



HANSEL + GRETEL

 dr.phillips
center

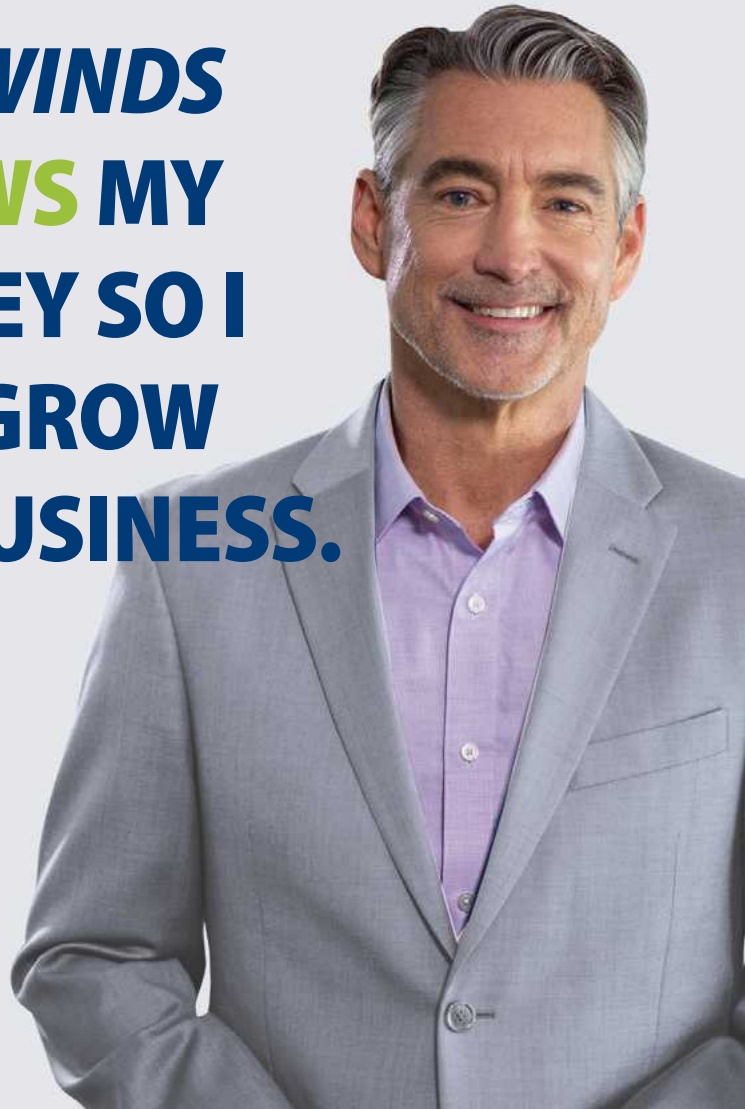
January 29 - 31, 2021
Alexis & Jim Pugh Theater

OPERA ON THE MAINSTAGE

OPERAORLANDO

2020-21 | The Curtain Rises

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A photograph of three performers on a stage set designed to look like a gingerbread house. The set features large gingerbread cookies with icing decorations. On the left, a performer in a red cap and brown vest holds a cookie. In the center, a performer in a dark, sparkly dress holds a rolling pin. On the right, a performer in a red and white dress holds a cookie. The text 'OPERA ORLANDO ENCORE!' is overlaid in the center, with two white starburst graphics. Below the title, performance dates, availability information, price, and access details are listed. The bottom right corner contains the production name and location.

OPERA ORLANDO ENCORE!

