

THE WINTERBEAST BALL

Hampton Court Palace
Casting Breakdown
JR Creative Group / Historic Royal Palaces

OVERVIEW

The WinterBeast Ball is a brand new large-scale immersive Christmas experience at Hampton Court Palace, running from 28 November 2026 to 3 January 2027. Inspired by the Palace's own heraldic bestiary, the experience brings mythical Beasts to life across the Palace's iconic rooms and courtyards through live performance, puppetry, projection and live music.

Performers will work across a free-roam, non-linear experience, engaging one-to-one and in small groups with visitors of all ages, predominantly families.

Characters are sustained across full performance days in a high-footfall, outdoor and indoor environment over the Christmas period. We are looking for performers who thrive in this context: resilient, inventive, and genuinely comfortable with the unexpected.

Rehearsals will take place over 6 days between 17 and 26 November.

Performance days run 28 November to 3 January, with specific schedules depending on character and daily opening times.

All performers will be required to apply their own beast-style make-up. Tuition and training on the specific make-up application for each character will be provided during the rehearsal period.

Candidates with a current enhanced DBS certificate on the update service are strongly preferred.

All roles are open to performers of all ethnicities and backgrounds. We are committed to an inclusive cast that reflects the breadth of our audiences.

Creative & Production Agency: JR Creative Group



CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

SEYMOUR PANTHER (THE LORD OF REVELS)

Full - puppet animatronic costume, non speaking character.

Gender: All

Age range: Open

Height Range: 5'8" - 5'11" (173cm - 180cm)

Seymour Panther, the Lord of Revels, is the true heart of the WinterBeast Ball and conductor of mischief and merriment. Operating entirely without dialogue, this full-puppet animatronic costume character communicates solely through physicality. To captivate a room without words, the role requires masterful timing, deliberate gestures, stillness, and non-verbal command in every interaction.

We are looking for a performer with significant experience in full body costume performance or physical theatre. You will work in close proximity to visitors of all ages, including very young children. Your comic timing needs to be exceptional. Your stillness needs to be as powerful as your movement.

Previous experience in full-puppet costume performance is essential. Puppetry or physical theatre background is an advantage.

Key skills: *Full body costume performance. Physical comedy. Crowd reading. Stamina.*

Fee

Daily fee: £165.00 - £195.00, dependent on hours worked.

The role of Seymour Panther is performed in shifts across the run, with three actors cast to share the schedule. Regular breaks are built into every working day to ensure performers are not fatigued. Shift patterns and hours will be confirmed on engagement.

Rehearsals are paid at £195.00 per day for 6 days.

The following dates are subject to confirmation and would be engaged at additional fees:

26 November

8 December



THE BULL

Speaking role.

Gender: Male.

Age range: Mid 20's - 40's

The Bull has been at the WinterBeast Ball since the early days. He came to ensure things were conducted appropriately. He is still trying.

He is steady, certain, authoritative, and possessed of a dry wit he would never describe as such. He has a particular relationship with Seymour Panther, which he would describe as supervisory. This is not accurate, but it keeps him going.

We are looking for a performer with strong comic instincts and genuine physical presence. The Bull plays it completely straight. The funnier the situation, the more earnest he becomes.

Key skills: *Character performance. Comic timing. Improvisation. Strong movement. Visitor engagement. Musical instrument an advantage.*

Fee

Total engagement fee: £ 4,107.50

The engagement runs across 37 days, including 6 rehearsal days and includes two 8-day performance blocks. Working days vary week to week between 5 and 6 days. The fee equates to an average of £620 per week pro rata based on a 40 hour week. Appropriate scheduled breaks are incorporated throughout performance days.

The following dates are subject to confirmation and would be engaged at additional fees:

Soft Launch: 26 November

Relaxed Performance: 8 December

THE GREEN MAN

Speaking role.

Gender: Male.

Age range: Mid 20's to early 60's

The oldest character in the Winter Palace. The Green Man is a storyteller, rooted in the Palace itself: pagan, ancient, unhurried. He tells the story of the WinterBeast Ball to visitors of all ages, including children, with the particular authority of someone who has been telling it for centuries.

