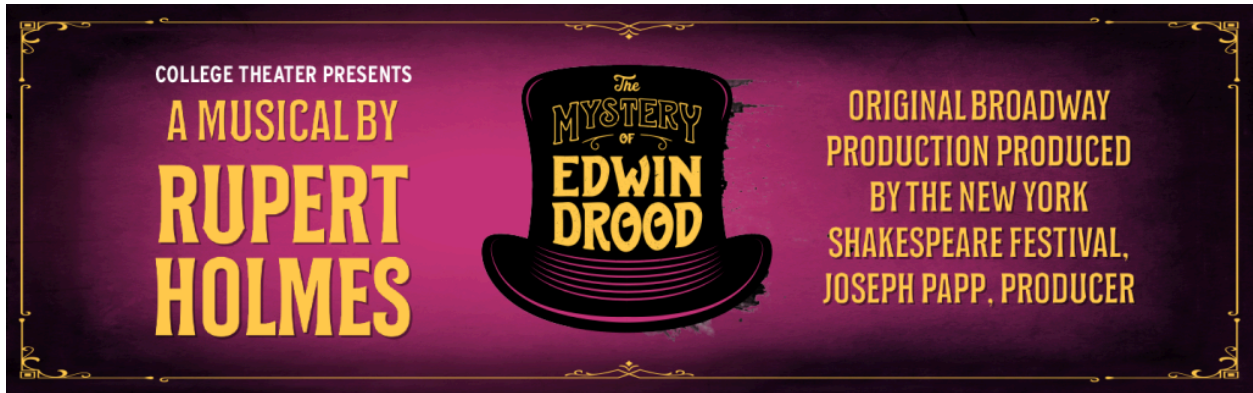


College of DuPage Theater Department

Presents



Director  
Amelia Barrett

Music Director  
Dan Brennan

Choreographer  
Kyle Donahue

**THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals  
on behalf of Tams-Witmark LLC. [www.concordtheatricals.com](http://www.concordtheatricals.com)**

Please note: Strong Language and Adult Themes

The College Theatre Department sincerely thanks the library for research support, for classes studying the script and production, as well as for the cast, director, and production team working on the project.

## **The Story**

A hilarious, interactive whodunit mystery musical that asks the audience to enter the action and become the ultimate detectives. Everyone on stage is a suspect in the murder of young and charming Edwin Drood. Is it John Jasper, Edwin's protective and maniacal uncle? Rosa Bud, his reluctant betrothed? The debauched Princess Puffer? Or someone else even more dastardly and villainous? Based on Charles Dickens' final unfinished novel, this play-within-a-play is sure to intrigue where the ending of each performance is up to you! *Contains adult themes and language.*

## **Time**

1892

## **Place**

The Music Hall Royale's Premiere Presentation of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*

## **Characters**

Chairman/Mayor Thomas Sapsea/William Cartwright

Edwin Drood/Miss Alice Nutting

John Jasper/Mr. Clive Paget

Rosa Bud/Miss Deidre Peregrine

Beatrice/Miss Florence Gill

Wendy/Miss Isabel Yearsley

Helena Landless/Miss Janet Conover

Neville Landless/Mr. Victor Grinstead

The Reverend Crisparkle/Mr. Cedric Moncriede

The Princess Puffer/Miss Angela Prysock

Durdles/Madam Nickie Cricker

Deputy/Mr. Nickie Cricker, Jr.

Stage Manager/Mr. James Throttle

Bazzard/Madam Philipia Bax

Citizens of Cloisterham

## **Act 1: The Situation**

Scene 1: The home of John Jasper at Minor Canon Corner in the cathedral city of Cloisterham, (England). A morning in late December.

Scene 2: The conservatory at the Nun's House, a seminary for young women in Cloisterham High Street. Later that morning.

Scene 3: Cloisterham High Street, outside the residence of Mayor Thomas Sapsea. The following afternoon.

Scene 4: The opium den of Princess Puffer in the East End of London. Dawn, the next day.

Scene 5: Cloisterham High Street. That afternoon.

Scene 6: The crypts of Cloisterham Cathedral. Late that night.

Scene 7: The ruins of Cloisterham. Christmas Eve.

Scene 8: The home of John Jasper. A short time later.

Scene 9: Minor Canon Corner. Christmas day and night.

## **Act 2: The Sleuths**

Scene 1: Cloisterham Station. Six months later.

