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## A preview of the Nevill Holt Opera

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The Nevill Holt Opera (<http://www.nevillholtopera.net>), which is hosted by David Ross who founded Carphone Warehouse, is fast becoming one of the highlights of the British Summer Social Season ([www.thesloaney.com/the-british-summer-social-season-guide](http://www.thesloaney.com/the-british-summer-social-season-guide)) and it has sold out in record time this year. It was launched as an independent opera festival in 2013 and takes place in a beautiful and unique stately home setting.

General Manager Rosenna East is extremely busy with preparations for this year's performance but she managed to find some time in her diary to give readers of *The Sloaney* a preview of the event.



The Nevill Holt Opera is hosted by David Ross

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#### READ THE ENGLAND RUGBY STAR'S FEATURES

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We are putting on Bizet's much-loved opera, Carmen. It is a brand new production created for Nevill Holt and will be directed by Ashley Page OBE. Artistic Director Nicholas Chalmers will be conducting and Simon Holdsworth is the Designer. We are reuniting the winning team from our acclaimed production of La Boheme 2014.

#### CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THE PERFORMERS?

Nevill Holt is all about young singers who are just emerging onto the professional circuit from British opera schools. It is a fantastic opportunity for them make professional debuts and the audience will hear very exciting singers. They are the stars of the future and will perform in a very intimate setting at Nevill Holt. This year Clare Presland makes her debut in Carmen, and she is certainly a start to keep your eye on. We also have a very strong link to local Academy schools in the region through the David Ross Educational Trust, and as a result, we are able to cast our children's chorus from the Malcolm Arnold Academy – it's a fantastic and life-changing experience for them.

#### WHY IS OPERA SIGNIFICANT TO NEVILL HOLT?

Our founder patron, David Ross, has imported opera to Nevill Holt for over a decade. There is a history and also an appetite from the local audience. Over the last two years it has taken a step up in significance as we are now creating our own work, rather than just featuring other people's touring productions. The stable block theatre dates back to the 16th century and is a very unique place to hear opera – it is unlike anywhere else!

#### CAN PEOPLE VISIT THE GARDENS WHEN THEY ATTEND THE OPERA?

Yes indeed – that is a big part of the experience of coming to Nevill Holt. It's a private estate but during the festival, the grounds are open to ticket holders. People can picnic in the grounds during the long interval and also take time to wander around enjoying the stunning collection of modern British sculpture on display – one of the things that Nevill Holt is famous for.

#### WHAT MAKES THIS SUCH A GREAT EVENT?

Nevill Holt is a unique place – it is a stunning setting. English country house opera has a long tradition and is much loved for a good reason as it provides a heavenly day out! The House has an astonishing view over the Wellend Valley from the gardens and the gardens themselves are beautiful. They are designed by Rupert Golby and the sculpture and art collection is the best collection of modern British art in private hands. The theatre is intimate, so people talk about it as a very special experience. Also, the quality of what you see and hear is of a top professional level. Nevill Holt is a place that feels as though it is bursting with youth, energy and vibrant colour, but all in a classically beautiful English stately home setting. It's a wonderful combination!



Visitors to the opera can look around the gardens at David Ross' Nevill Holt stately home

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A picturesque island framed by coral be turquoise sea

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