

The Box of Delights Audition Notes

PERFORMANCE DATES: 18th December 2026 - 3rd January 2027

Director: Clare Howard communications.cjh@gmail.com

“After a seemingly chance encounter on a train, orphaned schoolboy Kay Harker finds himself the guardian of a small wooden box with powers beyond his wildest dreams. Caught up in a battle between two powerful magicians, Kay fights to save not only the people he loves but the future of Christmas itself.”

The Box of Delights is a delightful and magical adventure which will be a considerable challenge to stage and perform: it will only succeed through great teamwork and shared creativity! Every page contains magic, illusion or puppetry to enchant adults as well as children. The story takes place at Christmas 1935, book-ended by the present day.

Originally a classic children’s book, written by John Masefield in 1935, the story was popularised through a major BBC Christmas adaptation in 1984, which still has an enthusiastic fan following. The stage adaptation was written for Wilton’s Music Hall in 2017 and has since been a hugely successful RSC Christmas Show.

Audition Details

Auditions will involve working on extracts from the script (available in advance) in groups. Please note that there are not extracts for every character and you may be asked to work on characters that you are not directly auditioning for. A copy of the script is available at the Box Office (not to be removed from the theatre!)

If you cannot make any of the scheduled audition dates, please get in contact with the Director ASAP to see if we can arrange an alternative. You will need to be available for the whole session.

- Mon 6th July 7pm – 9pm
- Thurs 9th July 7pm - 9pm
- Fri 10th July 7pm - 9pm

Recalls will be:

- Sat 18th July - 11.30am
- Sun 19th July - 2.30pm

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

Important: If you wish to be a part of this production please check **ALL** the scheduled performances **before** auditioning. This is a longer run than usual, with a lot of matinees, some of which are during the week. (Dates are listed at the end of this document.)

Characters

Ages are playing rather than actual ages. The children will be played by adults. Roles are gendered, as indicated, but casting is fully open to anyone able to play the indicated age range.

All but the leads may find themselves part of the ensemble at times, as well as their main roles. The ensemble will be playing/creating eg: Townspeople, Party Goers, Carol singers, a Phoenix, a flying Car, a Boat, Wolves... Support/training will be provided as required for puppeteering, dancing, physical elements and singing.

Kay Harker (Male, 12y) *The hero! An intrepid and intelligent, but sensitive, boy. Some puppetry. Onstage a lot so must have good stamina! (Present day and 1935)*

Cole Hawlings (Male, 70y+) *A kindly magician with the secret of immortality. He is fighting to stop the Box of Delights from falling into evil hands. Currently masquerading as a Punch and Judy Man. This actor doubles as present-day Kay's elderly grandfather.*

Abner Brown (Male, 50y+) *An evil sorcerer, Cole's nemesis. Currently masquerading as a respectable clergyman, head of a theological college.*

Sylvia Daisy Pouncer (Female, 40-60y) *Abner's partner and innamorata. A sultry, evil and duplicitous witch with a penchant for younger men*

Maria Jones (Female, 13y) *Kay's friend. A feisty, bloodthirsty and adventurous child. Some puppetry.*

Peter Jones (Male, 12y) *Kay's friend, Maria's brother. A sensible and cautious child. Some puppetry.*

Caroline Louisa (Female, 30-50y) *Kay's Guardian. Charming and caring. Solo song.*

Charles (Male, 20s-30s) *Part of Abner's evil gang. A jewel thief and card sharp, masquerading as a curate. A foxy character!*

Joe (Male, 20s-30s) *Charles's slightly less competent and slightly softer colleague. Also masquerading as a curate.*

Herne the Hunter (Male, 25-60y) *A powerful ancient forest spirit. With antlers!*

Bishop of Tatchester (Male, 50y+) *Kindly and Godly*

The following roles will be doubled and the actors will form the core of the ensemble so some movement, puppeteering, dancing and singing will be involved. The provisional split is as follows:

Double A	Rat	Male	Any	<i>A thoroughly disreputable rodent in league with Abner (this character is NOT a puppet).</i>
	Barney Puppeteer	Any	Any	<i>A cute, very intelligent terrier belonging to Cole</i>
Double B	Brazen Head	Any	Any	<i>A magical talking statue enslaved by Abner</i>
	Paper Boy/girl	Any	Any	<i>An excitable young person</i>
Double C	Mayor	Male	40y+	<i>Slightly pompous, but kind</i>
	Train Conductor	Male	Any	<i>A bit of a jobsworth</i>
Double D	Duchess	Female	Any	<i>Glamorous and bejewelled</i>
	Ellen	Female	Any	<i>A snooty maid</i>
	Mysterious Woman	Female	Any	<i>Mysterious!</i>

Rehearsals

The schedule will be finalised once cast – but we are likely to start at the beginning of October to allow for puppeteering, singing and movement workshops.

Although I will try not to call people unnecessarily, the ensemble nature of the play, and many short scenes, means that there has to be good availability from all involved.

Rehearsals will either be weekday evenings or during the day at the weekends. Initially rehearsals are likely to be three a week, gradually increasing. If you have any potential issues and want to know if this rules you out (or not) please contact Clare.

Performance and Production Week Schedule:

Actors must be available for all these dates

Production Week

Sunday 13 th December	Tech (w actors as required)
Monday 14 th December	Dress/Tech
Tuesday 15 th December	Troubleshooting or Dress/Tech
Wednesday 16 th December	Dress/Tech
Thursday 17 th December	Dress

Performances

December

Friday 18 th	7pm
Saturday 19 th	2pm
Sunday 20 th	2pm
Monday 21 st	NO PERFORMANCE
Tuesday 22 nd	2pm
Wednesday 23 rd	2pm
Thursday 24 th	2pm (Christmas Eve)
25 th /26 th	NO PERFORMANCE (Christmas Day/Boxing Day)
Sunday 27 th	2pm & 7pm
Monday 28 th	2pm (Bank Hol)
Tuesday 29 th	2pm
Wednesday 30 th	7pm
Thursday 31 st	2pm (New Year's Eve)

January

Friday 1 st	NO PERFORMANCE (New Year's Day)
Saturday 2 nd	2pm & 7pm
Sunday 3 rd	2pm

The Norwich Players Theatre Company

Audition Submission Form



Please complete this form if you would like to audition for The Box of Delights and send it attached to an email headed 'BoD Auditions' to Clare Howard at communications.cjh@gmail.com

Name						
Email Address						
Phone Number						
Gender Identity and preferred pronouns						
Playing Age This is not your actual age. Please put an X in one of the boxes. You must be 18 to audition.	Child-20	20-30	30-40	40-55	55-65	65 +
Production auditioning for	The Box of Delights 18th December 2026 - 3rd January 2027					
Part or parts auditioning for See the production's character notes for options.						
Preferred Audition dates See the production's notes for options - Please state 'any' if you have no preference.						
<i>Please read the statement below before signing and dating this document.</i>						
I understand that my data will be processed as described in the Maddermarket Theatre's Privacy Policy in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). You can read the Maddermarket Theatre's Privacy policy here: http://maddermarket.co.uk/about/privacy-notice						
Charity number 234993 Company reg number 00355871 VAT number 105910010						
Signature <i>This can just be typed</i>						
Date						