Scene 2: Cloisterham High Street.

Scene 3: The Voting; the Solution.

### **The Voting**

Stage of the Music Hall Royale

### **The Solution**

Cloisterham High Street, near the Cathedral, Dawn

## **Musical Numbers**

### **Act 1**

There You Are ..... Chairman, Company

A Man Could Go Quite Mad ..... Jasper  
 Two Kinsmen ..... Drood, Jasper  
 Moonfall ..... Rosa Bud  
 Moonfall (Reprise) ..... Rosa Bud  
 Moonfall Quartet ..... Rosa Bud, Helena Landless, Wendy, Beatrice  
 The Wages of Sin ..... Puffer  
 Jasper's Vision (Ballet) ..... Orchestra  
 Ceylon ..... Drood, Rosa Bud, Helena Landless, Ensemble  
 A British Subject ..... Drood, Crisparkle, Neville, Helena,  
 Rosa, Ensemble  
 Both Sides of the Coin ..... Jasper, Chairman, Ensemble  
 Perfect Strangers ..... Drood, Rosa Bud  
 No Good Can Come From Bad ..... Neville, Rosa Bud, Helena Landless,  
 Drood, Jasper, Crisparkle, Waiter  
 Never the Luck ..... Bazzard, Ensemble  
 Off to the Races ..... Chairman, Durdles, Deputy, Ensemble

## ACT 2

England Reins ..... Chairman, Ensemble  
 Settling Up the Score ..... Dick Datchery, Puffer, Ensemble  
 The Name of Love / Moonfall (Reprise) ..... Rosa, Jasper, Ensemble  
 Don't Quit While You're Ahead ..... Puffer, Ensemble  
 Don't You're Ahead (Reprise) ..... Company  
 The Voting ..... Potential Suspects  
 The Garden Path to Hell ..... Puffer  
 Puffer's Revelation ..... Puffer  
 Out on a Limerick ..... Voted Detective  
 Jasper's Confession ..... Jasper  
 Murderer's Confession ..... ????????  
 Duet Reprise ..... Voted Lovers, Ensemble  
 Writing on the Wall ..... Drood, Company  
 Bows ..... Company

### Director's Note:

Charles Dickens began writing what would become his final novel, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, in 1870, with the plan of releasing a new installment every month for a year. The story follows the title character, an ordinary man whose sudden disappearance throws the fictional townspeople of Cloisterham into a panic. Suspicions arise about who may be responsible for Drood's vanishing, and the cast of potential culprits unfolds. But Dickens suffered a stroke and

died the following day, leaving the ending of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*... unfinished. Consequently, the story's biggest question—the fate of the disappeared Edwin Drood and the identity of his ostensible murderer—was left unanswered.

Rupert Holmes's adaptation of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* is a reimagining of Dickens' unfinished work. Holmes conceived the show as a play-within-a-play, with the actors playing dual roles as *Drood* characters and the fictional English music hall actors portraying them. But his groundbreaking choice was to allow the audience, rather than himself, to finish the story.

We think the interactive aspect adds a layer of engagement and excitement, drawing the audience into the narrative in a way that honors the spirit of Dickens' serialized storytelling. Now it is your turn to shape the outcome, and choose your answer to each question. The play not only pays tribute to the original author but also celebrates the collaborative nature of theater itself. We hope you enjoy each possibility, as much as we do, it's up to you to decide!

~AB

### **The Mystery of Edwin Drood**

**Source:** Perdue, David A. "The Mystery of Edwin Drood ." The Charles Dickens Page , [www.charlesdickenspage.com/charles-dickens-the-mystery-of-edwin-drood.html](http://www.charlesdickenspage.com/charles-dickens-the-mystery-of-edwin-drood.html).

Charles Dickens' fifteenth novel, illustrated by Luke Fildes, was his last and was never completed. The story is a murder mystery in which Edwin Drood is supposedly murdered and suspicion is cast on his uncle. Dickens left exactly half of the monthly installments unfinished when, after a day of working on the completion of chapter 22, he suffered a stroke on June 8, 1870 and died the next day. Although early in planning the novel Dickens told his friend John Forster that he had an idea for a novel in which a nephew would be murdered by his uncle (Forster, 1899, v. 2, p. 452), Dickens guarded the mystery very closely while writing the story. Much conjecture about the actual outcome of the novel has taken place and *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* remains a mystery to this day.

