

UBC OPERA



ENGELBERT HUMPERDINCK

# HANSEL AND GRETEL

# UBCOPERA 2023 EVENTS



NINO ROTA

## THE FLORENTINE STRAW HAT

FEBRUARY 2, 3, 4, 2023 — 7:30 P.M.

FEBRUARY 5, 2023 — 2:00 P.M.



OTTO NICOLAI

## THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR

MARCH 24, 25, 2023 — 7:30 P.M.

MARCH 26, APRIL 1, 2023 — 2:00 P.M.



## OPERA TEA

APRIL 16, 2023 | 2:00 PM | UBC BOTANICAL GARDEN

A CELEBRATION OF SPRING



Additional information on our full season can found at [ubcopera.com](http://ubcopera.com)

UBCOPERA  
*presents*

# Hansel and Gretel

Fairy Tale Opera in Three Acts

*Sung in English with English surtitles*

*Music by* **Engelbert Humperdinck** | *Libretto by* **Adelheid Wette**

**December 8, 9, 10 — 7:30 p.m. | December 11 — 2:00 p.m.**

**Performed at The Old Auditorium**

*Conductor –* **Jacques Lacombe**

*Director –* **Nancy Hermiston**

*Lighting Design –* **Jeremy Baxter**

*Costume Design –* **Parvin Mirhady**

*Set Design –* **Alessia Carpoca**

**UBC Opera Ensemble**

**with members of the Vancouver Opera Orchestra**

*There will be a 20-minute intermission after Act 2*

**This production is made possible by the  
David Spencer Endowment Encouragement Fund**

*We acknowledge that the University of British Columbia is situated  
on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam  
(xʷməθkʷəy̓əm) people.*



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
School of Music

**UBCOPERA**



UBC THEATRE & FILM



# A Message from the Director



I love the opera Hansel and Gretel! It heralds the Holiday Season. It is actually a true brother and sister act!

Engelbert Humperdinck wrote the music and his sister Adelheid Wette wrote the libretto for this wonderful opera which he classified as a fairy-tale opera. It is based on the Grimm Brothers' fairy tale of the same title. There are many folk music themes in the piece and the one we probably all know and love is the evening prayer. The opera premiered with Richard Strauss conducting

in Weimar, Germany in 1893. Since then it has been a world favourite, particularly as a Holiday production.

The orchestra was of Wagnerian size and one is easily carried away by the glorious orchestral harmonies and colours that come with the powerful sound which Humperdinck created.

The opera requires great vocal and physical stamina from its performers and demands that one remembers the child in themselves. It is an opera for audiences of all ages; an opera that makes you feel good; an opera that can transport you from your everyday troubles and give you a short while of relief and happiness.

How does this opera relate to us today? Children are still playing and squabbling instead of doing their home chores; all too many mothers are still worried about feeding their children and taking care of them, often pushed to a place of anger and frustration which they would rather not visit. Fathers and mothers struggle to provide for their families. The Ilsestein Forest can represent any number of dangerous and difficult

situations that our children can run into at any time. There is always a 'witch' or a 'power' to lead young people astray and put them in harm's way. But there are still good people who rescue them – the 'Sandman' and 'Dew Fairy' of the real world.

We have chosen to leave this production as a fairy-tale opera as was wished by the brother and sister creators.

We hope that this will be the start to a happy, healthy and joyous Holiday Season for you all.

*Nancy Hermiston*

**Nancy Hermiston, O.C.**



*Photo: Emily Cooper*

# The Cast\*

Role	December 8, 10	December 9, 11
<i>Peter, a broom maker (Father)</i>	Zachary Martin	Pablo Romero Moreira
<i>Gertrude, his wife (Mother)</i>	Mara Ayque	Christina Demeo
<i>Hansel, their son</i>	Katie Fraser	Alessandra Ianni
<i>Gretel, their daughter</i>	Emma Jang	Hannah Ernst
<i>The Witch, who eats children</i>	Francesca Corrado**	Holly Duerichen
<i>Sandman (The Sleep Fairy)</i>	Carly King	Olivia Rapos
<i>Dew Fairy (The Dawn Fairy)</i>	Kenda McDermott	Brittany St. Clair Gamble

