

# VICTORIAN OPERA

Engelbert Humperdinck

# Hansel and Gretel

Friday 13 October 2017

The Capital, Bendigo



# SYNOPSIS

## Hansel and Gretel

Hansel and Gretel are playing in their house in the woods, waiting for their Mother and Father to come home. They should be making brooms, but are playing games instead. Hansel is hungry, so Gretel tries to distract him by teaching him a fun dance. She also shows him a surprise hidden away for later – a jug of milk.

Their Mother comes home and is cross because they have been playing instead of working. In her anger she accidentally knocks over the jug of milk, so she sends the children out into the woods with a basket to gather strawberries to eat. The poor Mother is upset that she doesn't have any food for her family.

Father comes home, very happy that he has sold lots of broomsticks and managed to buy the family a basket full of good food. Mother tells Father that she has sent them to the woods to gather strawberries as punishment for their bad behaviour. Father is worried because the woods are the home of the 'Evil One'.

This 'Evil One' is a Witch, who lives in a crispy, crunchy house of sugar and spice. She magically entices children into her house, puts them in her oven and turns them into Gingerbread Children.

Out in the woods, Hansel and Gretel are gathering lots of strawberries in their baskets. They hear a cuckoo and are scared by the whispering of the leaves in the trees.

A mysterious man appears, the Sandman, who reassures the children and sprinkles magic sand in their eyes to help them sleep. Hansel and Gretel together sing their evening prayer before falling asleep. As they sleep, fourteen angels appear in their dreams to watch over them, keeping them safe.

Morning comes, and the Dew Fairy wakes the sleeping children with dewdrops. As the morning mist clears, they see a house made of delicious sweet treats. Hansel breaks off a piece of the house and the children begin to eat. The Witch startles them and entices the children into the house.

The Witch tries to cast a spell on the children with her magic wand, but Hansel and Gretel are too clever to be tricked by the magic. The Witch tries to make Gretel get into the oven, but together the children trick the Witch and push her into the oven, closing the door behind her.

The Witch's Gingerbread Children appear, and can now open their eyes. The children thank Hansel and Gretel for breaking the Witch's spell, and everyone dances and sings together.

# PRODUCTION

## Hansel and Gretel

### Composer

Engelbert Humperdinck

### Librettist

Adelheid Wette

### Chamber Orchestra Arrangement

Julian Langdon

Running time is approximately 55 minutes with no interval.

### Creative Team

**Conductor** Richard Mills

**Director** Elizabeth Hill

**Set and Costume Design** Ross Hall

**Lighting Design** Peter Darby

**Production Manager** Peter Darby and Luke Hales

**Stage Manager** Laura Hansford

**Assistant Stage Manager** Katharine Timms

**Repetiteur** Phillipa Safey



Dew Fairy Illustration © Ross Hall

### Cast

**Hansel** Shakira Dugan

**Gretel** Cleo Lee-McGowan

**Mother/Angel/Child** Olivia Cranwell

**Father/Angel/Child** Nathan Lay

**Sandman** Timothy Reynolds

**Dew Fairy** Michelle McCarthy

**Witch** Carlos E. Bárcenas

**Angel/Child** Stephen Marsh

### Orchestra

**1st Violin** Susannah Ng

**2nd Violin** Ioana Tache

**3rd Violin** Josef Hanna

**Viola** William Clark

**Cello** Mee Na Lojewski

**Double Bass** Robert Nicholls

**Flute** Dominique Chaseling

**Oboe** Jessica Foot

**1st Clarinet** Andrew Fong

**2nd Clarinet** Cameron Smith

**Bassoon** Christopher Martin

**1st French Horn** Alexander Morton

**2nd French Horn** Melissa Shirley

**Keyboard** Phillipa Safey

### Acknowledgements

Victorian Opera would like to thank Resolution X.

## Share your thoughts

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*Hansel and Gretel* to go into the draw to win a  
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