

# STAATSOPER STUTT GART

Press Release

Stuttgart, 18-01-2022

## A Witch as benefactress?

### Film and theatre director Axel Ranisch stages Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel* at Staatsoper Stuttgart

Berlin filmmaker and theatre director **Axel Ranisch** returns to **Staatsoper Stuttgart** with a new production of Engelbert Humperdinck's *Hansel and Gretel*. The premiere on **6 February, 2022** at **5 pm** features mezzo-soprano **Rosie Aldridge** as the Witch together with ensemble members **Josefin Feiler** as Gretel, **Ida Ränzlöv** as Hansel, **Shigeo Ishino** as Father, **Catriona Smith** as Mother and **Claudia Muschio** as Sandman/Dew Fairy. In the course of the premiere series further ensemble members take on the roles: Esther Dierkes (Gretel), Diana Haller (Hansel), Natalie Karl (Witch), Christian Miedl (Father) and Laia Vallés (Sandman/Dew Fairy). The musical direction is by **Alevtina Ioffe**, who was recently appointed General Music Director of the Mikhailovsky Theater in St. Petersburg. Axel Ranisch has already worked with the Russian conductor at Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich.

In 2018/19, director Axel Ranisch celebrated a success with the public in Stuttgart with Sergei Prokofiev's *The Love for Three Oranges*, a production which was revived in the current season. Ranisch takes Humperdinck's fairy-tale opera in a similar vein, with plenty of narrative delight and hearty humor:

"For months I struggled to make the wicked witch into a good witch. I thought about whether she could be a trans person who suffers from society's heteronormativity. But in the end, none of that worked out. The witch therefore remains the evil person, but she acts like a benefactress by handing out delicious drops. In a world where the forests have been burned with nothing left to eat, people courageously seize any opportunity. And during a famine, it would never occur to anyone that the fine sweets might be made from their own children. If you wanted to, you could read a lot into that: deceptive bait offers, the cannibalism of a broken social and economic order," says the director.

Two weeks before the premiere, Staatsoper Stuttgart offers an **introductory matinee** to *Hansel and Gretel*: On 23 January, the directing team and the conductor will provide insights into their work and into the production's scenic and musical conception during a panel discussion. A **free of charge livestream** of the performance is scheduled for the end of March.

# STAATSOPER STUTT GART

## PREMIERE

### Engelbert Humperdinck *Hansel and Gretel*

Sunday 6 February, 2022, 5 pm

Introductory matinee 23 January, 2022, 11 am

#### Further performances

9, 20, 26 February, 2022

9, 11, 13, 28 March 2022

3 April, 2022

Conductor **Alevtina Ioffe**

Director **Axel Ranisch**

Stage Director **Saskia Wunsch**

Costume Director **Alfred Mayerhofer**

Light Director **Reinhard Traub**

Children Chorus **Bernhard Moncado**

Dramaturg **Franz-Erdmann Meyer-Herder**

Gretel **Josefin Feiler**/**Esther Dierkes** (20.2. afternoon / 26.2 / 3.4. afternoon)

Hansel **Ida Ränzlöv**/**Diana Haller** (20.2. afternoon / 26.2 / 3.4. afternoon)

Witch **Rosie Aldridge**/**Natalie Karl** (9.2. / 9., 11. & 13.3.)

Father **Shigeo Ishino**/**Christian Miedl** (9.2. / 20.2. afternoon / 28.3. / 3.4. afternoon)

Mother **Catriona Smith**

Sandman / Dew Fairy **Claudia Muschio**/**Laia Vallés**

**Children's Chorus Staatsoper Stuttgart**