

Christopher Gillett | 18 July 2014

## Glyndebourne Summer **The final act**



Christopher Gillett in *Der Rosenkavalier* © Bill Cooper

The last-night party is over but the costumes aren't packed away quite yet. Glyndebourne's production of *Der Rosenkavalier* has one last outing, a semi-staged performance at the Royal Albert Hall, and Christopher Gillett is starting to worry about the lack of scenery...

That's it, it's over. Finished. Done. No more giggles for the bed in the Act 3 panto, no more pelvic flinches as Tara Erraught's Octavian plunges the silver rose into Lars Woldt's Baron Ochs's buttock, no more wincing when Paul Hopwood's Doctor whips out his tube of ointment... I'm sorry, none of this means anything to you if you never saw *Der Rosenkavalier*, but for me and everyone else in the show, this is the stuff that has filled our waking hours for the last three months.

Only it's not over. Well it is but it isn't. There's still the Prom to go, 19 days after our last performance, which made for a strange atmosphere at the closing-night party. It was a like saying farewell at Heathrow to a load of new friends you've made on holiday, before bumping into them again on the Piccadilly Line.

The day before the Prom, the cast (but not the chorus) will reconvene at Glyndebourne, many flying in from abroad, to spend a day rehearsing it all over again. This is going to present a couple of challenges.

**Whereas Glyndebourne's theatre is small and intimate, the Royal Albert Hall most certainly is not.**

First, in the Royal Albert Hall we won't have the set. We may have some furniture but to be honest I don't know. We've not been told. In the absence of a stage crew and, thus, people to move furniture around, it seems highly unlikely. Without a set and stuff to sit on, we will have to do a completely different production. And anyway, whereas Glyndebourne's theatre is small and intimate, the Royal Albert Hall most certainly is not. There's also no pit, and we have yet to discover if we are performing in front of the

orchestra, watching Robin Ticciati in TV monitors, or behind them. We'll figure it all out, but as it's a lengthy opera, we won't have much time. We will be in costume, but as several singers normally have quick changes, we don't know how that will work either.

Second, I hope we can remember it. That may sound daft, but spacial and physical memory play a big part in remembering how the thing goes. If you're not seeing what you are used to seeing, the brain plays funny tricks. I'm used to delivering pages and pages of very rapid patter whilst walking backwards across the stage with my right eyeball focussed on Robin. It's pretty-well Pavlovian; set me walking backwards and a stream of Strauss-Hofmannsthal comes pouring out of me. What if I have to walk forwards and watch Robin with my left eye?

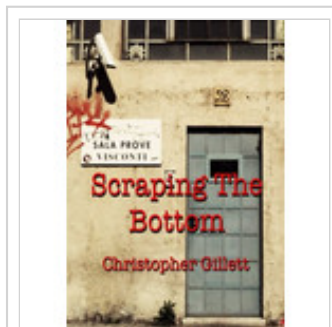
Well we'll find out soon enough. And with only about five gazillion people in the audience there shouldn't be much pressure.

**[Der Rosenkavalier is at the BBC Proms \(http://www.bbc.co.uk/proms/whats-on/2014/july-22/14932\)](http://www.bbc.co.uk/proms/whats-on/2014/july-22/14932)**  
on 22 July and broadcast live on BBC Radio 3.

Read more of **[Christopher Gillett on Sinfini Music \(/uk/features/blogs/christopher-gillett/festivals-are-no-holiday-for-singers\)](/uk/features/blogs/christopher-gillett/festivals-are-no-holiday-for-singers)**.

The tenor's own blog is **[christophergillett.co.uk \(http://christophergillett.co.uk/\)](http://christophergillett.co.uk)**

## Recommended



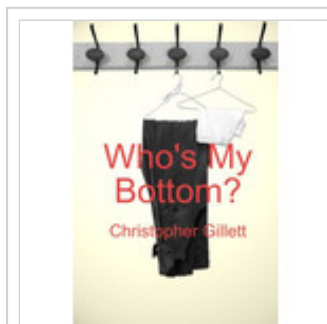
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