

UNCOVERED  
OPERA COMPANY

# HÄNSEL UND GRETEL

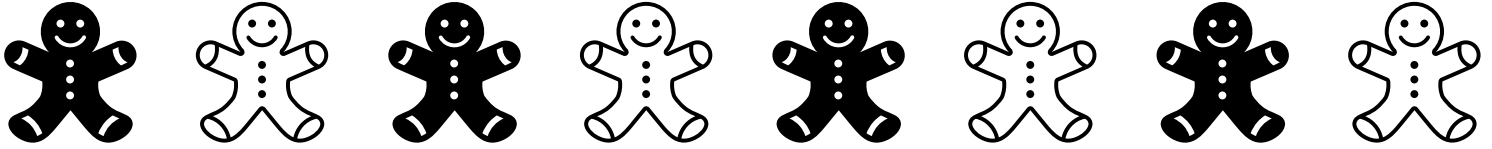
SWEET  
SHOP

Hexe's  
VAPE

## The Space

Tickets £20 from [space.org.uk](http://space.org.uk)  
269 Westferry Rd, London E14 3RS

Saturday 14th February 7pm  
Sunday 15th February 2pm and 6pm



## PRODUCTION TEAM

<b>Producer</b>	Marrianne Town Smith	<b>Director</b>	Valeria Perboni
<b>Choreographer</b>	Robert Brittain-Keates	<b>German Coach</b>	Anna Miell
<b>Production Manager</b>	Sam Edmonds	<b>Sets &amp; Props Supervisor</b>	Rachel Carter
<b>Production Assistant</b>	Liberty Anstead	<b>Surtitles</b>	Caitlin Carey
<b>Gingerbread temptress and “Bake Off” superstar</b>		Lesley Holloway	

<b>Conductor and Musical Director</b>	Panaretos Kyriatzidis
<b>Repetiteur</b>	Roxanna Shini Mehrabzadeh

## CASTS

	<u>14<sup>th</sup> Feb 7pm</u>	<u>15<sup>th</sup> Feb 2pm</u>	<u>15<sup>th</sup> Feb 6pm</u>
<b>Hänsel</b>	Maggie Cooper	Naomi Lidiard	Isobel Hughes
<b>Gretel</b>	Juliet Wallace	Elinor Popham	Helen Bailey
<b>Petra</b>	Natasha Elliott	Angharad Lewis	Luca Kocsmárszky
<b>Gertrude</b>	Salome Siu	Marrianne Town Smith	Rosalind O’Dowd
<b>Witch</b>	Marrianne Town Smith	Alicia Mallace-Goulbourne	Marrianne Town Smith
<b>Sandman</b>	Charlotte Town	Verity Jo Spencer Hall	Megan Artemova-Thomas
<b>Dew Fairy</b>	Verity Jo Spencer Hall	Nina Kopparhed	Mahtab Ghamsari

## MOVEMENT & GINGERBREAD CHORUS

Various cast members      Minglu Gao      Liberty Anstead

## COVERS

Minglu Gao: Gretel      Salome Siu: Witch

# What's going on?!

## Engelbert Humperdink's Hänsel und Gretel

Brothers Jacob Ludwig and Wilhelm Carl Grimm's first publication in 1812, featured the story of *Hänsel and Gretel* and it was a great success. Engelbert Humperdinck's sister, Adelheid Wette, wrote the libretto to the opera, for an amateur performance at home and asked her brother to set several songs for a play that she had written for her children to perform in their living room. This was then expanded into the opera that is performed today. Our setting is a step away from the traditional interpretation of a poor family and children lost in the wood looking for berries who stumble across the Gingerbread Witch. Ours is set as a dream-like reimagining on the neon-lit streets of a sprawling modern city: where two rebellious teens navigate alleyways, and stumble across a 24-hour vape-sweet shop run by the magnetic Gingerbread Witch. Although a dark fairy story: we hope you find it a light-hearted and joyful production.

### The overture:- A Christmas Present...

The parents of a lovely family from Kent have decided to give their children a surprise present of a day out up in town and to go and see 'Hänsel und Gretel', which is currently on as a matinee in Covent Garden. They take the train up to town and are immersed in the sights, the sounds, the flavours and the sensory overloads that only London can bring at this time of year. It's the first time the children have been up to town at Christmas and everyone's first opera. They visit the areas around Soho, Covent Garden, Oxford Street and Trafalgar Square... The people, the characters, the animals, the vaping, the sweets, the lights, the sounds, the opera... the, the, the Wow! Then they watch the opera! Double wow - although bits of it are really quite boring, other bits are amazing! And then they head back to Kent - their heads totally full of the whole day's experiences: back home to their sleepy village, and straight to bed, despite the sugar overload, where they are tucked up... their parents open a well-deserved bottle of wine - and they all fall asleep...

### The dream...

#### ACT I

In the cleaning-products seller's flat. Hänsel complains he is hungry. Gretel shows him some milk that a neighbour has given for the family's supper. The children dance. Their mother returns and wants to know why they have got so little work done. She accidentally spills the milk and chases the children out into the neighbourhood to pick up supplies. Their mother's partner, Petra, returns. She has been celebrating a mega sales day and has had a few drinks to celebrate: she has also been to the shops and bought supplies for everyone. She asks where the children have gone. The mother tells her that she has sent them into the local area to look for food. Petra tells her about the Witch, who once a year on a night with no moon or stars, works out of the Ilsenstein club in the city, and that the children are in danger if they go anywhere near there. They go out to look for them.