**Market People:** Haley Power, Jonathon Chan

**Archangel:** Mattias Carlberg

**Angels:** Adriana Zaharijevic, Alexandra Baird, Aubrey Craighead, Brittany St.Clair Gamble, Claire Bidulka, Carly King, Caroline Voltchok, Elissa Matthew, Emily Malmgren, Haley Power, Kenda McDermott, Kendra Baldwin, Naomi Barasch, Olivia Rapos, Trinity Collie

**Gingerbread Cookies:** Adriana Zaharijevic, Alexandra Baird, Aubrey Craighead, Caroline Voltchok, Claire Bidulka, Elissa Matthew, Emily Malmgren, Haley Power, Jonathon Chan, Kendra Baldwin, Kevin Liu, Naomi Barasch, Trinity Collie

*\*All cast is subject to change*

*\*\*Performing courtesy of the Canadian Actors' Equity Association*

# Synopsis

## ACT ONE – At Home

Gretel is stitching a stocking and Hansel is making a broom. Gretel sings to herself as she works. Hansel mocks her, singing to the same tune a song about how hungry he is. He wishes for Mother to come home. Gretel tells him to be quiet and reminds him of what Father always says: “When past bearing is our grief, God the Lord will send relief.” Hansel complains that one can’t eat words, and Gretel cheers him up by telling him a secret: A neighbor has given Mother a jug of milk, and tonight she’ll make a custard pie for them to eat! Hansel, excited, tastes the cream on the top of the milk. Gretel scolds him and tells him he should get back to work. Hansel says that he doesn’t want to work, he’d rather dance! Gretel agrees, and they begin to dance around. Mother enters, and is furious when she finds that Hansel and Gretel have not been working. As she threatens them with a broomstick, she knocks over the jug of milk. Mother sends Hansel and Gretel to the forest to look for strawberries. Alone, she expresses her sorrow that she is unable to feed her children, and asks God’s help for her family.

From far off, Father sings about how hungry he is. He comes into the house, having enjoyed a few drinks, and kisses Mother. She pushes him away and scolds him for drinking. He surprises her by bringing her a basket filled with a feast: ham, butter, flour, sausages, a dozen eggs, turnips, onions, and half a pound of tea! He explains to her that beyond the forest it is almost time for a festival, and everyone is cleaning in preparation. He went from house to house and sold his brooms at the highest prices. As Father and Mother celebrate, he suddenly stops and asks where the children are. Mother changes the subject to the broken jug, and after she finishes telling him the story of how it came to be broken, he laughs, then asks again after the children. She tells him that for all she knows they are in the Ilsestein forest. Suddenly frightened, Father tells her that the forest is where the evil Gingerbread Witch dwells. She lures children with cakes and sweets, pushes them into her oven, where they turn to gingerbread, and then eats them. Father and Mother rush to the forest to save their children.

## ACT TWO – In the Forest, Sunset

Gretel weaves a crown of flowers as she sings to herself. Hansel searches for strawberries. As Gretel finishes her crown, Hansel fills his basket. Gretel tries to put the crown on Hansel; he complains that boys don’t wear things like that, and so she places the crown of flowers on her own head. He tells her that she looks like the Queen of the Wood, and she says if that is the case, then he should give her a bouquet, too. He offers her a bouquet and the strawberries. They hear a cuckoo calling, and begin to eat the berries. As the basket empties, they fight for the remaining strawberries. Gretel scolds Hansel for eating all of the berries and tells him that Mother will be upset. She tries to look for more, but it’s too dark for her to see. Hansel tries to find the way back, but he cannot. As the forest darkens, Hansel and Gretel become frightened and think they see something or someone coming closer. Hansel calls out and a chorus of echoes call back. Hansel tries to comfort Gretel as a mysterious man walks out of the forest. The Sandman loves the children dearly and he has come to put them to sleep. He sprinkles magic grains of sand over the children. They can barely keep their eyes open. Before they fall asleep they sing their evening prayer. Fourteen angels come to protect the children through the long night.

### **ACT THREE – In the Forest**

The night has passed and the Dew Fairy appears to wake the children and sings of the beauty of the forest surrounding them. Gretel wakes first and greets the morning. She sees the sleepy Hansel and teases him until he too is awake. They tell each other of their mutual dream, of angels protecting them as they slept.