February 12, 2021 - February 26, 2021
Available via a private link on YouTube

\$25 per household

Access via www.operaorlando.org/hansel

Opera Orlando's *Hansel & Gretel*
On the MainStage at Dr. Phillips Center | January 2021



2020-21 | The Curtain Rises

Dear Friends,

Last month **Opera Orlando** presented *Die Fledermaus: The Revenge of the Bat* at Dr. Phillips Center's Walt Disney Theater. It was the first indoor, full operatic production in the United States since March 2020, and I can't tell you how overjoyed we were to return to the theater. Producing *Die Fledermaus* was quite an exciting undertaking, and everyone at **Opera Orlando** worked hard to ensure that health and safety precautions were in place for all involved. And now, the work continues as we go from champagne bubbles to cookie crumbles and gingerbread as **Opera Orlando** continues its fifth anniversary celebrations. Hard to believe it has only been five years, but our growth has been tremendous, from just two small-scale productions in the Alexis & Jim Pugh Theater in 2016 to now with six major productions per season, three **On the MainStage** and three **On the Town**. We could not do it without you and your amazing support, patronage, and enthusiasm for this glorious art form.

Hansel & Gretel is a fitting choice for this season as it was one of our most beloved productions from the past five years. It truly is an opera with a little something for everyone, from its lush score by Engelbert Humperdinck to everyone's favorite witch.

We have a full calendar of opera events and productions coming up as we kick off our **On the Town** series with the world premiere of *Death of Ivan Ilych*. On site at the **Orlando Museum of Art**, this special presentation includes drinks, appetizers, and dessert. We are also staying busy online with our new **ENCORE!** series allowing you to enjoy our MainStage productions from the safety of your home if you are not yet be able to join us in the theater or if you just want to see the show one more time. Either way, we are more grateful than ever to be back producing art, and presenting live theater for us all to enjoy. As always, see you at **The Opera ...** or see you **ONLINE** at The Opera!



A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'G. Preisser'.

Gabriel Preisser, executive director
Opera Orlando

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There is no better way to make an impact than to become part of the **Opera Orlando** family yourself.

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www.operaorlando.org
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Opera Orlando Ambassadors are a devoted group of opera supporters and fans who enjoy friendship and fellowship at special events throughout the season. **Ambassadors** host informative luncheons leading up to productions and present "Behind the Curtain" events to acquaint audiences with performers, themes, and the creative process.



MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

INDIVIDUAL | For a contribution of **\$50** or more, you automatically become an **Ambassador** at the individual level.

FAMILY | For a contribution of **\$75** or more, you and one other member of your household can become **Ambassadors**.

EDUCATOR/STUDENT | Educators and students can become **Ambassadors** for a donation of **\$20** with proof of school affiliation. In addition to **Ambassador** benefits listed below, they will also receive notifications for student rush tickets and invitations to attend final dress rehearsals.

Memberships run annually from July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021.

The **Forte Society** is a diverse and engaged group of young professionals who have a passion for the arts, social and professional networking, and fellowship with other like-minded individuals in Central Florida. **Ambassadors** are invited to join the Forte Society at no additional cost.



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HANSEL + GRETEL



presented by

OPERAORLANDO ✨ ✨

music by **Engelbert Huperdinck**

libretto by **Adelheid Wette**

English translation by **Constance Bache**

Sung in English with English supertitles

Friday | **January 29** at **7:30 p.m.**

Saturday | **January 30** at **2 p.m.**

Saturday | **January 30** at **7:30 p.m.**

Sunday | **January 31** at **2 p.m.**

Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts

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Robin Jensen, conductor
Grant Preisser, stage director