#### ACT II

In the urban jungle... Hänsel takes pick 'n mix sweets from shops. The children hear a police siren that sounds like a cuckoo singing and they scoff all the sweets. Soon they have eaten all of them. In the sudden silence of the neighbourhood, Hänsel admits to Gretel that he has lost the way. The children grow frightened. The Sandman, a nurse, comes to bring them sleep, and the children say their evening prayer.

**INTERVAL – CAKE BAKES ARE AVAILABLE IN THE THEATRE & THE BAR WILL BE OPEN. RAFFLE TICKETS WILL BE SOLD TO WIN A CAKE MADE BY OUR BAKE-OFF STAR, LESLEY HOLLOWAY**

#### ACT III

The Dew Fairy, a lady of the night, comes to wake the children. Gretel wakes Hänsel, and they see the "Gingerbread Vape House", aka the Ilsenstein club a fake Vape Candy Shop in the heart of Soho. The Witch tries to convince them that she is friendly but then binds them with a spell and decides to fatten them up to make her gingerbread. The oven is hot. Gretel breaks the Witch's spell and sets Hänsel free. When the Witch asks her to look in the oven, she pretends she doesn't know how to: the Witch must show her. When the Witch peers into the oven, she shoves her inside and shuts the door. The oven explodes. The gingerbread children come back to life. Gertrude and Petra find the children, and all express gratitude for their salvation.

### The End?



## Biographies

### Movement, Chorus & Production Assistant 14 February 7pm, 15 February 2pm, 15 February 6pm



**Liberty Anstead** is studying a Masters in Voice at Trinity Laban Conservatoire under the tutorship of Sophie Grimmer. Recently, Liberty was invited to Japan to perform Britten's War Requiem with the Bournemouth Symphony Chorus, and sang chorus in Oxford Opera's *Tosca* in March. During her studies, she has worked on scenes from Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin* as Tatyana, Lalo's *Roi de L'Ys* as Rozenn, Beethoven's *Fidelio* as Leanore, and Gluck's *Armide* as Armide. She is currently working towards a scene from Puccini's *Il Tabarro* as Giorgetta. She is looking forward to her debut as Barbarina in Oxford Opera's production of the *Marriage of Figaro* later on this year. As well as studying for her Masters, Liberty enjoys her role as (Joint) Artistic Director for *Serenata*, a group of student singers, with particular interest in promoting compositions by women and exploring environmental themes, such as trees and birds.

### Sandman 15 February 6pm



**Megan Artemova-Thomas** has recently completed a Professional Diploma at Trinity Laban, studying with Neil Baker and Panaretos Kyriatidis, where she has performed as Vitellia (*La clemenza di Tito*), Dorabella (*Così fan tutte*), Miss Jessel (*The turn of the screw*), and Mother (*Hansel & Gretel*) in a selection of scenes. Other recent performances include chorus in *Dido's Ghost* (Errollyn Wallen) for the Trinity Laban Summer opera, 2nd Customer/Witch hunter in *Besse: Water, Rye and Hops* (Dani Blanco Albert) for Infinite Opera, and chorus in HGO's Offie award-winning production of *Eugene Onegin*. Megan is also a passionate recitalist, having given recitals on themes such as exploring masculine voices in opera and song, female rage in opera, and the portrayal of female

agency in the classical music canon.

### Gretel 15 February 6pm



**Helen Bailey** was born in Middlesbrough and graduated from Liverpool JMU with a First Class degree in English Literature before training on the postgraduate Vocal Studies course at Trinity Laban. She then studied at The Royal Academy of Music, winning many awards and gaining an Advanced Diploma in Opera, a Masters in Vocal Studies, and the Vocal Teaching LRAM. Helen splits her time between teaching and performing. She has performed principal operatic roles with Kentish Opera, Opera South East, Pop Up Opera, Opera Up Close, Ryedale Opera, Buxton International Festival Opera, Rose Opera, Red Earth Opera, Hampstead Garden Opera, Midsummer Opera, and Saffron Opera Group. Most recent roles include Fiordiligi in *Così Fan Tutte* with Carshalton Opera, Tebaldo in *Don Carlo* with Uncovered Opera, and Cleopatra in Handel's *Cesare* for Somerset Opera and Pleasure Dome Theatre.

Helen appears regularly as soprano soloist for numerous choral society across the UK with recent highlights including gala concerts with the Bexhill Choral Society and Royal Northern Sinfonia, recitals for CODA and Symphonova, and Verdi's *Requiem* for Hampshire Choral Festival at The Anvil, Basingstoke. Please visit [www.helen-bailey.com](http://www.helen-bailey.com) for more information about future engagements.