We are looking for a male performer with strong storytelling instincts and genuine physical presence. He works largely solo, holding groups of visitors in a semi-structured storytelling environment. Experience in immersive or interactive performance, children's theatre or site-specific work is an advantage.

Key skills: *Storytelling. Improvisation. Solo performance. Audience management. Physical presence. Musical instrument an advantage.*

Fee: *Total engagement fee: £ 4,107.50*

The engagement runs across 37 days, including 6 rehearsal days and includes two 8-day performance blocks. Working days vary week to week between 5 and 6 days. The fee equates to an average of £620 per week pro rata based on a 40 hour week. Appropriate scheduled breaks are incorporated throughout performance days.

The following dates are subject to confirmation and would be engaged at additional fees:

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Relaxed Performance: 8 December

THE GRIFFIN

Speaking role.

Gender: All

Age range: 18 - 40

The Griffin is the Dragon's guardian, translator and most devoted friend. They make no secret of any of this. They are quick, bright, restless, energised. They have the storyteller's gift and use it constantly, finding the right version of the Dragon's story for whoever is in front of them: children, adults, sceptics. They notice everything, remember everything, and have an opinion on most things. They will share it whether the moment calls for it or not.

We are looking for a performer with strong storytelling instincts, quick thinking and genuine warmth. The Griffin is never still for long. They are the character most likely to find the child at the back of the group and bring them in.

Key skills: *Character performance. Storytelling. Strong movement. Visitor engagement. Stamina for full day performance.*

Fee: *Total engagement fee: £ 2,769.33*

The engagement includes 14 performance days, plus 6 rehearsal days. Working days vary week to week in line with the performance schedule. The fee equates to an average of £620 per week pro rata, based on a 40-hour week. Appropriate scheduled breaks are incorporated throughout performance days.

The following dates are subject to confirmation and would be engaged at additional fees:

Soft Launch: 26 November

Relaxed Performance: 8 December



THE YALE

Speaking role with hand puppet.

Gender: All

Age range: 18 - Mid 40's

The Yale takes their role very seriously. Entrusted with the care of the King and Queen's daughter, they consider it the defining appointment of their life. They are grounded, unhurried, encyclopaedic. Their relationship with the Princess Unicorn Foal, the hand puppet in their care, is devoted, proud and protective.

We are looking for a performer with puppetry experience who can operate a hand puppet while in full Masked Court costume. This role is based in Clock Court: outdoors, in all weathers. Warmth, patience and comic instincts are essential.

Key skills: *Puppetry (hand puppet). Character performance. Outdoor performance stamina. Strong movement.*

Fee: *Total engagement fee: £ 4,190.17*

The engagement runs across 37 days, including 6 rehearsal days and includes two 8-day performance blocks. Working days vary week to week between 5 and 6 days. The fee equates to an average of £620 per week pro rata based on a 40 hour week. Appropriate scheduled breaks are incorporated throughout performance days.

The following dates are subject to confirmation and would be engaged at additional fees:

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THE SEAHORSE

Speaking role.

Gender: Female

Age range: 18 - Mid 40's

The Mythic Seahorse came from the deepest waters of the Land of Tide. They are patient, watchful, precise about when to act. They can be entirely still, reading what is happening around them, waiting for the moment when something is about to shift. Their curiosity is genuine and constant. They approach every interaction as new information.

We are looking for a performer with excellent spatial awareness and instincts for ensemble work.

Key skills: Character performance. Ensemble performance. Strong movement. Visitor engagement. Stamina for full day performance.

Fee: *Total engagement fee: £ 4,107.50*

The engagement runs across 37 days, including 6 rehearsal days and includes two 8-day performance blocks. Working days vary week to week between 5 and 6 days. The fee equates to an average of £620 per week pro rata based on a 40 hour week. Appropriate scheduled breaks are incorporated throughout performance days.

The following dates are subject to confirmation and would be engaged at additional fees:

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Relaxed Performance: 8 December



THE STAG

Speaking role.

