An All-Ages Rock Musical!

Hansel & Gretel:
A Wickedly Delicious Musical Treat
Music & Lyrics by Justin Roberts
Book by Ernie Nolan
Animations by Micah Chambers-Goldberg
3D Animations by Gaspard Lacroix
Directed by Michael Matthews

One Performance Only!
Sunday, January 22 at 3:00pm

(Los Angeles, CA) December 19, 2016 - Valley Performing Arts Center’s PLAY DATE series continues the all-ages rock musical, Hansel & Gretel: A Wickedly Delicious Musical Treat with music and lyrics by Grammy-nominated children’s music artist, Justin Roberts and book by Ernie Roberts. This brand new production with animations by Micah Chambers-Goldberg, 3D animations by Gaspard Lacroix and direction by Michael Matthews has one performance only on Sunday, January 22 at 3:00pm.

“Justin Roberts has adapted this Grimm Fairy Tale for a modern audience,” said Thor Steingraber, VPAC’s Executive Director. “His message is resounding and positive, and his infectious score inspired VPAC to create its first original theatrical production, slated to tour theaters across America in the coming year. The animated backdrops by Micah Chambers-Goldberg are captivating, like a modern-day Fantasia, backing a young and energetic cast of actors.”

Crumb by crumb, when your heart weighs a ton
Let it fall like the rain that gets warmed by the sun
Crumb by crumb.

This inspiring adaptation of The Brothers Grimm’s tale follows Hansel and Gretel’s journey through The Black Forest, in search of the Black Forest Troll for a wish that will make everything right. But in true fairy tale form, they land in the trap of a heartless witch and
discover the Troll is merely a slave to her powers. After a heroic rescue, the audience is reminded: “YOU be your own hero... Write YOUR own story. YOU are in charge of your own happy endings.” In the end, love wins and Hansel and Gretel know that the greatest gift of all is being together as a family.

Justin Roberts is one of America’s top children’s recording artists and tours nationally performing concerts for families. With a sound that’s more akin to Fountains of Wayne than Romper Room, Roberts blends his deft indie-pop sensibilities with a keen understanding of what it’s like to be a kid. He’s been variously compared to Elvis Costello, Nick Lowe, Weezer and Loudon Wainwright. Music critics from the Washington Post to Salon.com are invariably surprised at the musical sophistication and lyrical depth of the songwriting. WXPN Radio’s Kathy O’Connell was quoted in USA Today, calling Roberts “the Paul McCartney of children’s music.”

Chris Jones of The Chicago Tribune said of the music: “This is a great score: witty, melodic, varied and most important of all, fresh and alive.” Chicago Theatre Review said, “Filled with 14 catchy joyous soft rock tunes...the show’s real strength is in its well written characters...sports a positive theme of love and family.”

About Hansel & Gretel: A Wickedly Delicious Musical Treat
Beyond the snowy depths of The Black Forest, a family is frozen by the mystery of their missing mother. Soon after her disappearance, the daring sibling duo of young Hansel and his older sister Gretel embark on an icy adventure in hopes of rekindling the warmth in their home. The Grimm Brothers Band brings the story to life with a rock and roll score amidst an animated wonderland inspired by the whimsy of Lemony Snicket and Roald Dahl. This sparkling fable of humor and heroism is anything but grim.

Hansel & Gretel: A Wickedly Delicious Musical Treat is part of Valley Performing Arts Center’s PLAY DATE Family Sunday Matinee Series. This series concludes with SHAOLIN WARRIORS: THE LEGEND CONTINUES (February 19).

About Justin Roberts (Music & Lyrics)
Justin Roberts is a two time GRAMMY-nominated singer-songwriter of children’s music; his album Jungle Gym, was nominated for Best Album for Children in 2011, while his follow up album, Recess, was nominated for Best Album for Children in 2014. His latest album, Lemonade, released in 2016 is a return to the simplicity of his earliest recordings and captures the sound of folks playing together in a room, like setting up an impromptu lemonade stand and seeing if anyone will show up. He is the winner of eight National Parenting Publications Gold Awards, as well as eight Parent’s Choice Gold Awards. Truly one of the “all-stars” of the indie family music scene, he logs thousands of miles on the road each year, leading some to call him the hardest working man in children’s show business. He performs with the Not Ready for Naptime Players. Justin has been praised in the New York Times, “He has a remarkable ability to see through a child’s eyes...the Judy Blume of kiddie rock,” and USA Today called him “hands down the best songwriter in the genre.”

About Michael Matthew (Director)
Select Los Angeles credits: Failure: A Love Story (Coeurage Theatre)(2015 Ovation Win for
Best Director), Justin Love (LADD Award, Best Musical; World Premiere), Very Still and Hard to See (LA Weekly nominations for Best Director and Best Production, Play; World Premiere), The Color Purple, The Musical (Ovation and LA Weekly Awards for Best Director and Best Production, Musical), What’s Wrong with Angry? (Ovation Noms for Best Director and Best Production, play).

About Ernie Nolan (Author)
Ernie Nolan is an award-winning director and playwright who received the Illinois Theatre Association’s 2014 Award for Excellence in Theatre for Young Audiences. He is the Executive Artistic Director of Nashville Children’s Theatre. His work as former Artistic Director of Emerald City Theatre includes directing and writing over 20 productions for the company. Ernie’s playwrighting has been featured both nationally and internationally at such theatres as The Coterie, First Stage, Walnut Street, Orlando Rep, Children’s Theatre of Charlotte, Adventure Theatre, La Jolla Playhouse, and the Milwaukee Zoological Society.

About Micah Chambers-Goldberg (Animator)
Micah Chambers-Goldberg, known for his whimsical imagination and fantastic imagery, is a versatile and accomplished artist in film and animation. He has directed notable music videos such as Fly or Die, performed by Rock Mafia, sponsored by Coca-Cola’s 5 by 20 campaign and Spotify. His animated film, Who Stole the Mona Lisa?, set to Stravinsky’s The Firebird was called, “a triumph” by the Philadelphia Inquirer and has been presented by the Queen’s Symphony Orchestra and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Additional projects include animation for Coca-Cola, Cristiano Ronaldo’s ROC Headphones, The National Civil Rights Museum, Eminem’s Shady Records and the Broadway magic show, The Illusionists.

Calendar Listing for Hansel & Gretel: A Wickedly Delicious Musical Treat

Venue: Valley Performing Arts Center
18111 Nordhoff Street
Northridge, CA 91330

Date: Sunday, January 22 at 3:00pm

Tickets: Price: Starting at $38
In Person: VPAC Ticket Office, located in the VPAC Courtyard
By Phone: (818) 677-3000
Online: ValleyPerformingArtsCenter.org

Press Contacts:
Tim Choy, Niki Blumberg, Davidson & Choy Publicity
323-954-7510 | t.choy@dcpublicity.com; n.blumberg@dcpublicity.com
Gary W. Murphy, Public Relations Consultant
310-914-0178 | gmurphypr@gmail.com

Photos: Click here for photos from the 2016-17 Season:

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