### Choreographer



**Rob Brittain-Keates** trained at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, completing both his BA (Hons) in Dance Theatre and MA in Dance Performance. Over the past 12 years, he has built an exciting and fulfilling freelance career, working nationally and internationally with a wide range of companies across the dance and performance world. These include the Royal Opera House, Summit Dance Theatre, Gingerline, and Secret Cinema. Alongside his performance work, Rob has extensive teaching experience with a variety of schools, colleges, and universities in the UK and abroad. He is also a qualified AcroYoga Teacher, Sports Massage Therapist, and Transformational Coach. He currently works as a sole Sports Massage Therapist and biomechanics specialist, with a strong focus on supporting people to move pain-free and with greater awareness. Rob believes that the expression of movement within the body

is a fundamental part of being human. His work encourages people to amplify these expressions, reconnect with their bodies, and rediscover joy in movement — so let's dance.

### Sets & Props Supervisor



**Rachel Carter** met Marianne over a decade ago and serves as Non-Executive Director, supporting the company, productions and email marketing. A willing all-rounder, she helps with everything from lighting and props to costumes and snacks. Outside Uncovered Opera, she runs a market research agency, supports a local hairdressing chain, and sings with her local choir.

## Hänsel 14 February 2026 7pm



**Maggie Cooper** was awarded a scholarship to train at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. She started her career as a lyric soprano and her Madame Butterfly was described by 'The Times' as 'captivating..naive and delicate, yet tough, touching and never cloying...she delivers with searing power and passion'. As her range extended she transitioned to singing Mezzo. Maggie's Mezzo roles include Carmen (title role), Prince Orlofsky *Die Fledermaus*, Pauline Queen of Spades Mutter and Hexe *Hänsel und Gretel* and *Dido Dido and Aeneas*. In 2023 she performed with Merry Opera for their unique and highly acclaimed staged production of Handel's Messiah. Maggie is passionate about contemporary opera and thrives on the collaborative experience involved with working with composers and premiering a new opera. Most notably she performed the role of Princess Diana, for the premiere of 'A Silver Spoon' by Lisa Logan with Keynote Opera. Maggie frequently performs solo recitals in the UK and abroad. She has given recitals at the Holywell Music Room, St Paul's Cathedral, St Martin-in-the-Fields, St John's Smith Square, Kings Place, The National Portrait Gallery. In 2019 Maggie was nominated for Women's Radio Station's Future Classic Women Awards.

## Production Manager



With 35 years of expertise in the financial industry, **Sam Edmonds** has pivoted her focus and joined Uncovered Opera Company to take on the role of Company Manager and Administrator. She retired from Mercer in 2022, having held a number of senior positions during her 20 year career there: her most recent being Global Chief Operating Officer, Analytics Research & Tools where she managed multiple high profile global projects covering Legal, Marketing, Digital Functionality, Data, Sales, Client Service & Partnerships. Prior to this she held a number of European and UK positions also within the digital / research team. Sam is a busy mum and loves to travel and explore the world, swimming in turquoise seas as well as relaxing with a puzzle, or a video game and the

occasional pint!

## Petra 14 February 7pm

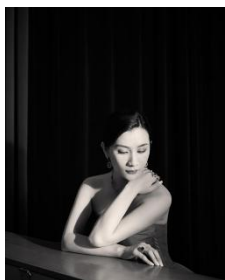


**Natasha Elliott** is a London based mezzo soprano/contralto. She recently completed her Artist Diploma as a Morag Noble Scholar at Trinity Laban conservatoire of Music and Dance, where she won first prize in the 2025 Hearn Foundation Vocal Competition. Roles performed recently are "Ericlea" in 'Il Ritorno d'Ulisse in Patria', Second Witch in Errollyn Wallen's opera 'Dido's Ghost', Florence Pike in 'Albert Herring', Baba in 'The Medium' and the nurse in 'Boris Gudunov'. Other recent engagements have included off-stage chorus lead for The Opera Maker's production of "Turandot" at Grimeborn, and Princess Clarice in "L'Amour des Trois Oranges" for Regents Opera. This year she is looking forward to performing Mahler's 8th symphony (Maria Aegyptiaca/Alto 2 soloist).

Other future engagements include the Page in Regents Opera's 2026 production of Salome, and she will also be an

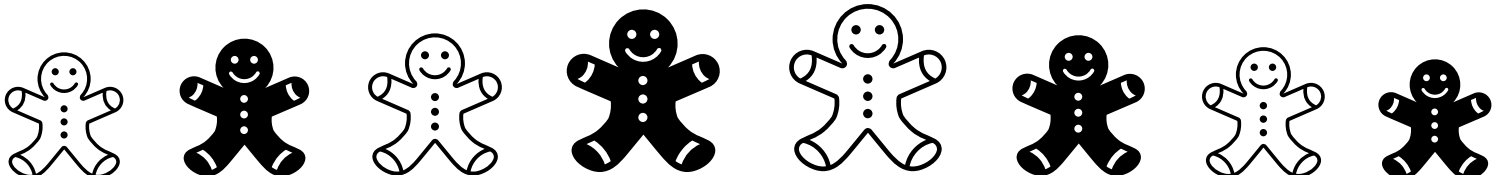
Emerging Artist at Longborough Festival Opera this summer. Website: [www.natashaelliott.co.uk](http://www.natashaelliott.co.uk)

