Fairy tale opera in three scenes
Music by Engelbert Humperdinck
Libretto by Adelheid Wette
after the Grimm brothers’ fairy tale

FILMED AT Opéra national de Paris
IN April 2013
TV DIRECTOR Andy Sommer
RUNNING TIME 1 x 90’
Hänsel und Gretel

ARTISTIC INFORMATION

DESCRIPTION

In 1881, the twenty-seven-year-old Engelbert Humperdinck became Richard Wagner’s assistant in Bayreuth. Wagner had two more years to live. These two years of intense artistic collaboration on Parsifal indelibly marked the young composer’s life and style. In 1883, the Master died, leaving his disciple “incomplete”. He became a wanderer, traveling throughout Europe, eventually becoming a renowned teacher. Ten years later, in Weimar, Humperdinck completed his masterpiece, Hänsel and Gretel. His sister wrote the libretto, inspired by the Grimm brothers’ fairy tale. The opera premiered at Christmas under the enthusiastic baton of Richard Strauss. Humperdinck had retained a Wagnerian taste for continuous melody and leitmotiv. However, his fairy-tale opera (Märchenoper) also drew on children’s songs and the sort of popular melodies whose origins tend to become lost in the mists of time. The result is music that astounds, as deep as the lakes of Germanic legends but at the same time strangely familiar. It conjures up memories of our forgotten childhoods as though once, long ago we ourselves were that very brother and sister lost in the forest, trapped in the grasp of the witch with her gingerbread house.

PERFORMERS

Jochen Schmeckenbecher ............................................................... Peter
Irmgard Vilsmaier ......................................................................... Gertrud
Daniela Sindram ............................................................................. Hänsel
Anne-Catherine Gillet .................................................................. Gretel
Anja Silja ...................................................................................... Die Knusperhexe

Paris Opera Orchestra,
Maîtrise des Hauts-de-Seine / Paris Opera Children’s Chorus

ARTISTIC STAFF

Musical conductor Claus Peter Flor
Stage director Mariame Clément
Set and costumes Julia Hansen
Lighting Philippe Berthomé
Choreography Mathieu Guilhaumon

LANGUAGE VO German
LANGUAGES / ST English, French

PRODUCTION

PRODUCTION COMPANIES Opéra de Paris Production, Bel Air Media,
in association with France Télévisions and the support of the CNC

DISTRIBUTION

DISTRIBUTION COMPANY Telmondis Distribution 7, Rue du Dôme
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VIDEO FORMAT HDCAM, Digibeta 16/9

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