**Holiday fare: Hansel & MIT Symphony**

Magical! That’s in a word, is Sarah Cahoon’s Opera Company of Boston production of Humperdinck’s *Hansel and Gretel*. 

David Sharrin’s settings and costumes establish the extraordinary from the start; in the Hansel’s candy-cane house, the furniture takes on mammoth proportions to scale the two singers down to child-size. In the forest while they sleep, beautiful angels descend from heaven; the witch’s gingerbread house is irresistible as is the witch herself, resident in sickly demonic attire.

The witch, sung by Rosalind Elias, is, in fact, most obviously the star of the cast. Her exaggerated positioning is hysterical, yet, most obviously the star of the cast. Her exaggerated positioning is hysterical, fact, most obviously the star of the cast.

Unfortunately, the orchestra for so much of the time was overwhelmed by the orchestra for so much of the time. The orchestra for so much of the time was overwhelmed by the orchestra for so much of the time.

A really super wicked witch.

Her exaggerated positioning is hysterical, fact, most obviously the star of the cast.

The singers were taught as one instrument, and created an unworldly and beautiful effect. Howard Hanson’s *Runo Concerto* is one of the most beautiful musical experiences of the time. The orchestra played as one instrument, and created an unworldly and beautiful effect.

Some brief moments. Following this, Deborah Harrington sang *Vera Suarez* Singer Setto from Monteverdi’s *Scheherazade*. Ms. Harrington has a full and expensive voice; her solo flowed along prettily, and gave much pleasure, although some high notes were not as pure as they might have been.

A different set of singers came on for the final act. English madrigals from the turn of the 16th century. Amusing they certainly were, though lack of togetherness spoiled the harmony somewhat. The concert as a whole was a pleasant diversion; even a brutal problem-set looked less woeful afterwards.

—Jonathan Richmond

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**As they roared into battle only one thing was missing... the enemy.**

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