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## Ram's Head presents 'Mystery of Edwin Drood'

### [Sarah Pape](#)

 April 19th, 2002 by Sarah Pape

Forget theater where the audience sits back and lets the actors do all the work. This year, Ram's Head's spring musical "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" requires the audience to solve the mystery themselves.

"The Mystery of Edwin Drood" is an original Broadway production based on the unfinished novel by Charles Dickens. The story is a play within a play that takes a turn when Edwin Drood, the fiancée of one character, disappears on Christmas Eve. The play turns into a "whodunnit" mystery where the audience chooses the ending.

The musical is produced by Ram's Head Theatrical Society, a student-run theatrical group on campus. Each year in the spring, they produce a musical and this year they chose "The Mystery of Edwin Drood" because it is a lesser-known play and it involves a huge technical crew.

"More students are involved this year than last because last year's play wasn't as technical," said sophomore Trang Pham, the play's producer. "We have seven different sets, designed by students and with a period piece, we need students to design costumes as well."

Part of the challenge for this year's play was piecing everything together.

"The play is kind of corny," Pham said. "But when you pull it off, it really looks good and the play goes well."

The cast began practicing in January and already had two performances last weekend.

"Keeping up with the crazy rehearsal schedule, which has been at least six hours a day for the past two weeks leading up to opening night, is taxing," said freshman Meredith Kendall, who plays Rosa Bud, Drood's fiancée. "Staying mentally and physically fit to perform a high-energy show such as Edwin Drood requires a lot of focus and dedication."

The first two performances went well, according to Pham.

"On Saturday night, the audience really got into it and the cast fed off that energy," Pham said. "I think the audience really likes being able to be a part of the play. They didn't get it at first, but then people start figuring out the motives of the characters and identifying with different ones."

The cast is prepared to do multiple endings, which cast members say adds to the fun of the play.

"It sure makes the actors stay alert to see what ending we have prepared for at a moment's notice," Kendall

said. "The mystery and 'anything-can-happen' attitude that characterizes the show makes it high energy and exciting."

Pham said that part of the reason she likes the play so much is the voting that the audience does.

Cast member Nathan Lasche, a senior, agrees.

"I think it adds a lot of excitement and unpredictability to the musical, which is a great way to engage the audience and give them their own role."

The play is running April today and tomorrow at Memorial Auditorium starting at 8 p.m. each night. Cost is \$9 for Stanford students and \$15 for the general public.



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