## Minglu Gao Cover Gretel: Movement, Gingerbread Chorus



**Minglu Gao** is a lyric soprano from China. She completed her Artist Diploma with Distinction at Trinity Laban Conservatoire, where she was a Kathleen Roberts Scholar. Her operatic roles in scenes include Liu (Turandot), Mimi (La bohème), Fiordiligi (Cosi fan tutte), Pamina (The magic flute), Donna Anna (Don Giovanni), Ilia (Idomeneo), Titania (A Midsummer Night's Dream), Nannetta (Falstaff), Servilia (La clemenza di Tito), Xenia (Boris Godunov), Elvira (L'italiana in Algeri), Reiza (Oberon), and Olympia (Les Contes d'Hoffmann). In 2025, Minglu sang Despina (Cosi fan tutte) at the Vienna Opera Festival, covered the title role in Lucia di Lammermoor with Barefoot Opera, and performed Giunone (Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria) at Blackheath Halls. A prizewinner of the Peter Hearn

Foundation competition, she was selected as a Young Artist with the OperAffinity Festival, performing at the Teatro Comunale di Todi in Italy. She was also a bursary recipient at both the Oxenfoord International Summer School and Grasmere Song. In 2026, Minglu was selected as an artist for the Accademia dell'Opera Italiana masterclasses in Nardò, Italy. Upcoming engagements include Fiordiligi (Cosi fan tutte) on tour with Barefoot Opera, Gilda (Rigoletto) at the Vienna Opera Festival, and covering Gretel (Hänsel und Gretel) with Uncovered Opera Company.



## Dew Fairy 15 February 6pm



**Mahtab Ghamsari** is a Soprano of Iranian and Canadian origins currently pursuing a Master of Music in vocal studies at Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music in London, UK. Mahtab had been singing classical and Iranian music since childhood. She switched to training in Opera in 2018 and has performed roles such as Valencienne from *The Merry Widow*, Blue Fairy from *Pinocchio*, Miss Jessel in *Turn of the Screw* by Britten, Despina from *Così fan Tutte* amongst others. Mahtab also works in music and media technology, for example working with synthesizers, electronic instruments and production software.

## Gingerbread temptress and “Bake Off” superstar



**Lesley Holloway** has been a hairdresser for 45 years, salon owner and colour specialist and ID artist for L’Oreal. She is also a lecturer and assessor in the hairdressing field and was an end point assessor for City and Guilds. Lesley has always loved baking and cooking, she was lucky enough to be selected to appear on the Great British Bake off this year. It was an amazing adventure and she managed to get to week 7. She’s a Nanna and loves spending time with her little Granddaughter Mabel, and her family means the world to her. Lesley is in the process of opening her own small cake school, and a cake shed.

## Hänsel 15 February 6pm



**Isobel Hughes** is a mezzo soprano from North London and recent graduate of the David Seligman Opera School at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Their recent roles include Prince Orlofsky in Johan Strauss’ *Die Fledermaus* (New Aquarian Opera), Sesto in *CESARE*, a comic reimagining of Handel’s *Giulio Cesare* (Somerset Opera), Lola in Mascagni’s *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Rose Opera), and Mother Marie in Poulenc’s *Dialogues of the Carmelites* (Aylesbury Opera), in which they were described as a “striking” performer by Opera Magazine. Isobel was also the recipient of the Best Female Singer Award at the Hertfordshire Opera Gala Awards in July 2025. Isobel looks forward to performing the role of Tisbe in Exeter Opera group’s upcoming tour of Rossini’s *La Cenerentola* in spring/summer 2026.

## Petra 15 February 6pm



**Luca Kocsmárszky** is a classically trained singer, violinist, actor and educator. After completing her conservatoire training in Hungary she relocated to London in 2009. She has toured extensively with orchestras and various singing ensembles in the USA and Europe. She has also been enjoying a varied teaching career specialising in violin, voice and Kodály-musicianship. As a language coach she has had clients like the London Symphony Chorus and the BBC Chorus. Recent acting credits include Baruska in the first regional revival of the West End Musical “Once”. Her opera debut came in 2023 in Greenwich Opera’s *Suor Angelica* where she sang Zelatrice and Prima Cercatrice. Luca sang her first lead role as Elvira in Mozart’s *Don Giovanni* at Ensemble OrQuesta’s Opera Academy in March 2025. Luca would like to thank her teachers Julia Mintzer and Panaretos Kyriatzidis for their continuous support and guidance.

## Dew Fairy 15 February 2pm



Swedish, London based soprano **Nina Kopparhed**, BMus (Hons), PG Dip, is based in London and has performed in the UK, Italy, Sweden, Brazil and Bolivia. Having made her operatic debut singing Susanna, her favourite operatic roles include: The Queen of the Night, Zerbinetta, Miss Wordsworth and Despina. Most recent roles: the Queen of the Night, the Plaintiff (Trial by Jury) and 1st Witch (Dido and Aeneas). Concert/recital highlights include: Schönberg: String quartet no.2, Britten: Les Illuminations, Dallapiccola: Quattro liriche di Antonio Machado, appearing at Festival Internacional Renacentista y Barroca Americana “Misiones de Chiquitos”, Bolivia, and giving several world premieres, including Anthony Esland’ “The Amherst Chronicles”, and Neil Crossland’s “Songs of Travel and Rest”. Commercial solo recordings include: Anthony Esland: “The Amherst Chronicles” (2024); Nina is also featured as a soloist on Stewart Lane’s albums “We are all Here” (2025) and “Radio Ghosts” (2023); her solo tracks from both albums have been used for award winning short films.