### **Exploring the Mystery of Edwin Drood**

**Source:** Fitzpatrick, Sean. "The Unsolved Mystery of Mr. Dickens" <https://crisismagazine.com/opinion/ground-unsolved-mystery-mr-dickens>

**June 9, 1870.** Charles Dickens sat writing at his desk. He had been laboring more than was his custom on his latest book. Though the story was progressing well, Mr. Dickens was not feeling well. His left hand clawed at the air. His left foot dragged on the ground. And though he had recently retired from public performances with a final reading from *Pickwick*, his pen scarcely ceased its scratching. A profound and perplexing mystery was unfolding beneath that pen and Mr. Dickens' knew it well. If only his readers might know it as well.

It had been five years to the very day since the Staplehurst train wreck and Charles Dickens had never quite recovered from the accident. After rescuing terrified victims from derailed carriages and desperately trying to help people who died in his arms, the great novelist was driven to a nervous state of deterioration that could not keep up with his feverish work habits as England's favorite author. But he was bringing an exciting story to life. A book he called "very curious and new."

It was not finished yet, but what were the effects of exhaustion and oncoming cerebral hemorrhage to Charles Dickens? The book was not yet finished. And it would be finished, sir, or he would die writing it. He would. Nevertheless, even he had a mysterious premonition of death and—as he would have done if he had been a character in one of his novels—he added a foreboding clause to his contract which he had never done before, making provision if the said Charles Dickens should die before the said work was completed.

Visibly and admittedly ill on that June evening after writing throughout the day, Mr. Dickens rose from the dinner table. His sister-in-law suggested that he lie down on the sofa. Turning as if to do so, he collapsed. "On the ground," he said. Charles Dickens, aged fifty-eight years, was placed in the ground at Westminster Abbey without uttering another word, much less writing another word. When news of Dickens' tragic death reached American shores, his friend Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote, "I hope his book is finished... It would be too sad to think the pen had fallen from his hand and left it incomplete." The book was not finished. The manuscript of *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* remained on his desk as he had left it, incomplete.

Charles Dickens gave the world fourteen novels and one mystery, and that mystery is worth reading—eminently worth reading. It is one of the few stories whose ending cannot be given away. Instead, the ending, or the dying point, leaves every reader with their own catharsis. It is a story about death in a delightfully dark Dickensian town; a story that is more about death than Dickens knew—or did he? Cloisterham, with its great gothic cathedral, sets the strange gothic scene for the sinister, opium-smoking organist John Jasper and the strangling relationship he has with his nephew, the young architect, Edwin Drood.

So the mystery unfolds. Jasper confesses the torments of unrealized aspirations. Drood releases his betrothed, Rosa Budd. Minor Canon Crisparkle accepts custody over the wayward orphans Neville and Helena Landless from the misanthropic philanthropist, Mr. Honeythunder. Mr. Sapsea, the most self-important ass in the entire Dickens canon since Mr. Pecksniff, reveals his lofty epitaph. Durdles, the dusty and bedraggled stone mason, shows his skill in sounding for hidden graves in the cathedral crypt to a keen Mr. Jasper. Mr. Grewgious, the jittery lawyer whose manner and speech are punctuated by a paralytic caution, produces a wedding ring for Edwin. The Princess Puffer, or Opium Sal, the dreadful drab who supplies Jasper with his drugs, harbors a violent vendetta. Then, on a stormy Christmas Eve, after an argument with Neville Landless, Edwin Drood disappears. Landless leaves Cloisterham. Drood's pocket watch is found in the river weir. Suspicions fly. Jasper is desperately beside himself, torn by something in between love and hate, between justice and guilt. Grewgious begins asking veiled questions. Princess Puffer begins making veiled accusations. And Dick Datchery, the bespectacled stranger with wild white hair who never wears his hat, appears in Cloisterham to rend the veil for all.

