

Hello, Dolly!

The Bohemians

March 2005

Set Changes

The scene numbers below do not correspond to those in the Libretto as they seem to run several scenes into one. They do however match up with the Set Plans.

General

The intention is that as many of the scene changes as possible are performed as part of the action and in full view of the audience. When this is done in a co-ordinated fashion it will actually form part of the action of the piece.

Preset

The revolves are set to the NY street scene positions. The US trucks sit partially onstage (this is their "home" position). The rear flats are in their closed position.

I, 1: New York Street

Same as preset. Note that the door into the revolve SR is practical, however there is no exit from within the revolve. The horse & streetcar unit are separate wheeled units. The horse unit will require at least one (preferably two) costumed people to wheel it along. The streetcar has a small bench inside which can seat 5 to 6 people, and will require another 2 costumed people to wheel it along from behind (it will appear to the audience that they are in the streetcar as well). The streetcar has two signs to mount on its side; one for when it is a streetcar (this scene) and one for when it's part of the train (see I, 6 below).

I, 2: Grand Central Station, New York

Fly in painted tabs and Grand Central Station header (clock) downstage. Behind the tabs the revolves are changed to their Yonkers positions and the US trucks are pushed together USC. Note that each time the US trucks are pushed together, their onstage sides are hinged opened upstage so people can walk on the rostra inside the trucks from one truck into the other.

I, 3 Vandergelder's Exterior

Fly out station header and painted tabs to reveal scene behind.

1, 4 Vandergelder's Interior

The first "seen" scene change. Crew in costume open the front hinged doors of the US trucks (one per door). These are bolted into the floor in their open positions. As the SR truck door opens, a third crew person inside the SR truck pushes out the nested rostrum unit, brakes it, then pushes out the steps/treads unit and brakes it. The door in the SL opening door is practical. Note that a small stepladder is attached to the SL truck's offstage wall (hidden from view) to allow someone to exit the 5ft high rostra inside the truck by means of going through a small "secret" door in the truck's side wall. This entrance/exit is not very practical as the stepladder is steep!

1, 5 Yonkers, New York

The above scene change is reversed.

1, 6 Yonkers Railroad Station

The Yonkers Station header is flown in. The streetcar unit (as used in I, 1) is used with the steam engine unit to form the train. Again the streetcar requires two costumed operators at the rear. The streetcar should have its sign changed for this scene (see I, 1). The steam engine unit requires up to 6 crew (minimum 4) to move it (none of these crew are seen). It consists of wheeled concertinaed flats with a rostrum cube (roughly 2ft square) at each end to stabilise it. A smoke machine (not provided with the set) is used with the supplied hosepipe to get steam coming out of the steam engine's funnel. The movement of the train unit will be quite spectacular as long as it is rehearsed and no-one operating the engine or streetcar is in any doubt as to what they are doing.

1, 7: Outside Mrs Molloy's Hat Shop

The US trucks part from the middle of the stage to their offstage "home" positions (as per I, 1). Note that crew need to be in place behind the trucks for the whole of I, 6 if the trucks are to be moved without any crew being seen by the audience during the change. The revolves are set back to their NY shop settings.

I, 8 Hat Shop Interior

As the characters walk into the practical door in the SR revolve, costumed crew members walk through the tormentors and one per revolve unlatches the opening section and wheels it open, locking it in position. Just as they get to the correct "open" position the flown Hat Shop Window flies in to bridge the gap between the opening sections, hiding the crew members at the same time. Note that the cupboard in the SL opening section is practical.

I, 9 Yonkers, New York

The above scene change is reversed. The small wheeled float is moved into position either by cast or costumed crew. Generally it is locked down into the floor with drop-bolts so it may be best to have crew do this one (we don't want it rolling down the stage!). The mannequin supplied with it is not dressed so please check with Costumes what is required.

II, 1 NY Street Scene

There is no interval change apart from striking the small wheeled float as used in I, 9.

II, 2 Harmonia Gardens Exterior

The painted tabs are flown in along with the Harmonia Gardens "Gate" header. Note this header has practical lamps on it. Whilst this scene is taking place the full Harmonia Gardens (interior) scene is set. This consists of turning the revolves to their 3rd as yet unseen positions and opening the doors of the rear flats to their open positions. The step unit is a cleverly hinged single unit which a couple of crew open from inside the rear rostra. The Palm Trees with Lights (practical) either side of the stair are flown in to complete the picture.

II, 3 Harmonia Gardens Interior

The painted tabs and header are flown out to reveal the scene as set above. One crew member is required on the upstage rostra to operate the sliding door for Dolly's entrance. Note that as the rostra is 5ft high and quite far upstage, there will be people in the Upper Circle (and perhaps the rear of the Stalls) who won't see all of Dolly standing in the doorway. She will however be seen as she descends the steps into the main scene. The cast operate the curtains on the revolves.

II, 4 Courtroom

The painted tabs are flown in as the two courtroom wheeled trucks come on, one through each wing tormentor. These wheeled units are bolted into the floor as per the other wheeled trucks so again this may be best done using costumed crew instead of cast (two per unit preferred). During the Courtroom scene, the Harmonia Gardens Interior set is changed to Vandergelder's Interior. This consists of striking the steps and Palm Trees/Lights, closing the doors of the rear flats, moving the US trucks to their centre positions and opening their doors and setting their rostra, and lastly moving the revolves to the Yonkers positions.

II, 5 Vandergelder's Interior

The Courtroom trucks are struck offstage through each tormentor and the painted tab is flown out to reveal Vandergelder's Interior.

Finale

The Harmonia Gardens scene is re-set in full view. This may be done (just!) in the 50 seconds of music prior to the Finale. The rostra and treads in the SR US truck are retracted and the doors of the trucks are shut, before the trucks are moved offstage. The doors of the rear flats are then opened and bolted in position as the tread unit is unfolded and the Palm Trees with Lights are flown in. At the same time the revolves are turned to their Harmonia Gardens setting.

Mike Hume
3 Jan 2005