

CALGARY OPERA

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE // January 12, 2026

CALGARY OPERA PRESENTS A SPELLBINDING NEW PRODUCTION OF HANSEL AND GRETEL

Brought to Life with the Artistry of Calgary's
own Old Trout Puppet Workshop

CALGARY, AB — Calgary Opera invites audiences of all ages to fall under the spell of a reimagined classic as *Hansel and Gretel* takes the stage in a breathtaking new production infused with wonder, whimsy, and handcrafted magic, from **January 31 - February 6, 2026** at the Southern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium.

This beloved fairy tale is awakened through the enchanting vision of Engelbert Humperdinck's lush score and the playful words by Adelheid Wette — vividly imagined through the artistry of Calgary's own **The Old Trout Puppet Workshop**.

"This production is particularly special as it is so visually exciting. The Trouts have designed a world where design and storytelling come to life. *Hansel and Gretel* is a story we all have a little bit of knowledge of — it is a world full of magical creatures, and the music is so lush and engaging," said Stage Director Brenna Corner.

Renowned for their wildly imaginative and meticulously handcrafted creations, The Old Trout Puppet Workshop brings its signature blend of whimsy, depth, and theatrical dare. They transform the stage into a living storybook, where each puppet and set piece feels infused with personality and magic. The magical puppetry elevates this production into an immersive visual feast — one that surprises, delights, and enchants at every turn.

The extraordinary set, costume, and puppet designs transform the stage into an enchanted realm where imagination reigns, complemented by the soaring voices of the Cantaré Children's Choir and featuring the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra, conducted by Calgary Opera Artistic Director Jonathan Brandani.

Audiences will be swept away by beautiful music, vivid storytelling, and the irresistible charm of this production — a perfect winter escape for families and opera lovers alike, recommended for ages 6+.

“The music of *Hansel and Gretel* is one of the most evocative scores ever written, and even though it was composed before the time of movies, it has such a cinematic power that if you close your eyes you’ll feel like you have been transported into a dream-like realm filled with magical creatures,” said Jonathan Brandani, Conductor and Artistic Director of Calgary Opera.

ARTISTIC TEAM

Conductor: Jonathan Brandani

Stage Director: Brenna Corner

Set, Costumes & Puppet Design: Old Trout Puppet Workshop

Cantaré Children’s Choir Founder & Artistic Director: Catherine Glaser-Climie

CAST

Hansel: Xenia Puskarz Thomas

Gretel: Simone Osborne

Witch / Gertrude: Claire Barnett-Jones

Peter: Peter Barrett

Sandman / Sleep Fairy: Maria Milenic

Dewman, the Dew Fairy: Katelyn Bird

Featuring the Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra

Calgary Opera’s *Hansel and Gretel* promises a magical journey for the young and young at heart — a story told with heart, humour, and spellbinding creativity.

MORE INFORMATION & TICKETS

Saturday January 31, 2026 — 7:30 p.m.

Sunday February 1 — 2:00 p.m. (NEW MATINEE!)

Friday February 6 — 7:30 p.m.

For more information and to purchase tickets, visit calgaryopera.com or call Calgary Opera Audience Services at 403-262-7286.

Tickets are 50% off for ages 18 & under.

<https://www.calgaryopera.com/hansel-and-gretel>

Photos are available [HERE](#).

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ABOUT CALGARY OPERA

Founded in 1972, Calgary Opera is one of Canada's leading professional opera companies. For 52 years, the not-for-profit arts company has made a name for itself nationally and internationally for its commitment to the development of Canadian talent and the creation of new opera works, including seven world premieres. Through education and community outreach, Calgary Opera fosters a love of music and theatre in young people and provides opportunities for young artists to develop skills for successful professional careers in the performing arts industry.

Instagram / TikTok: @CalgaryOpera | Facebook: /CalgaryOpera

www.calgaryopera.com

ABOUT OLD TROUT PUPPET WORKSHOP

The Old Trout Puppet Workshop was founded on a ranch in southern Alberta back in the strange winter of 1999. We were a small gang of old buddies, with a fondness for beards and wood and wool and other old-fashioned and pleasant things. We've toured our productions across Canada and into the United States and Europe. We've mounted ten mainstage shows, most of which are lurking in crates at the workshop, ready to deploy: The Unlikely Birth of Istvan, The Tooth Fairy, Beowulf, The Last Supper of Antonin Carême, Pinocchio, Famous Puppet Death Scenes, The Erotic Anguish of Don Juan, Ignorance, Jabberwocky and, most recently, Ghost Opera. We also make sculptures, films, children's books, music, and paintings, and run workshops year round and deeply harrowing puppetry intensives in Banff and New England.