But the veil remains intact. The pen of Dickens fell on the ground with its master. Why did Edwin Drood disappear? And where? Was it murder? As Andrew Lang said, "If Edwin Drood is dead, there is not much mystery about him." And thus the theories over the existing portion of the novel and the fate, and even the future, of Edwin Drood abound and are a joy to peruse. They present a literary pleasure that only an unfinished work can offer, though it comes with a degree of pain that is deeply meaningful. *Sunt lacrimae rerum.*

*The Mystery of Edwin Drood* is a partial mystery and therefore a perfect mystery. Those who have read mystery stories from Sherlock Holmes to Hercule Poirot will know that the solution is never as wonderful as the problem. As it stands, the story of Edwin Drood is half told, with six parts out of an intended twelve drafted. In some of the final words to fall from Dickens' pen, Datchery the detective has his epiphany before famously falling to his breakfast with an appetite. The line he scores in chalk in the cupboard door beforehand is a boundary that the world may never cross into a tale that will never be told. This murder will never out. The clues will never be separated from the blinds. The mystery of Drood will remain inviolate and eternal, retaining that perfection of mystery, that sense of immortality. In the words of G. K. Chesterton:

Something more seems hinted at in the cutting short of Edwin Drood by Dickens than the mere cutting short of a good novel by a great man. It seems rather like the last taunt of some elf, leaving the world, that it should be this story which is not ended, this story which is only a story. The only one of Dickens' novels which he did not finish was the only one that really needed finishing. He never had but one thoroughly good plot to tell; and that he has only told in heaven... What was the mystery of Edwin Drood from Dickens's point of view we shall never know, except perhaps from Dickens in heaven, and then he will very likely have forgotten... Edwin Drood may or may not have really died; but surely Dickens did not really die. Surely our real detective liveth and shall appear in the latter days of the earth. For a finished tale may give a man immortality in the light and literary sense; but an unfinished tale suggests another immortality, more essential and more strange.

This fragment from the great novelist provides a taste for the power of literature on a whole, and a foretaste for the fulfillment, for the answers, for the truth that all seek. It demands an idealism or optimism that rejoices in Dickens' earlier novels, where all things end up beautifully with miraculous coincidences, marriages, and resolutions. But the latter half of his career, after his semi-autobiographical *David Copperfield*, took a darker, more realistic, or even pessimistic turn. The fortune of Oliver Twist is decidedly not the fortune of Sydney Carton. Tiny Tim had a merrier outcome than Little Dorrit. *The Old Curiosity Shop* is brighter than *Bleak House*. Though Nicholas Nickleby fell on hard times, they were not like those in *Hard Times*. Thus these later works and their themes ended fittingly with *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*.

There is a poignancy in unfinished art that cries out with one of the purposes of art: to evoke the longing for completion, for perfection. Those masterpieces whose creation is cut short by the death of a master resound with both human experience and human existence. St. Thomas Aquinas' *Compendium*, Michelangelo's *Rondanini Pietà*, Mozart's *Requiem*, and Dickens' *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* all evoke that singular sense of needing to be finished that every human being must share until he finds a heavenly end. Such works, such mysteries, preach the Resurrection and the Life to those on the ground.

## **About the Author: Charles Dickens**

**Source:** "History - Charles Dickens." BBC, BBC,  
[www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic\\_figures/dickens\\_charles.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/dickens_charles.shtml).

Charles Dickens is much loved for his great contribution to classic English literature. He was the quintessential Victorian author. His epic stories, vivid characters and exhaustive depiction of contemporary life are unforgettable.

His own story is one of rags to riches. He was born in Portsmouth on 7 February 1812, to John and Elizabeth Dickens. The good fortune of being sent to school at the age of nine was short-lived because his father, inspiration for the character of Mr. Micawber in 'David Copperfield', was imprisoned for bad debt. The entire family, apart from Charles, were sent to Marshalsea along with their patriarch. Charles was sent to work in Warren's blacking factory and endured appalling conditions as well as loneliness and despair. After three years he was returned to school, but the experience was never forgotten and became fictionalised in two of his better-known novels 'David Copperfield' and 'Great Expectations'.

Like many others, he began his literary career as a journalist. His own father became a reporter and Charles began with the journals 'The Mirror of Parliament' and 'The True Sun'. Then in 1833 he became parliamentary journalist for 'The Morning Chronicle'. With new contacts in the press he was able to publish a series of sketches under the pseudonym 'Boz'. In April 1836, he married Catherine Hogarth, daughter of George Hogarth who edited 'Sketches by Boz'. Within the same month came the publication of the highly successful 'Pickwick Papers', and from that point on there was no looking back for Dickens.