Suddenly they notice an enormous gingerbread house and a fence made of gingerbread as well. Unable to resist temptation, they take a little bit of the house to nibble on it.

As the children nibble, a voice calls out, “Nibble, nibble, mousekin! Who’s nibbling at my housekin?”. Hansel and Gretel decide that the voice must have been the wind, and they begin to eat the house again. As Hansel breaks off another piece of the house, the voice again calls out. Hansel and Gretel ignore the voice, and continue eating. The witch comes out of the house, catching Hansel and Gretel. As Hansel tries to escape, the witch explains that she is Rosina Daintymouth, and that she likes nothing better than to feed children sweets. The two children are suspicious of the witch; Hansel frees himself, and he and Gretel begin to run away.

The witch takes out her magic wand and Hansel and Gretel are frozen on the spot. Using the wand, the witch leads Hansel to the cage and goes inside her house to fetch raisins and almonds with which to fatten Hansel. Hansel whispers to Gretel to pretend to obey the witch and that he has a plan. The witch returns, and waving her wand forces Gretel to dance, then tells her to go into the house and set the table. Hansel pretends to be asleep, and the witch, overcome with excitement, describes how she plans to cook and eat Gretel.

The witch wakes up Hansel and has him show her his finger. He puts out a stick instead and she feels it. Disappointed that he is so thin, the witch calls for Gretel to bring out raisins and almonds. As the witch tries to feed Hansel, Gretel steals the wand. Waving it towards Hansel, Gretel whispers, “Hocus pocus, witches’ charm! Rigid body loosen, hush!”. As the witch turns around and wonders at the noise, Hansel discovers that he can move freely again. The witch tells Gretel to peep inside the oven to see if the gingerbread is done. Hansel softly calls out to her to be careful. Gretel pretends that she doesn’t know what the witch means. The witch tells her to go on tiptoe and bend her head forward. Gretel acts like she doesn’t understand, then asks the witch to demonstrate. The witch, frustrated, opens the oven and leans forward. Hansel springs out of the cage, and he and Gretel shove the witch into the oven. They dance for joy at conquering the witch! The oven begins to crackle and smoke, and with a loud crash it explodes. Around Hansel and Gretel, the gingerbread children have turned back into humans. They are asleep and unable to move, but they sing to Hansel and Gretel, asking to be touched. Hansel is afraid, but Gretel strokes them on the cheek, and they wake up, but are still unable to move. Hansel then takes the witch’s wand and, waving it, calls out, “Hocus pocus, witches’ charm! Rigid body loosen, hush!” The children are freed from the spell, and give Hansel and Gretel their lifelong thanks.

Father is heard in the distance, calling for Hansel and Gretel. He and Mother enter and embrace Hansel and Gretel. Meanwhile, the gingerbread children pull the witch, who has turned into a gingerbread cookie, out from the ruins of the oven. Father gathers the children around and tells them to look at this miracle. He explains that this is heaven’s punishment for evil deeds and reminds them, “When past bearing is our grief, God the Lord will send relief!”



# Nancy Hermiston, O.C., Director



Canadian-born lyric coloratura soprano Nancy Hermiston has performed throughout Europe and North America. Parallel to her extensive singing career, Ms. Hermiston worked as a voice teacher, stage director, and Co-coordinator with the University of Toronto's Opera and Performance Divisions. In 1995, she joined the University of British Columbia's School of Music as the Head of the Voice and Opera Divisions, where she established the UBC Opera Ensemble.

Professor Hermiston is also a favourite guest for master classes throughout Canada, the United States, China, and Germany. Her UBC Opera Ensemble tours regularly to the Czech Republic, Germany, Ontario, and throughout British Columbia. The Opera Ensemble gave their first performances in Beijing and Chengdu in May of 2009 and Shanghai in 2010 and 2011. Ms. Hermiston appeared as Stage Director with the Regina Opera for *The Barber of Seville* and *La Cenerentola* and with the Vancouver Opera twice for *Die Fledermaus*. *La Traviata*, *La Bohème* and in 2016, directed their production of Verdi's *Rigoletto*, starring UBC Alumna and her former student, Simone Osborne.

