

The actors in this production have two parts: their actor-self as a member of the Music Hall Royale, and the part they play in the Music Hall's production of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*. In the descriptions below, the acting company member is listed first, with the Drood role second.

All characters have British accents – variations like Cockney, Scottish, Welsh, Irish, etc are fine as well.

Chairperson/Mayor Thomas Sapsea: The leader of the music hall troupe. The Chairperson carries the majority of the dialogue and must be quick with a joke and able to improvise. S/he is in charge of keeping the pace of the show moving. Unexpectedly fills in as the Mayor character in *Drood* when another actor fails to show up. This part can be played by a male-identifying or female-identifying individual, and can play any age over 40ish. Baritone/Low Alto (D#3 – F#4 – can pop octaves if needed).

James or Joyce Throttle, Stage Manager: A non-singing role, male or female-identifying, who helps to keep the Chairperson on track throughout the play.

Clive Paget/John Jasper: The Royale's male-identifying lead, a devilishly attractive cad, and knows it. In *Drood*, he is the baddie. Choirmaster of Cloisterham Cathedral, and uncle of Edwin Drood. In love with Rosa Bud. Madness lurks beneath smooth exterior. Strictly speaking, a suspect, but didn't do it. Plays 35-50ish. Bari-tenor (A2 – A4).

Alice Nutting/Edwin Drood: Prima donna (female-identifying) and London's leading male impersonator, charming but, as you might expect, with determination and a lot of ego. Must command the stage. As Edwin Drood, she is an attractive, rich, and popular young man who has everything. The victim. Plays 25-45ish. Mezzo (B3 – E5).

Deirdre Peregrine/Rosa Bud: The not-so-innocent ingenue of the Music Hall Royale, Deirdre portrays the love interest of *Drood*, the young, beautiful and apparently fragile Rosa Bud. She is betrothed to Edwin Drood, the only man who isn't in love with her. A suspect in his murder. Plays 16-30ish. Female-identifying. True soprano (A3 – B5), with a high B natural that can't be avoided.

Angela Prysock/Princess Puffer: Angela has been a favorite of London audiences forever, a staple of the stage. As the mysterious Princess Puffer, Madam, opium dealer and general purveyor of vice of all kinds, she is glamorous in her ruin. A suspect. Female-identifying. Plays over 50. Serious low alto (F3 – D5) – must have a big chest voice and lots of rapport with the audience.

Janet Conover/Helena Landless: Janet is a long-standing member of the acting troupe, asked to play the mysterious Helena Landless who hails from a mysterious foreign colony not unlike India. Will need to switch between her British accent and a “geographically untraceable” approximation of an East Asian accent. Another suspect. Female-identifying. Plays 25-50ish. Mezzo (G3 – D5 [optional E5]), strong ensemble singer.

Victor Grinstead/Neville Landless: Victor is enjoying his premier performance with the Music Hall Royale. His character, Neville, is Helena's brother and suffers from the same “geographically untraceable” approximation of an East Asian accent. Falls for Rosa Bud, falls out with Edwin, and is therefore another suspect in the murder. Very passionate and often angry. Male-identifying. Plays 25-50ish. Bari-tenor (C3 – G4), strong ensemble singer.

Cedric Moncrieffe/Reverend Crisparkle: This troupe member is a bit of an open book who plays an archetypal vicar, who is also a bit of a lurker, and was in love with Rosa's mother. A suspect. Must play significantly older than Rosa. Male-identifying. Baritone (C3 – G4), strong ensemble singer.

Phillip Bax/Bazzard: Devotee of the theatre, the everlasting understudy, who finally gets his moment. May have quite a major part if the evening turns out that way. A sad sort of clown. In his role as Bazzard, he is often an audience-favorite suspect. Very capable of stealing the whole show. Any age. Male-identifying. Bari-tenor (A2 – Eb4 [opt G4 or Bb4]).

Nick Cricker, Sr./Durdles: “Clown Prince of the Royale” who makes the most of every line and plays the drunkard sexton in *Drood*. Gets to announce the murderer. Plays over 30. Male-identifying, Baritone or Tenor (B2 – F4) – ensemble singer.

Nick or Nicole Cricker, Jr./Deputy: Any gender. Any age younger than Cricker, Sr. As the Deputy, lowest in the pecking order, and very funny. Any voice range – ensemble singer.

Wendy and Beatrice: Drawn from the company, these characters are contemporaries of Rosa Bud who sing a fabulous quartet with Rosa and Helena in Act I as well as participating in the rest of the company goings-on. (C4-D5)

Company Members: Takers of small parts in the *Drood*, but along with other non-suspects, these will be important characters throughout, taking much of the responsibility for making the audience participation work, and working individually with sections of the audience. In addition, these characters are vital in creating the atmosphere of the touring theatre company. Lots of scope for creation of individual characters.