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OPERA ORLANDO

2020-21 | The Curtain Rises

CARMEN

April 1 & 3, 2021
Walt Disney Theater

OPERA ON THE MAINSTAGE

www.operaorlando.org



A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

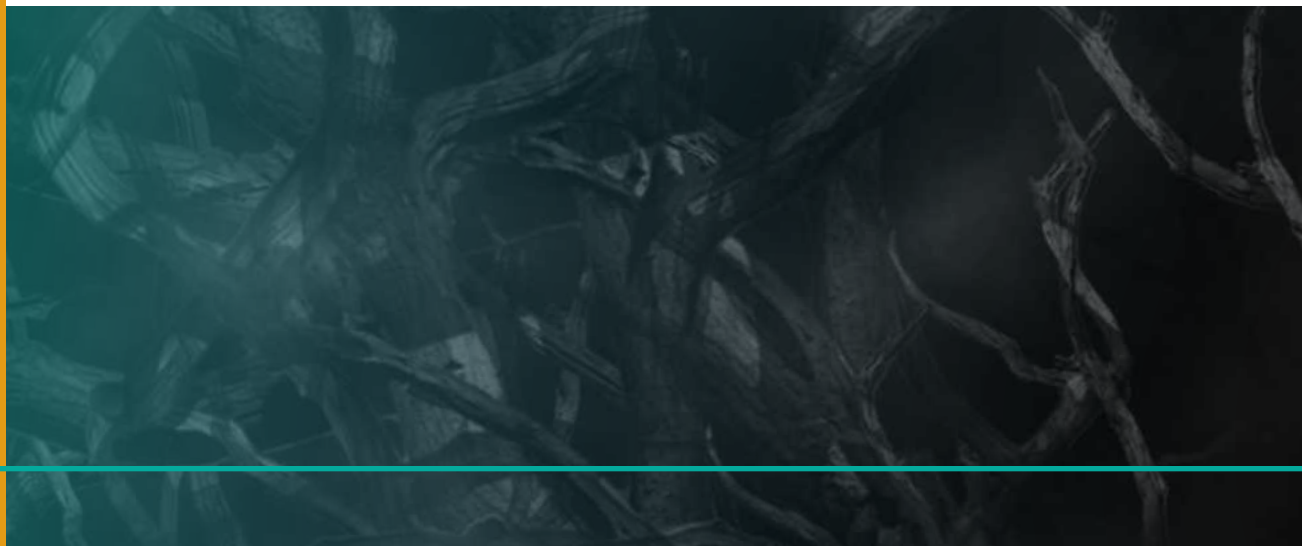
Composer Engelbert Humperdinck and librettist Adelheid Wette crafted a timeless message of faith and family with their interpretation of *Hansel & Gretel*. They have artfully balanced humor and heart with peril and fright as the two siblings lose themselves in the dark and unknown wood. There is a happy ending, of course. However, it comes with a moral and some real lessons learned for each of the characters. Lessons we should all learn or be reminded of in our own lives.

Who can't relate to a family struggling to make ends meet, parents trying to do the best they can for their children with little or nothing to offer? Who hasn't had a sibling relationship or friendship with its share of ups and downs, one minute best friends, the next at each other's throats? Who hasn't been in a dark or dire situation, feeling lost and desperately needing to find a way through it? In situations like these, it would be so easy to give in to fear and insecurity, especially when you can't see the forest for the trees, but it is exactly these situations that truly define and shape us.

It would be a much different story if Hansel and Gretel surrendered to their doubts and remained paralyzed by fear. However, they hearken back to their father's adage, "When past bearing is our grief, God the Lord will send reilef," and choose bravery and faith instead. They rely on each other to persevere and find their way back home, a home that they can now appreciate more than they ever could before.

Navigating this murky path we call life is always better when you have someone traveling along with you, even if it is just your bratty younger brother. Let us take a lesson from our heroic duo and focus on faith, support, and love as we look forward to 2021, and hopefully, coming out of this forest of a pandemic, back to a home of warmth, community, and plenty of candy, cookies, and cake!