## Conductor



London-based pianist and conductor **Panaretos Kyriatzidis** is in demand as a collaborative performer, vocal coach and musical director. Panaretos has won the Gerald Moore Award, Emmy Destinn Awards Accompanist Prize and the London Song Festival duo prize, and has been a Britten Pears and Oxford Lieder young artist. Panaretos completed his postgraduate studies with distinction at Trinity Laban. He has performed extensively across the UK and broadcast live on BBC Radio 3. His work in opera has garnered high praise, as well as an Olivier Award nomination and two Off West End Awards (Offies) for best opera production. He is co-founder and musical director of The Opera Makers, with whom he will be presenting the UK premiere of Augusta Holmès' opera *La Montagne Noire* on International Women's Day - 8th March 2026. Panaretos (aka Pan) is a vocal coach at Trinity Laban and head of opera studies at Morley College. He hails from the Greek island of Thasos, holds a BA in Law and is an avid food lover.

## Petra 15 February 26 2pm



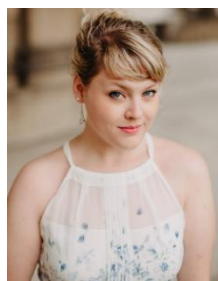
**Angharad Lewis** was born in Australia and began her career with the role of Mabel in *Pirates of Penzance* at the age of 13. From there she went on to be chosen to compete in the Operalia, then complete a Bachelor of Music (Performance) degree at the University of Western Australia and a Diploma of Opera at the Sydney Conservatorium of Music. A highlight of her time there included performing at the Sydney Opera House in a staged production of *Carmina Burana* (Coro Piccolo) with the Australian Ballet Company. Angharad has also participated in masterclasses with Richard Bonyngne, Patrick Summers, Jan Hendrik-Rootering, Christopher Hogwood, Nelly Miricioiu, Rosalind Plowright, David Parry and Maestro Cilario. Had Dame Joan Sutherland choose her as the winner of the Oratorio Award of the Sydney Eisteddfod. She has performed with Tobacco Factory, London Opera Players, Opera de Baugé and received a scholarship award for excellence, Opera Australia, Australian Ballet, West Australian Opera, Rockwell Opera, Guildford Opera, covered Turandot sections in Warner Bros Movie *Mission Impossible 5*, Holland Park Opera, Bath Opera, St Albans Opera, Roles performed include: *The Carmelites* as Mother Marie, *The Monitor & Mistress of Novices* (Suor Angelica), *Amneris* (Aida), *Carmen & Mercedes* (Carmen), *Suzuki* (Madama Butterfly), *Third Lady* (Magic Flute), *Zita* (Gianni Schicchi), *Olga* (Eugene Onegin) *Public Opinion/Juno* (Orpheus Down Under), *Katisha* (Mikado), *Mabel* (*Pirates of Penzance*), *Casilda* (*Gondoliers*).

## Hänsel 15 February 2pm



Mezzo-soprano **Naomi Lidiard** studies with Neil Baker and Panaretos Kyriatzidis. She has just completed a diploma at Trinity Laban Conservatoire, where she enjoyed playing the roles of Hermia in Britten's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and Mercédès in Bizet's *Carmen* in opera scenes. Prior to that Naomi trained at the Morley Opera School, where roles included Bianca in Britten's *The Rape of Lucretia* and Playmate in Zemlinsky's *Der Zwerg*. Recent engagements include a concert raising funds for Refuge at the Brunel Museum, exploring women's experiences through opera and song. Naomi's musical education began with orchestral playing as a violinist and she later held a choral award at Oriel College, Oxford. She also performed as an actor in the Oxford Playhouse and at the Edinburgh Fringe. She is a keen writer and has enjoyed directing a broad range of student theatre productions.

## Witch 15 February 2pm



British lyric soprano **Alicia Mallace-Goulbourne** has been praised as having a "sensitive legato" and "an outstanding sense of poise and command". Alicia made her role debut as Female Chorus/*The Rape of Lucretia* with Opera Asteria, other roles include cover Anna/*La nonne sanglante* for Gothic Opera, *Dido/Dido & Aeneas* for Opera Asteria, *Naiad/Ariadne auf Naxos* for Uncovered Opera Company, *Cis/Albert Herring* for New Palace Opera, *Dama/Macbeth* for Uncovered Opera Company and *Suor Osmina/Suor Angelica* for Opera Greenwich. Ensemble roles include Fulham Opera's *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, Hampstead Garden Opera's *La bohème & Savitri*, Gothic Opera's *La nonne sanglante* (won the 2021 Offie for Best Opera Production), Regent Opera's *La forza del destino*, Scherzo Ensemble's *L'elisir d'amore* at Longhope Opera and Saffron Opera Group's *Tannhäuser*. Alicia has performed a variety of roles in staged operatic scenes including *First Lady/The Magic Flute*, *Naiad/Ariadne auf Naxos*, *Queen Elizabeth I/Gloriana*, *Fifth Maid/Elektra*, *Elettra/Idomeneo*, *Countess/The Marriage of Figaro*, *Euridice/Orfeo ed Euridice*, *Marschallin/Der Rosenkavalier* and *Alice* in a scene from *Falstaff*, performed with the Welsh National Opera. She has also performed in masterclasses with David Gowland and evening concerts with the ROH Jette Parker Artists. For upcoming engagements please check out