As well as a huge list of novels he published autobiography, edited weekly periodicals including 'Household Words' and 'All Year Round', wrote travel books and administered charitable organisations. He was also a theatre enthusiast, wrote plays and performed before Queen Victoria in 1851. His energy was inexhaustible and he spent much time abroad - for example lecturing against slavery in the United States and touring Italy with companions Augustus Egg and Wilkie Collins, a contemporary writer who inspired Dickens' final unfinished novel 'The Mystery of Edwin Drood'.

He was estranged from his wife in 1858 after the birth of their ten children, but maintained relations with his mistress, the actress Ellen Ternan. He died of a stroke in 1870. He is buried at Westminster Abbey.

## **About the Playwright Rupert Holmes**

**Source:** "Rupert Holmes." Music Theatre International,  
[www.mtishows.com/people/rupert-holmes](http://www.mtishows.com/people/rupert-holmes).



Called “an American treasure” by the Los Angeles Times, “brilliant” by the London Times, “a comic genius” by Kirkus Reviews and “a true Renaissance man” by Newsweek, CBS Sunday Morning, Playbill magazine and scores of other publications and websites...mystery novelist-playwright-composer-arranger-screenwriter-conductor-singer-songwriter Rupert Holmes is the first person in theatrical history to solely win Tony® awards as an author, a composer and a lyricist.

Twice presented with the coveted “Edgar” award (the “Oscar” of the Mystery Writers of America), his first novel, *Where the Truth Lies*, was nominated for the Nero Wolfe award for Best American Mystery Novel, was a Booklist Top Ten Debut Novel and made into an Atom Egoyan motion picture starring Colin Firth and Kevin Bacon...

...He solely authored and composed the Broadway musical-comedy *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, which won the Tony® award for Best Musical and last year received a critically-acclaimed Broadway revival by the Roundabout Theater. His comedy-drama about the life of comedian George Burns, *Say Goodnight, Gracie*, earned him a Tony® nomination for Best Play and won the National Broadway Theatre Award for Best Play. His stage comedy-thrillers *Accomplice* and *Solitary Confinement* broke existing box office records for the Kennedy Center and the Pasadena Playhouse, with both shows enjoying runs on Broadway, while *Curtains* starring David Hyde Pierce (and written with the legendary songwriting team of Kander and Ebb) won Holmes the Drama Desk award for Best Book of a Musical as well as two further Tony nominations®. In 2012, Holmes collaborated as author and lyricist with musical giant Marvin Hamlisch for the award-winning premiere of *The Nutty Professor*, which received 8 BroadwayWorld.com awards including Best Musical and Best New Work. The team of Hamlisch and Holmes also contributed to the score of Steven Soderburg’s 2013 Liberace biopic, *Behind the Candelabra*. His script for *Secondhand Lions* premiered at Seattle’s Fifth Avenue Theatre and is slated for the east coast in 2017. He most recently adapted John Grisham’s classic novel *A Time to Kill* for Broadway with Sebastian Arcelus, John Douglas Thompson, Tom Skerritt and the late Fred Thompson, and created the book of the new musical *Sweet Potato Queens* in collaboration with pop songwriters Melissa Manchester and Sharon Vaughn, which recently concluded a record-breaking 2016 world premiere at Houston’s Theatre Under the Stars.

Born in Cheshire, England, the son of an American army band leader who met Holmes’ British mother while stationed overseas, he grew up near Nyack, New York and attended first The Crouse College of Music at Syracuse University as a clarinetist, then Manhattan School of Music, where he changed his major to music theory. He found his passion for music was equally matched by a love of story-telling, which initially found outlet within the framework of unique story songs, leading him to a career as a pop singer-songwriter of the seventies.

While still in his late teens, Rupert Holmes was already arranging and conducting some of the last recording sessions of The Drifters, The Platters and Gene Pitney as well as Top 40 pop groups such as The Cuff Links. Following an early hit tune written for TV’s The Partridge Family

("Echo Valley 2-6809"), and an initial foray onto the Top Forty charts as the lead singer of the non-existent group The Street People, his first Billboard Top 20 song was the "calculated-to-be-banned" Dr. Demento standard about possible cannibalism during a mining disaster ("Timothy" by The Buoys)...

...Over the decades, Holmes has performed in every kind of venue, live or televised, from The Bottom Line to Carnegie Hall, London's "Top of the Pops" to NYC's 54 Below, The Today Show, The Tonight Show, Caesar's Palace, Trump Plaza, The Roxy, Dangerfield's with Rodney and Michael's Pub, from the Jon Stewart Show to The People's Choice Awards, capped by his own hour-long PBS Soundstage special and winning Best Performance at the World Popular Song Festival in Tokyo's Budokan...