Grant Preisser, artistic director
Opera Orlando



A NOTE ON THE COMPOSITION

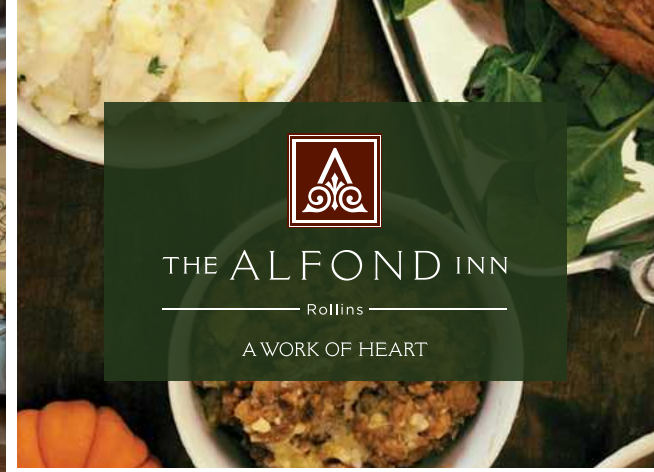
Engelbert Humperdinck was born in 1854 in Siegburg in the Rhine Province. His parents disapproved of his plans for a career in music, encouraging him to study architecture. Nevertheless, he began taking music classes at the Cologne Conservatory in 1872. In 1876, he won a scholarship that enabled him to continue his studies in Munich. In 1879, he won the first Mendelssohn Award, given by the Mendelssohn Stiftung, which he used to travel to Italy. There he had the great fortune to meet Richard Wagner, who had been exiled in Naples. Wagner invited Humperdinck to join him in Bayreuth, and during 1880 and 1881 Humperdinck assisted in the production of Wagner's *Parsifal*.

Humperdinck's reputation rests chiefly on his opera *Hänsel und Gretel*, which he began working on in Frankfurt while a professor at the Hoch Conservatory. He first composed four songs to accompany a puppet show his nieces were giving at home. Then, using a libretto by his sister Adelheid Wette loosely based on the version of the fairy tale by the Brothers Grimm, he composed a *singspiel* of sixteen songs with piano accompaniment and connecting dialogue. By January 1891 he had begun working on a complete through-composed orchestration. With its highly original synthesis of Wagnerian elements and traditional German folk songs, *Hänsel und Gretel* premiered in Weimar on December 23, 1893, under the baton of Richard Strauss. It was an immediate and overwhelming success.

On September 26, 1921 Humperdinck attended a performance of Carl Maria von Weber's *Der Freischütz*. He suffered a heart attack during the performance and died the next day. The Berlin State Opera performed *Hänsel und Gretel* in his memory a few weeks later. *Hänsel und Gretel* remains Humperdinck's most popular work. In 1923 the Royal Opera House in London chose it for their first complete radio opera broadcast. Eight years later, it was the first opera transmitted live from the Metropolitan Opera and continues to be a perennial favorite of opera houses in the holiday season.



Engelbert Humperdinck (1854-1921)



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UPCOMING CONCERTS:

FAIRWINDS CLASSICS SERIES

YUJA WANG PLAYS STRAUSS

Jan. 9, 2021 at 7:30 p.m.

POPS SERIES

GERSHWIN!

Jan. 30, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. & 7:30 p.m.

FOCUS SERIES

BEETHOVEN & MOZART

Feb. 8, 2021 at 7 p.m.

SYMPHONY STORYTIME SERIES

CARNIVAL OF THE ANIMALS

Feb. 20, 2021 at 10:00 a.m. & 11:30 a.m.

Feb. 21, 2021 at 11:00 a.m. & 12:30 p.m.

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Welcome to where everyone dines among the stars – Jack’s Place – International Drive’s most fascinating restaurant featuring the largest collection of autographed caricatures. Take a seat next to Queen Elizabeth or Neil Armstrong as we present you with our wildly popular prix fixe, three-course menu featuring the best of Jack’s Place. Your stellar dining experience begins with an appetizer to set the scene for a special night. The main course hits home with a hearty, savory dish, while the sweet notes of the final course reignite your tastebuds. This incredible gastronomic journey among dignitaries and stars is all yours to create at an earthly price.

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SYNOPSIS

Once upon a time in the Black Forest ...

Hansel and Gretel are busy at home, playing when they should be doing their chores. Dancing and singing, they are surprised by their Mother, who is angry that they have not gotten any work done. At her wit's end, she kicks the children out into the woods to gather strawberries, the only food they will have for dinner that night. As the children narrowly escape their Mother's wrath, their Father returns home. He brings food and treats that he bought from selling his brooms. In a celebratory mood, he asks where the children have gone, and Mother tells him that she has sent them into the woods. Terrified for them, he sings of the Witch who haunts the forest. Now rightly worried for their children, they head into the woods together to find Hansel and Gretel.