In 2004, Professor Hermiston was named the UBC University Marshal, and in 2008, UBC awarded her the Dorothy Somerset Award for Performance and Development in the Visual and Performing Arts. She was also honoured with a Killam Teaching prize in 2010. In October 2011, she received an Opera Canada Rubie Award for her contributions to opera in Canada. Ms. Hermiston was made an Officer of the Order of Canada in December 2013. In 2017, she was awarded the Canadian Music Centre's BC Award of Excellence, and in November 2017, Alumni UBC recognized Professor Hermiston with the Honorary Alumnus Award. In 2018, she received the Faculty of Arts 2017/18 Dean of Arts Award for her outstanding contributions to UBC's creative research, teaching, and service to the scholarly and broader community. In 2018 Ms. Hermiston was inducted into the BC Entertainment Hall of Fame.

# Jacques Lacombe, Conductor



Conductor Jacques Lacombe is renowned as a “gifted and ambitious” conductor (*The New York Times*) whose artistic integrity and rapport with musicians and orchestras have propelled him to international stature.

Maestro Lacombe was the Music and Artistic Director of the Orchestre Symphonique de Mulhouse in France from 2017 to 2021, Principal Conductor of the Bonn Opera in Germany from 2016 to 2018, Music Director of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra from 2002 to 2006, Music Director of Orchestre Symphonique de Trois-Rivières from 2006 to 2018, Music director the Philharmonie de Lorraine and Principal guest conductor of Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal. Jacques has conducted concerts in Tanglewood Music Festival with the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and symphonic debuts with the Taiwan Philharmonic National Symphony Orchestra as well as orchestras in Dallas, Nancy, Omaha and San Antonio, among many collaborations with orchestras in North America, Europe, Oceania and Asia. He has conducted multiple operatic productions with companies like Bonn Opera, the Royal Opera House at Covent Garden, Opera de Marseille, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Opera de Monte-Carlo, The Metropolitan Opera House, Teatro Regio in Turin, Bayerische Staatsoper in Munich, Opera National du Rhin, among others.

He has collaborated with renowned artists like Joshua Bell, Yo-Yo Ma, Jean-Yves Thibaudet, Diana Damrau, Joyce DiDonato, Renee Fleming, Angela Gheorghiu, Frederica von Stade, Roberto Alagna, José Cura, Dimitri Hvorostovsky and Bryn Terfel.

Maestro Lacombe has earned multiple awards throughout his career like the ASCAP award given by the League of American Orchestras, the Juno Award given by the Canadian Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences for Best Classical Album of the Year: Vocal or Choral Performance for his recording of *Lettres de Madame Roy à sa fille Gabrielle* with renowned contralto Marie-Nicole Lemieux written by André Gagnon and Michel Tremblay.

# UBC Opera Ensemble

The University of British Columbia Opera Ensemble was founded by Canadian lyric coloratura, Nancy Hermiston, in 1995. Beginning with a core of seven performers, Ms. Hermiston has built the program to a 90-member company. The Ensemble performs three main productions at UBC every season, several Opera Tea Concerts, and a series of *Singer Behind the Song* events featuring international stars who work with Ensemble students. As well, the Ensemble has several engagements with local community partners such as the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Vancouver Opera, and Bard on the Beach. In addition, the Ensemble travels each year to the Czech Republic to gain valuable European performance experience. Frequently they appear in concert with the Plzen Opera Orchestra, and they are regular guests at the Nürnberg Opera House for their Musikalischen Damen Teas (founded by Prof Hermiston in 1985). They have also given several concerts in Beijing, Shanghai, and Chengdu, China. The Ensemble has also toured throughout B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Ontario.