[www.aliciamallacegoulbourne.com](http://www.aliciamallacegoulbourne.com)



## Repetiteur



British-Iranian pianist **Roxanna Shini Mehrabzadeh** is distinguished performer, collaborator, curator and teacher. She has performed at distinguished venues across the UK and Europe including Wigmore Hall, St John's Smith Square, Steinway Hall, Cambridge University, Oxford University, St James's Piccadilly, Sala Michelangeli, The Arlberg 1800, Konzertsaal des Augustinum and Auditoria Joaquin Rodrigo. As an active collaborative pianist, Roxanna regularly performs alongside vocalists and instrumentalists and has been coached by esteemed musicians such as Nicky Spence, Nuccia Focile, Pascal Rogé, Richard Stokes, Sergei Leiferkus, Panaretos Kyriatzidis, Eugene Asti and Helen Yorke. Roxanna was a Junior Fellow 2024/25 at Trinity Laban Conservatoire, where she also completed her postgraduate studies in piano performance with Distinction under Professors Peter Tuite and Martino Tirimo, as well as First Class degree under Professor Yekaterina Lebedeva. Roxanna maintains a strong passion in Iranian contemporary music, exploring its distinctive idioms and expressive possibilities within her performance practice - her work with Iranian composers in the diaspora will be released later this year. She is also co-producer of Displaced, a concert series bringing artists and audiences together through interdisciplinary storytelling & collective memory, promoting Middle Eastern and North African voices.

## Gertrude 15 February 6pm



**Rosalind O'Dowd** (soprano) was brought up in Hampshire before studying English and French at Liverpool University, followed later at Trinity Laban Conservatoire for her MMus in Vocal Performance. She has worked for a variety of fringe opera companies, including English Pocket Opera, Opera Loki, Fulham Opera, Regents Opera, St Paul's Opera, and has produced and performed for her own small opera company: Ormond Opera. Opera roles include Cio-Cio San, *Madama Butterfly*; Michaëla, *Carmen*; Alice Ford (cover) *Falstaff*; Mabel, *The Pirates of Penzance*; Marcellina, *The Marriage of Figaro*; an Apprentice, *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg*; Curra, *La Forza Del Destino*, Lady Billows, *Albert Herring* and Pamina, *The Magic Flute*. Her oratorio work includes Rossini's *Petite Messe Solennelle*, and Mendelssohn's *Elijah*. She recently premiered *Hidden Lovers* by Janet Oates at the *Tête-à-tête Opera Festival*. Upcoming performances include *Trial by Jury* and *Dido & Aeneas* with Porcupine Productions.

## Director



**Valeria Perboni** is an Italian opera practitioner working as both a soprano and director. She studied at the Conservatoire of Mantova, earning her BA in Opera Studies, and completed her MA in Musical Theatre at the Royal Academy of Music in 2018, receiving the DipRAM award for Outstanding Performance. As a soprano, Valeria has performed in the UK and internationally, at venues such as the Royal Albert Hall, Barbican Centre, Royal Opera House (*The Dante Project*), working with conductors such as Antonio Pappano, Sir Simon Rattle, Gustavo Dudamel among others. Roles performed include Maria in *West Side Story* for BBC Radio 3, the Queen in Holst's operetta *The Idea*, among others. She also performs in jazz and musical theatre, touring a one-woman show with the Jazz Acoustic Strings ensemble. As a director, since 2022 Valeria has directed productions including *Aida* (NODA award winner), *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *La Traviata*, *Macbeth*, among others.

## Gretel 15 February 2pm



British / Irish Soprano, **Elinor Popham**, trained at the Royal Academy of Music with Nuccia Focile, generously supported by the John Clemence & Sophie's Silver Lining Funds - she there won the Isabel Jay Opera Prize and was invited by Lieder Professor, Richard Stokes, to perform a recital at Bob Boas & Lauderdale House. Previous competition successes include the John Miller Young Recitalist & Opera Unmasked Prizes, the runner-up award in the inaugural Isobel Buchanan Award- she was recently selected to compete at the Concorso Lirico Internazionale Portofino. As a soloist, she has performed repertoire ranging from Handel's *Messiah*, Haydn's and the Mozart and Fauré *Requiem*, to Tippett's *Child of Our Time*. Operatic highlights include Pamina (St.Albans Opera), Najade (Uncovered Opera), Lucia & Micaela (Opera Integra), Geraldine (Grimebourne), Rosalinda, Valencienne & Countess (Opera Warwick). She recently covered Lucy (The Telephone - Opera on the Move), Violetta (Instant Opera) & Musetta (Aylesbury Opera). She recently made her debut as Königin at the Teatru Manoel, Malta, and is delighted to return to Uncovered Opera once again.



