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## **TORONTO PUBLIC PERFORMANCES OF XSTRATA ENSEMBLE STUDIO SCHOOL TOUR PRODUCTION OF *HANSEL AND GRETEL***

**Toronto** – The **Canadian Opera Company** is pleased to present two Toronto public performances of this year's **Xstrata Ensemble Studio School Tour** production of *Hansel and Gretel*, a child-friendly adaptation of the original full-length opera, based on the classic fairytale by the Brothers Grimm. Sung in English, the school tour version of *Hansel and Gretel* contains amusing characters and enchanting music that will have young audiences spellbound. The two public performances take place at **11 a.m.** and **2 p.m.** on **Saturday, Nov. 5, 2011** at the **Joey and Toby Tanenbaum Opera Centre** (227 Front St. E.).

Forty-five minutes prior to each performance, COC artists, educators and staff will lead children through creative arts and interactive activities inspired by *Hansel and Gretel*. Young people attending the performances may also participate in an Introduction to Opera workshop with critically acclaimed Canadian composer Dean Burry, creator of the COC's school tour opera *Isis and the Seven Scorpions* and the children's opera *The Hobbit*.

Tickets to the **Xstrata Ensemble Studio School Tour** public performance of *Hansel and Gretel* are **\$20** for adults, **\$15** for seniors (ages 65 and up)/students (ages 16 to 29), and **\$10** for children (ages 15 and under). Tickets can be purchased online at [coc.ca](http://coc.ca), by calling COC Ticket Services at **416-363-8231**, or in person at the **Four Seasons Centre for the Performing Arts Box Office** (145 Queen St. W., Monday to Saturday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.).

Written by German composer Engelbert Humperdinck in 1890, *Hansel and Gretel* was last performed as part of the school tour in 2006. Widely known for its timeless appeal to audiences young and old, the operatic version of this beloved fairytale is noted for its enchanting score, much of it inspired by European folk music.

For more than 30 years the COC's renowned school tour has brought opera to local schools and communities across Ontario, in the last four years adding northern Ontario to the list of destinations with performances in Sudbury and Timmins. In 2010, the tour travelled further north than ever before to the Inuit communities of Salluit and Kangiqsujuaq in the Nunavik region of northern Québec. The **2011 Xstrata Ensemble Studio School Tour** visits elementary schools across Ontario from **Oct. 31 to Nov. 26, 2011**, with *Isis and the Seven Scorpions*, by Dean Burry, and *Hansel and Gretel*, by Engelbert Humperdinck.

Xstrata, a major global diversified mining group, is the Title Sponsor of the school tour.

**The COC Ensemble Studio is Canada's premier training program for young opera professionals and provides advanced instruction, hands-on experience, and career development opportunities. The Ensemble Studio is supported by the Government of Canada through the Department of Canadian Heritage, RBC Foundation and other generous donors.**

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For more information or to request photographs of the school tour productions, please contact:

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