Deep in the woods and having gathered a good number of strawberries, Hansel and Gretel can't fight their hunger any more and eat everything they have collected. Full, sleepy, and nervous about going home, the children realize they have lost their way. As it gets darker, they get more and more frightened by the forest, until the Sandman takes pity on them and enchants them to sleep.

The next morning the Dew Fairy comes to wake the children, who find themselves in front of the most fantastic gingerbread house they could have ever imagined. Greedy for the candy and treats, they eagerly start to eat the house, unaware that it is where the Witch lives. The Witch takes them by surprise, putting a spell on them and trapping them so she can fatten them up. Ready to put them both in the oven, the Witch enlists Gretel's help. However, Gretel has other plans and instead pushes the Witch in the oven, rescuing herself and her brother. Mother and Father finally find Hansel and Gretel, and the family is reunited at last.



Opera Orlando's *Hansel & Gretel*
On the MainStage at Dr. Phillips Center | December 2018

WORTH A WATCH

1981 Production available from Deutsche Grammophon

Edita Gruberova (*Gretel*)
Brigitte Fassbaender (*Hänsel*)
Hermann Prey (*Father*)
Helga Dernesch (*Mother*)
Sena Jurinac (*Witch*)
Norma Burrowes (*Sandman*)
Elfriede Hobarth (*Dew Fairy*)

Wiener Philharmoniker
conducted by **Sir Georg Solti** directed by **August Everding**





CAST *(in order of appearance)*

**HANSEL
GRETEL
MOTHER
FATHER *
WITCH +
SANDMAN / DEW FAIRY**

Gloria Palermo
Kyaunnee Richardson
Cass Panuska
Torlef Borsting
Robyn Rocklein
Melony West

YOUTH ENSEMBLE

Jayna Bailey
Gabriel Gutensohn
Cooper Labelle
Daniella Labelle
Carys Williams

* cover *Andrew Thomas Pardini*
+ cover *Meghan Hone*

PRODUCTION TEAM

Robin Jensen
Julie Tompkins
Michelle Engleman
Stephanie Canada
Grant Preisser
Kim Welborn
Rocco Gaglioti, Jr.
Nate Wheatley
Johnmichael Bohach
Image in a Nation

Youth Company Director
Rehearsal Pianist
Production Manager
Stage Manager
Scenic Designer
Costume Designer
Hair & Makeup Designer
Lighting Designer
Props Designer
Video Producer

Emily DeNardo
Caitlin Durrance
MeLissa Duran
Heather Sladick
James Erwin
Tyler Thomas
E Ward
Heidi Kneisl
Sarah Taylor
Laura Zalneraitis

Assistant Stage Manager
Wardrobe Supervisor
Hair & Makeup Assistant
Lighting Assistant
Technical Director
Master Carpenter
Props Carpenter
Scenic Artist
Scenic Artist
Supertitles

HANSEL + GRETEL

A capital contribution from Dr. Phillips Charities named Dr. Phillips Center for the Performing Arts in perpetuity to honor Dr. P. Phillips and his family's legacy.

The **ENCORE!** presentation of Hansel & Gretel is graciously underwritten by the Winifred Johnson Clive Foundation.



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IVAN ILYCH
YOUNG & OLEJNICZAK

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OPERA ON THE TOWN

2020-21 | The Curtain Rises



THE SECRET RIVER

music by STELLA SUNG &
libretto by MARK CAMPBELL

PIANO WORKSHOP

April 24, 2021
Mead Gardens | The Grove



May 21 & 23, 2021
Harriett's Orlando Ballet Centre

As One

music and concept by **Laura Kaminsky**
with a libretto by **Mark Campbell & Kimberly Reed**

THE ARTISTS



GLORIA PALERMO | Hansel

HOMETOWN: Orlando, FL

OPERA ORLANDO ENGAGEMENTS

Ida, *Die Fledermaus: The Revenge of the Bat*, 2020

Wowkle, *The Girl of The Golden West*, 2020

PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENTS

Carmen, *Carmen Suite* - Russian Ballet (FL)