The Ensemble's mission is to provide an outstanding performance and academic education for young, gifted opera singers, preparing them for international careers. Past main-stage productions have included *Le Nozze di Figaro*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Die Gärtnerin aus Liebe*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Suor Angelica*, *La Bohème*, *Dido and Aeneas*, *The Bartered Bride*, *Manon*, *Eugene Onegin*, *Florence: the Lady with the Lamp*, *Dreamhealer*, *Falstaff*, *Don Giovanni*, *Cendrillon*, *Albert Herring*, the Western Canadian Premiere of Harry Somer's *Louis Riel*, *The Crucible*, *Die Lustige Witwe (The Merry Widow)*, *Rusalka*, *Così fan tutte*, *Dialogues des Carmélites*, *Carmen*, *The Tales of Hoffmann*, *The Florentine Straw Hat*, *La Traviata*, *A Night in Venice (Eine Nacht in Venedig)*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Consul*, *Orfeo ed Euridice*, *La Cenerentola*, *Il Tabarro* and *Gianni Schicchi*, *Silent Night*, *Pasazerka*, and *Il Viaggio a Reims*, *Mansfield Park*, and *The Gondoliers*.

# Vancouver Opera Orchestra

The Vancouver Opera Orchestra was established in 1977, replacing an orchestra made up of members of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra. Comprised of the region's leading freelance players, the VO Orchestra has developed into a fine ensemble that has taken the specialized and demanding art of pit performance to a very high level. Several of the current roster of musicians were in the pit for the orchestra's inaugural performances, in 1977, of Massenet's *Le Roi de Lahore*, starring Joan Sutherland and conducted by founding Music Director Richard Bonyngne. There have since been two music directors: David Agler (1992–1999) and Jonathan Darlington (2002–2019).

## VIOLIN 1

**Angela Cavadas**  
(Acting Concertmaster)

**Yun Jung**  
(Acting Assistant Concertmaster)

**Evelyn Creaser**

**Anne Stride**

## VIOLIN 2

**Andrea Siradze**  
(Acting Principal)

**Heilwig von Koenigsloew**  
(Acting Assistant Principal)

**Julia Lim**

**Sandy Fiddes**

## VIOLA

**Sevilya Hendrickx Rai**  
(Acting Principal)

**Marie-Claude Brunet**  
(Acting Assistant Principal)

**Mila Tymoshenko**

## CELLO

**Harold Birston**  
(Acting Principal)

**Sue Round**  
(Acting Assistant Principal)

**Ashton Lim**

## BASS

**Michael Vaughan**  
(Acting Principal)

**Remy Xiz**  
(Acting Assistant Principal)

## FLUTE & PICCOLO

**Brenda Fedoruk**  
(Principal)

## OBOE & ENGLISH HORN

**Emma Ringrose**  
(Principal)

## CLARINET & BASS CLARINET

**Mary Backun**  
(Principal)

**Carlos Savail Guardiola**  
(+ BASS CLARINET)

## BASSOON

**Ingrid Chiang**  
(Principal)

## HORN

**Valerie Whitney**  
(Principal)

**Nick Anderson**

## TRUMPET

**Tom Shorthouse**  
(Principal)

## TROMBONE (BASS)

**Sharman King**  
(Principal)

## TIMPANI

**Phil Crewe**  
(Acting Principal)  
(Principal)

## PERCUSSION

**Daniel Tones**  
(Acting Principal)

## HARP

**Elizabeth Volpé Bligh**  
(Acting Principal)

## ORCHESTRA MANAGER

**Jim Littleford**

# VANCOUVER OPERA GUILD

## 2023 ESCORTED OPERA TOURS

### BERLIN, DRESDEN, PRAGUE AND VIENNA

**May 3 – 14, 2023**

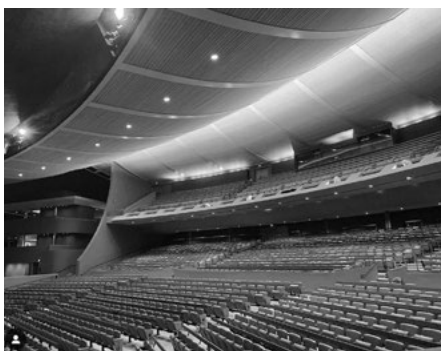
Guided tours highlight the beauty of these four cities while opera performances include *Tannhauser* and *La Traviata* at the Staatsoper in Berlin; *Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg* in Dresden; *The Bartered Bride* and *Don Giovanni* in Prague; plus *Tosca* and *Manon* in Vienna.



### OPERA IN SANTA FE

**August 6 – 13, 2023**

Tour includes airfare, accommodation at the Inn of the Governors, sightseeing tours, and five operas: *Tosca*, *Rusalka*, *Pelléas et Mélisande*, *The Flying Dutchman*, and *Orfeo*.



### FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL

Lis Dawson at 604-922-8008

Genny MacLean (Great Expeditions) at 604-738-5535

# Production Team

DIRECTOR  
Nancy Hermiston

CONDUCTOR  
Jacques Lacombe

LIGHTING DESIGN  
Jeremy Baxter

SET DESIGN  
Alessia Carpoca

COSTUME DESIGN/  
HEAD OF COSTUMES  
Parvin Mirhady

TECHNICAL DIRECTOR  
Keith Smith

OPERA COACHES  
Andrea Grant  
Wenwen Du  
Derek Stanyer

STAGE MANAGER  
Caroline Tang

SCENIC ARTIST  
Omanie Elias

HAIRDRESSING & WIGS  
Elke Englicht

MAKEUP  
Shamsi Ashti

STUDENT COSTUME  
TECHNICIAN  
Brittany St. Clair Gamble

ASSISTANT STUDENT COSTUME  
TECHNICIANS  
Sarah Anderson-Caulfield  
Hannah Ernst

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER  
Kevin Liu

SCENIC PAINTERS  
Carly King  
Nick Goldin  
Liam Robertson  
Kevin Liu  
Gabriel Chona Rueda

SCENIC CARPENTERS  
James Fergusson  
Matthew McLellan

PROPS, FREDRIC WOOD  
THEATRE  
Lynn Burton

PROPS  
Caroline Tang  
Liam Robertson  
Kevin Liu

PROGRAMME  
Katie Fraser  
Mariana Iguavita

PROGRAMME PRINTING  
Ancan Marketing

MARKETING COORDINATION  
AND GRAPHIC DESIGN  
Miles Linklater

EVENTS MANAGER  
Francesca Corrado

ASSISTANT STAGE AND  
EVENTS MANAGER  
Mara Ayque

OFFICE ASSISTANTS  
Katie Fraser  
Mariana Iguavita

SURTITLES  
Emma Jang  
Mariana Iguavita

OPERA LIBRARIAN  
Alyssa Nicole Samson

BOX OFFICE DIRECTOR  
Paul Sontz

STUDENT BOX OFFICE DIRECTOR  
Emma Jang

STUDENT TECHNICAL DIRECTOR  
Liam Robertson

ASSISTANT TECHNICAL  
DIRECTORS  
Carly King  
Kevin Liu  
Gabriel Chona Rueda

ASSISTANT LIGHTING  
TECHNICIAN  
Gabriel Chona Rueda

**Collide Entertainment**

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY  
Mike Southworth

CAMERA OPERATORS  
Barry Ambrosio  
Mike Southworth

**Chan Centre  
Production Crew**

ASSISTANT TECHNICAL  
DIRECTOR AND HEAD LIGHTING  
TECHNICIAN  
Andrew Riter

HEAD AUDIO RECORDING  
TECHNICIAN  
James Perrella

PRODUCTION MANAGER  
David Humphrey

*The Front of House, Ticketing  
and Production Staff of  
the Chan Centre for the  
Performing Arts are members  
of CUPE 2950*

# Special Thanks

David Spencer Endowment Fund  
The Wall Family  
Mohammed Faris and Faris Family  
Vancouver Opera Guild  
Robert Dales  
Martha Lou Henley Charitable  
Foundation

Judith and Graham Forst  
Parvin Mirhady  
Lynn Burton, Properties, Theatre  
UBC  
The Chan Centre of the Performing  
Arts  
SOM Director, T. Patrick Carrabr 

**BENJAMIN BRITTEN** | *Magical evening of ethereal melodies*

## A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

**FEB 11-19**

[vancouveropera](http://vancouveropera.com)

**TICKETS FROM \$50**  
[vancouveropera.ca](http://vancouveropera.ca)



ARTWORK BY HANNA BARCZYK

# UBCOPERA



NINO ROTA

# THE FLORENTINE STRAW HAT

FEBRUARY 2, 3, 4 — 7:30 P.M. | FEBRUARY 5 — 2:00 P.M. | 2023  
CHAN CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

UBCOPERA.COM | 604.822.2697



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
School of Music