...With the new millennium, Holmes added novel writing to his repertoire. His critically-acclaimed mystery, *Where the Truth Lies*, was a Booklist Top Ten Debut Novel; his second, *Swing*, was a San Francisco Chronicle Top Ten Best Seller, called "imaginative, smart, sophisticated and impressively elaborate" by Janet Maslin of the New York Times. His short stories have been anthologized in such prestigious collections as *Best American Mystery Stories*, *On a Raven's Wing*, *A Merry Band of Murderers* and *Christmas at the Mysterious Bookshop*. He was also commissioned by The New York Times to write the Arts and Leisure tribute celebrating the one hundredth birthday of Irving Berlin. Holmes is currently finishing the first entry in a new fictional mystery series for Simon and Schuster.

### **The Great British Music Hall**

**Source:** Brain, Jessica, "The Great British Music Hall"  
<https://www.historic-uk.com/CultureUK/Music-Hall/>

The Great British Music Hall was a cultural phenomenon that thrived in the early Victorian era as an entertainment venue for theatre and musical acts. The popularity of the music hall made it a vital cultural and social institution embedded in British history.

The music hall derives its origins from the eighteenth century coffee houses, saloon bars and taverns that existed across Europe. In London, men would not only enjoy refreshments in the form of a beverage or a meal but could do business whilst performers would entertain the audiences. Some of these coffee houses or taverns began to dedicate more time to entertainment, with rooms specifically devoted to musical performances.

By the 1850's music hall theatres solely dedicated to entertainment had evolved, providing a variety of acts with catchy songs and theatrical displays to entertain whilst people ate, drank and smoked. This was a new concept for the theatre and entertainment sector as previously theatres were more formal with seated audiences and separate rooms for refreshments. The music halls were providing a new kind of social scene for people to enjoy.

The music hall became synonymous with affordable entertainment in the Victorian era. The public were treated to a wide range of performances, from gymnastic acrobatics to singing and dancing routines. The popularity is exemplified by an illustration from “The Graphic” newspaper showing audience members vying to get the best view of the performances.

The audience members included a new urban working class emerging out of the context of the Industrial Revolution. The desire for more affordable entertainment in a more relaxed atmosphere made for a jovial atmosphere. As the alcohol flowed, the lower classes were able to kick back and relax as they enjoyed the music and acts that were on offer. A sometimes rowdy experience, it was appealing to those who wanted to join in the frivolity and raucous fun...

The music halls of the Victorian era began to gain a reputation amongst the middle classes for their vulgarity and distasteful performances. Nevertheless, music halls continued to flourish, so much so that by 1875 there were around 375 music halls operating just in the Greater London area. Of course, this level of entertainment and competition between halls necessitated a growing array of performers and entertainers. For some working class women, this would provide a much needed opportunity to acquire independence with their own income.

If the public liked the songs and music they would join in and cheer their favourite performers whilst those that gave lack-lustre shows were booed off the stage.

...During the First World War, music halls hosted charity events for the war effort. However post-war it soon became apparent that the golden days of the music halls were over. The era of the Victorian entertainment was evolving into something new with the introduction of jazz music.

...With the advent of talking films, the public were soon seeking a new entertainment experience and eventually famous venues such as “The Canterbury” were forced to close. Like many others, “Canterbury” was turned into a cinema.

However, there remained a certain nostalgia about music hall. An entire generation of performers and artists learnt their trade on the music hall stage, including such famous stars as Charlie Chaplin who got his first break in a music hall.

### **The Opium Den**

**Source:** Ali, Wafiyah. “High Times: Depictions of the Opium Den in Charles Dickens’ *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* and Blanchard Jerrold and Gustave Doré’s *London: A Pilgrimage*.” [https://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/sites/open.conted.ox.ac.uk/files/resources/Create%20Document/09\\_Ali\\_High%20Times.pdf](https://open.conted.ox.ac.uk/sites/open.conted.ox.ac.uk/files/resources/Create%20Document/09_Ali_High%20Times.pdf)

The opium den inhabits a unique place in the Victorian imagination. Equal parts abode of pleasure and signifier of moral decay, the opium dens that lay at the edges of London society captured the attention of writers, artists and poets not least of all because of the vast array of contradictions it offered. In a lot of ways opium itself embodied the many faces of Victorian society. It was evidence of the cultural importation which came with the ever-expanding British empire, it challenged the values of an increasingly rigid society, opened the door to spiritual and self-exploration and also exposed the gritty underbelly of a society facing unprecedented growth

and change. Many well-known literary works of the time incorporated these imaginations of the opium den experience into their narrative, none quite as detailed or extensively as in Charles Dickens' unfinished novel, *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*.