Bradamante, *Alcina* - University of Southern California

Flora, *La Traviata* - Aspen Music Festival (CO)

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS

Mercédès, *Carmen* - Opera Orlando

graciously sponsored by Jonathan & Krista Ledden



KYAUNNEE RICHARDSON | Gretel

HOMETOWN: Miami Gardens, FL

OPERA ORLANDO ENGAGEMENTS

Adele, *Die Fledermaus: The Revenge of the Bat*, 2020

PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENTS

Alice Allegretto/Dr. Marigold, *The Amazing Adventure of Alvin Allegretto*

Orchestra Miami

Nella, *Gianni Schicchi*, Opera Fusion (FL)

Clara, *Porgy and Bess*, South Florida Symphony Orchestra

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS

Frasquita, *Carmen*, Opera Orlando

Calpurnia, *The Secret River*, Opera Orlando

graciously sponsored by Larry & Susan Costin



CASS PANUSKA * | Mother

HOMETOWN: Deland, FL

PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENTS

Rose, *The Little Prince* - First Coast Opera (FL) *canceled due to COVID-19*

Flora, *The Computer Kid's Magic Night* - Solo Opera (CA)

graciously sponsored by Jonathan & Krista Ledden

THE ARTISTS



TORLEF BORSTING | Father

HOMETOWN: Deland, FL

OPERA ORLANDO ENGAGEMENTS

Sonora, *The Girl of the Golden West*, 2020
Count Almaviva, *The Marriage of Figaro*, 2019

PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENTS

Leporello, *Don Giovanni* - Indianapolis Opera
Man on the Train, *Stonewall* - New York City Opera
Germont, *La Traviata* - Livermore Vally Opera (CA)

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ROBYN ROCKLEIN * | Witch

HOMETOWN: Venice, FL

PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENTS

Santuzza, *Cavalleria Rusticana* - Sarasota Festival of Vocal Arts
Adalgisa, *Norma* - St. Petersburg Opera
Elizabeth Proctor, *The Crucible* - Arizona Opera Theatre

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS

Soloist, *Women of Note* - Sarasota Artist Series Concerts
Soloist, *Who's Afraid of Hugo Wolf?* - Sarasota Music Archive Concerts
Soloist, *Qol Quartet in Concert* - Peace River Presbyterian Church
& Pelican Pointe, FL

graciously sponsored by Frank & Mary Doherty



MELONY WEST * | Sandman / Dew Fairy

HOMETOWN: Orlando, FL

PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENTS

Chorus, *Amahl and the Night Visitors* - Opera Orlando
Chorus, *Carmen* - Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra
Shepherd Boy, *Tosca* - Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS

Chorus, *Carmen* - Opera Orlando

* OPERA ORLANDO DEBUT

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PRODUCTION TEAM



ROBIN JENSEN | music director

HOMETOWN: Orlando, FL

OPERA ORLANDO ENGAGEMENTS

Director, Opera Orlando Youth Company
Music Director, *The Girl of the Golden West*, 2020
Conductor, *Noye's Fludde*, 2019
Conductor, *Hansel & Gretel*, 2018
Music Director, *Brundibar*, 2017



GRANT PREISSER | stage director & scenic designer

HOMETOWN: Chicago, IL

OPERA ORLANDO ENGAGEMENTS

Stage Director, *Die Fledermaus: The Revenge of the Bat*, 2020
Stage Director, *All is Calm*, 2019
Stage Director, *Hansel & Gretel*, 2018

PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENTS

Stage Director, *Frida* - Opera Steamboat (CO)
Stage Director, *Così fan tutte* - Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra (NY)
Stage Director, *Arcina* - University of Michigan

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS

Stage Director, *Death of Ivan Ilych* (world premiere) - Opera Orlando
Scenic Designer, *Carmen* - Opera Orlando



KIM WELBORN | costume designer

HOMETOWN: Rockledge, FL

OPERA ORLANDO ENGAGEMENTS

Costume Designer, *The Marriage of Figaro* (2019)
Costume Designer, *Pagliacci/Pulcinella* (2019)
Costume Designer, *Tales of Hoffman* (2018)

PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENTS

Costume Designer, *Little Women* - Opera in the Ozarks (AR)
Costume Designer, *Abduction from the Seraglio* - Opera in the Ozarks (AR)
Costume Designer, *Don Pasquale* - Vero Beach Opera (FL)

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS

Costume Designer, *Cendrillon* - Opera in the Ozarks (AR)
Costume Designer, *Lucia de Lammermoor* - Opera in the Ozarks (AR)
Costume Designer, *The Magic Flute* - Opera in the Ozarks (AR)

PRODUCTION TEAM



ROCCO GAGLIOTI JR. * | hair & makeup designer

HOMETOWN: Orlando, FL

PREVIOUS & CONTINUING ENGAGEMENTS

Makeup Artist/Supervisor - Universal Studios Orlando

Key Makeup Artist, *Ghosts of The Ozarks* - HCT Media

IATSE Local 798 Makeup Artist



NATE WHEATLEY | lighting designer

HOMETOWN: Kansas City, MO

OPERA ORLANDO ENGAGEMENTS

Lighting Designer, *Die Fledermaus: The Revenge of the Bat*, 2020

Lighting Designer, *All is Calm*, 2019

PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENTS

Lighting Designer, *Alcina* - Pittsburgh Opera (PA)

Lighting Designer, *Candide* - Des Moines Metro Opera (IA)

Lighting Designer, *Don Giovanni* - Florida Grand Opera

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS

Lighting Designer, *Platée* - Des Moines Metro Opera (IA)

Lighting Designer, *Fellow Travelers* - Des Moines Metro Opera (IA)



JOHNMICHAEL BOHACH * | props designer

HOMETOWN: Pittsburgh, PA

PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENTS

Freelance Scenic Designer, various companies - Pittsburgh (PA)

Props Coordinator - Pittsburgh Opera (PA)

Scenic & Props Designer - Opera Steamboat (CO)

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENTS

Scenic Designer, *Dance Nation* - Pittsburgh Playhouse (PA)

Scenic Designer, *Local Singles* - New Hazlett Theatre CSA project (PA)

Scenic Designer, *A Man of No Importance* - Front Porch Theatricals (PA)

* OPERA ORLANDO DEBUT

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SECOND VIOLIN

Alexander Stevens, principal

VIOLA

Mauricio Céspedes-Rivero, principal

CELLO

Ronald Gardiner, principal

BASS

Don-Michael Hill, principal

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CLARINET

Nikolay Blagov, principal

The Mary and Frank J. Doherty Chair

BASS CLARINET

Calvin Falwell

HORN

Vincent Kiray, principal

PIANO

Robin Jensen

LIBRARIAN

Simone Silé

OPERA ORLANDO

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Collette Baum

Savannah Brown

Noelani Ernst

Mary Eshleman

Jude Frazier

Gabriel Gutensohn

Judah Hone

Katherine Hone

Rachel Jolley

Cooper Labelle

Daniella Labelle

Elsa Mejeur

Jurrien Mejeur

Aaliyah Montane-Moran

Diya Somnali

Adria Velez

Brooke Weiner

Carys Williams

Youth Ensemble audio tracks recorded at Timucua Arts Foundation

Benoit Glazer, recording engineer



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private dinner w/ executive & artistic director	✦								
lunch with MainStage artist	✦	✦							
lunch/golf w/ executive director	✦	✦							
attend the board of directors annual meeting	✦	✦	✦						
exclusive MainStage artist cocktail parties	✦	✦	✦						
attend MainStage dress rehearsals	✦	✦	✦	✦					
backstage tour of the production	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦				
attend fall Studio Artist dinner party	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦			
lunch/bridge w/ development director	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦			
company coffee mug & tote bag	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦		
attend opening night after parties	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦	
receive exclusive company emails & offers	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦
company t-shirt & name tag	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦	✦
	\$25,000	\$10,000	\$5,000	\$2,500	\$1,500	\$1,000	\$500	\$250	\$100

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