## Gertrude 15 February 7pm and Witch Cover



**Salome Siu** is a Hong Kong-born dramatic mezzo-soprano based in London. She graduated with distinction from Trinity Laban Conservatoire (MMus Performance, 2023), supported by the Eva Malpass Scholarship, receiving the Director's Prize for Excellence in Voice and reaching the final of the 2024 Trinity Laban Gold Medal. In 2023 she was a finalist in the Soloists' and Elisabeth Schumann Lieder Duo Competitions. Her varied roles include Carmen in Carmen, Third Lady in The Magic Flute (Park Opera), gender-swapped Ping in Turandot (Grimeborn Festival, The Opera Makers), and Madame de Croissy in Dialogues des Carmélites (Aylesbury Opera), where Opera Magazine (July 2025) praised the "charismatic mezzo-soprano" who "grabbed the show and shook it to life". As Cornelia in Handel's Giulio Cesare (Somerset Opera) she was lauded for her statuesque dignity and "beautiful voice" with a "tender but mournful quality" that perfectly suited the role. In 2026 she will cover Eboli in Verdi's Don Carlo (Aylesbury Opera).

## Dew Fairy 14 February 7pm, Sandman 15 February 2pm



Lyric/Coloratura soprano **Verity Jo Spencer Hall** is a recent graduate from the Royal Academy of Music. She discovered a passion for singing at the age of 17 and began as a soprano soloist with various choirs in southern Spain, captivating sold-out audiences. In 2018, she caught the attention of Yuriy Yurchuk, a student in the Jette Parker Young Artist Program, who invited her to the Royal Opera House for a consultation with vocal teacher Jack Livigni. Impressed by her talent, Livigni offered her a place in the 'Mediterranean Opera and Studio Festival' young artist program in Sicily. During her time there, she made her opera debut as Zerlina in Mozart's 'Don Giovanni'. After her time in Sicily, she was approached by vocal coach Marek Ruszczynski to audition for the Royal Academy of Music. After a successful audition, Verity was thrilled to be accepted onto the Bachelor's degree. Since her graduation in 2024, Verity has been the winner of the Sonderpreis at the inaugural Romana Vaccaro Opera competition in Frankfurt. Performed for German and Belgium royalty, and debuted roles in London, Germany, Seattle and soon to be in New York for the coming spring.

## Sandman 14 February 7pm

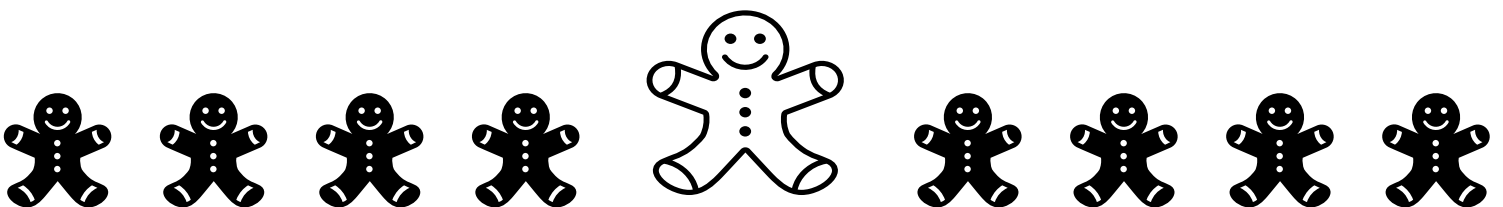


**Charlotte Town** is a Manchester based light soprano with a unique voice well suited to early music. With a background in musical theatre she split her undergraduate studies between Goldsmiths University of London and the University of Huddersfield gaining a first-class BA(hons) Degree in Music Performance. With credits including Johanna (Sweeney Todd) and Orfeo (L'Orfeo). She completed her Postgraduate studies in Music Performance at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama with Nuccia Focile. During her studies she has sung with a number of chamber choirs, larger choruses and choral societies. The highlight of which came performing in the 2024 and 2025 Proms with BBC NOW and BBC NCW. She is currently singing as a Soprano Choral Scholar with the Halifax Choral Society for their 2025-2026 season. Previous solo credits include Handel's *Messiah* as well as featuring in Proper Job Theatre Company's touring production of Kafka's *The Trial*. She is delighted to be making her operatic debut with Uncovered Opera.

## Producer, Witch 14 February 7pm, 15 February 6pm, Gertrude 15 February 2pm



Lyric-dramatic soprano **Marrienne Town Smith** started to sing in 2007 as a hobby and distraction from a fast-paced marketing management role. In 2015 she successfully auditioned for a Postgraduate Vocal Studies Programme at Trinity Laban and graduated with distinction in 2017. Roles performed and covered include Elisabetta de Valois, Don Carlos: Lady Macbeth, Macbeth: Ariadne, Ariadne auf Naxos; Abigaille, Nabucco; Madeleine Lidoine Les Dialogues des Carmélites, Maddalena Andrea Chenier, Donna Anna Don Giovanni, The Gingerbread Witch and Gertrude Hänsel und Gretel, and on the concert stage has performed as soprano soloist in Verdi's Requiem, Brahms's Requiem, Mozart's Requiem, Handel's Messiah, Beethoven's Ninth, Rossini's Petite Messe Solennelle, Mendelssohn's Elijah, Bizet's Te Deum. In 2021 Marrienne established Uncovered Opera Company and has produced six operas and over 15 lunchtime recitals as well as professional galas, involving over 100 other emerging artists and hopes to continue that long into the future!