...In nineteenth-century Britain, opium was as ubiquitous as a bottle of paracetamol [aspirin] in the modern medicine cabinet. Given to infants in the form of elixirs and syrups to soothe or freely distributed in pubs to hurry along the sobering up process, opium was widely prescribed and used for a vast array of maladies and perceived maladies. Opium preparations could be purchased at the 'barbers, confectioners, ironmongers, stationers, tobacconists, wine merchants' and transcended both social and economic class. Very little was thought of the addictive properties of the drug although by the mid-nineteenth-century worrying trends in overconsumption of opium as well as deaths attributed to opium overdose signaled a growing public health crisis. Various groups such as the Quaker-led Society for the Suppression of Opium were instrumental in lobbying for better control of the drug and as a consequence more attention was shed on the dangers of opium addiction and opium poisoning. Nevertheless, usage of opium grew until the end of the nineteenth-century when legislation such as the Pharmacy Act of 1868 finally put a curb on the uncontrolled sale of the drug. Inasmuch as opium was commonplace during this time, to eat opium or to smoke it for pleasure was still highly contentious. Opium preparations and dilutions were considered medicinal and although large sections of society became hooked on opium through these mediums, the smoking of opium was not a household activity. Pure opium needed to be prepared and administered in a very specific way to ensure the greatest effect on the faculties with none of the problematic side effects. Unless an individual had the means for a personal assistant to properly prepare and administer the opium for consumption, these activities could only be found in a dedicated establishment, the opium den.

### **Things to think about before the performance:**

- Are you familiar with Charles Dickens and his novels?
- What do you think about the title of the play? What does the phrase "The Mystery" mean to you?
- We have built a false "proscenium" to frame our stage but you can still see some of the set. Note the areas you are able to see, the design of the set and the details. What do they remind you of?
- Before the production begins, "actors" from the play within the play greet the audience. How does this make you feel? Does it give you a "preview" to what is to come?

### **Things to watch for in performance:**

- Notice the colors and styles of the costumes worn by the actors.
- Notice the use of the theater space. Notice where the actors enter and their proximity to the audience.
- Notice the lighting of the production. What feelings are created through atmosphere and color choice?

- Notice the music and the way the actors sing with the music. Listen for repeated elements and melodies.
- Watch for clues in solving the mystery and who points them out to the audience.
- Notice when the actors address the audience.

**Things to think about after the performance:**

- How do you think the production might differ during a different performance?
- What is the idea that you are left with within the story?
- Do you think that you were part of the play?

**Other Analysis “Tools”:**

- What happens in the very last moments of the play? Certainly, the last few minutes, but, more importantly, the last thirty seconds? In that time, WHAT happens or is said, and what does that say about what the play is ‘about?’ In a nutshell, how does the playwright drive his point(s) home?
- And what is the significance of the title? Why did the playwright decide that this was the most quintessential title for their work?

**The running time for this production is approximately 3 hours including one 15 minute intermission.**

There are no pre-show or post-show discussions for the summer productions.

Please **join us!**

**We also encourage your attendance at our College Touring Production, specially designed for young audiences and FREE!. We tour through DuPage County and at The MAC <https://www.atthemac.org/events/bibbidi-bobbidi-doo-wop/>**

**College Theater Touring Show Dates: Bibbi- Bobbi – Doo Wop**

Friday, June 21 at 10am YMCA – Downers Grove  
 Saturday, June 22 at 2pm LaGrange Public Library  
 Tuesday, June 25 at 7pm Glenside Public Library  
 Wednesday, June 26 at 7pm Helen Plum Library  
 Thursday, June 27 at 6pm Wheaton Public Library  
 Monday, July 8 at 7pm Oak Brook Library  
 Thursday, July 11 at 10am Winfield Public Library  
**Saturday, July 13 at 1pm MAC – Belushi Performance Hall**  
**Sunday, July 14 at 1pm MAC – Belushi Performance Hall**