbara de Limburg*
Costume Design	Laurent Pelly*
Lighting Design	Joël Adam

† Former Seattle Opera Young Artist

* Company Debut

Production Sponsor: Microsoft

2016/17 Season Sponsor: Seattle Opera Guild In memory of Marian E. Lackovich and Captain Louis J. Lackovich

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