## Gretel 14 February 7pm



Soprano **Juliet Wallace** studied English Language and Literature at King's College London before training at the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, Trinity Laban and the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama. Recent engagements include Donna Anna (*Don Giovanni*), Tytania (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Zerbinetta (*Ariadne auf Naxos*), Catalina (*Black, el Payaso*), Estelle (*The Stronger* by Hugo Weisgall), Die Königin der Nacht (*Die Zauberflöte*) and Cunegonde (*Candide*). Juliet enjoys collaborating with composers, and has created the roles of The Mother (*Rotten Kid* by Erchao Gu), Eve (*Paradise Lost* by Bertie Baigent), and Susan (*You Can't Kill the Spirit* by Josh Kaye). Juliet's most recent concert work includes the Memorial Concert for Alexander Goehr alongside the Britten Sinfonia, conducted by Sir George Benjamin, a fundraising for Congresswoman Lucy McBath in Atlanta, Georgia to advocate for gun reform and affordable healthcare, and as conductor and singer in the Cirque de Pierrot, an all-female Pierrot ensemble Juliet founded to promote women working in contemporary classical music. The ensemble performed Schönberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* and at the Blackheath Halls in 2022 and Joanna Lee's *Pierrot!* at King's Place in 2023.

## Surtitles



**Caitlin Carey** received her BA in Music from the University of Notre Dame (USA) and her MMUS with distinction from the Guildhall School, where she trained as a répétiteur in the Opera department and was awarded multiple scholarships. She is currently working towards a Professional Diploma in Vocal Studies at Trinity Laban Conservatoire under the instruction of Sophie Grimmer. Caitlin has performed roles in various staged and semi-staged opera scenes and ensembles as part of Morley College's opera courses. She also has experience as a musical director (*Wizard of Oz*, *Woodmansterne Operatic and Dramatic Society*, 2024) and répétiteur (*Gianni Schicchi/Last Night of the Proms*, *New Aquarian Opera*, 2024). Prior to her performance training, Caitlin was a corporate finance lawyer at a top-tier international law firm, holding law degrees from Harvard and Cambridge.

## BEHIND THE SCENES – UNCOVERED OPERA COMPANY



Meet the 3-woman team behind Uncovered Opera Company! **Marrianne Town Smith** - Company Founder and Director, **Rachel Carter** - CRM Manager and Production Assistant and **Sam Edmonds** - Company Manager and Administrator.

Working together in our spare time, we organise Uncovered Opera Company performances and thrive on bringing recitals and productions to you, our audience!

## OUR MISSION

Cover singers devote vast amounts of time learning and preparing roles in opera but rarely have the chance to perform. Let's celebrate those unseen singers who cover roles and give them a platform to be seen: or at least to work on a role and add it to their CV. Let's uncover as many developing singers as possible. Let's bring opportunities to people not heard by larger companies. Let's acknowledge there are not enough opportunities for developing artists and let's do something about it. Let's come together in a fun, encouraging environment. Let's learn, build our skills, work out how to hold our shit together as opera singers and grow as artists.

Unlike some other developing artist programmes or amateur opera companies there is no fee charged to take part and until funding is secured there is no fee paid to participate. We are a group of likeminded singers, working as part of an equal team, people who actively enjoy learning from each other and want to learn on the job.

**For news about forthcoming recitals and future productions please sign up to [uncoveredoperacompany.com](https://uncoveredoperacompany.com) and register your email address. Or follow us on Instagram and Facebook.**

## THANK YOUS



Without the generosity of these kind people who donated to our Go Fund Me and Paypal and sent billet doux - our production would not have been possible. Our appreciation and thanks go to:

R Byford, S Watson, D Roblou, D Bristow, T Ravenhill, L Russheim, M Day, A Truesdale, J Matthews, L Newberry, A Usher, A Curley-Lee, FJ Wilson, L Gardiner, L Ryder, A Mills, C Steward, B Woodward and many others who donated anonymously.



Thanks as well go to the kind people who offered to step in and play for free whilst we were trying to source funding to allow us to perform with a small orchestral ensemble and Andrew Morley who would have conducted if we had been able to raise the funds... He gave a lot of his time talking about the logistics and holding time in his schedule and we are very grateful for all his support.



This show would have not been possible without the singers and actors giving their time for free to bring this production to you! You are all beautiful souls and great artists and many, many thanks to you all!



A huge thank you to Anna Miell for donating her time to coach our performers with their German.



Thank you to The Space for hosting our performance and supporting live music with their recital series and other musical events - it has been wonderful working with you and we look forward to collaborating more in the future!



And finally thank YOU - our audience, thank you so much for coming to see our show!



With love, Marrienne, Sam and Rachel x