Gender: Male

Age range: 18 - Mid 40's

The Mystic Stag carries one of the oldest mythologies in any Land. They are the White Hart: the creature glimpsed at the edge of the forest. They are mildly amused that people keep finding them so easily at the Christmas Beast Ball. They are deliberate, far-sighted, dry, and patient. Children with serious questions tend to find their way to them, because something in their manner suggests they take serious questions seriously.

We are looking for a performer with genuine stillness and quiet authority. Dry wit and genuine ease with children are essential.

Key skills: *Character performance. Strong movement. Visitor engagement. Stamina for full day performance.*

Fee: *Total engagement fee: £ 4,107.50*

The engagement runs across 37 days, including 6 rehearsal days and includes two 8-day performance blocks. Working days vary week to week between 5 and 6 days. The fee equates to an average of £620 per week pro rata based on a 40 hour week. Appropriate scheduled breaks are incorporated throughout performance days.

The following dates are subject to confirmation and would be engaged at additional fees:

Soft Launch: 26 November

Relaxed Performance: 8 December



THE WOLF

Speaking role.

Gender: Female

Age range: 18 - Mid 40's

Arctic Wolf has come further to be at the Christmas Beast Ball than almost anyone else in the room. They read rooms the way they read terrain: fast, accurately, and with a specific interest in who is on the edge. They are warm without being soft, deliberate without being slow. When they laugh it surprises people because it is louder than they expected and entirely genuine.

We are looking for a performer with strong social instincts and genuine physical command.

Key skills: *Character performance. Strong movement. Visitor engagement. Stamina for full day performance.*

Fee: *Total engagement fee: £ 2,769.33*

The engagement includes 14 performance days, plus 6 rehearsal days. Working days vary week to week in line with the performance schedule. The fee equates to an average of £620 per week pro rata, based on a 40-hour week. Appropriate scheduled breaks are incorporated throughout performance days.

The following dates are subject to confirmation and would be engaged at additional fees:

Soft Launch: 26 November

Relaxed Performance: 8 December



THE PHOENIX

Speaking role.

Gender: Female

Age range: 18 - Mid 40's

Phoenix has been to every Ball. Every single one. They are vivid, warm, alive, and genuinely delighted to be in the room. They are not the loudest character in the Cartoon Gallery, they are the most present. They move through the space with ease, finding the moments that matter; the child who suddenly lit up, the reluctant adult who forgot to stay on the outside. They collect these moments with joy.

This is a role for a performer who is genuinely compelling one-to-one. Quick, warm, fluid, and interested in people.

Key skills: *Character performance. Strong movement. Visitor engagement. Stamina for full day performance.*

Fee: *Total engagement fee: £ 4,107.50*

The engagement runs across 37 days, including 6 rehearsal days and includes two 8-day performance blocks. Working days vary week to week between 5 and 6 days. The fee equates to an average of £620 per week pro rata based on a 40 hour week. Appropriate scheduled breaks are incorporated throughout performance days.

The following dates are subject to confirmation and would be engaged at additional fees:

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Relaxed Performance: 8 December



PIP THE COOK

Speaking role.

Gender: Female

Age range: 40 +

The Cook runs the Great Kitchen: the warmest, most human room in the Winter Palace. She is Masked Court but in the kitchen her animal nature expresses itself through industry, appetite and a complete inability to let anyone stand around doing nothing. She works directly with visitors, particularly children, in an interactive kitchen environment.

We are looking for a female performer in her forties or above with warmth, physical energy and genuine ease with young audiences. Experience in children's theatre, interactive performance or character hosting is an advantage.

Key skills: *Interactive performance. Warmth with children. Physical energy. Character hosting.*

Fee: *Total engagement fee: £ 2,769.33*

The engagement includes 14 performance days, plus 6 rehearsal days. Working days vary week to week in line with the performance schedule. The fee equates to an average of £620 per week pro rata, based on a 40-hour week. Appropriate scheduled breaks are incorporated throughout performance days.

The following dates are subject to confirmation and would be engaged at additional fees:

Soft Launch: 26 November

Relaxed Performance: 8 December

THE SWING

Multiple characters.

Gender: Male.

Age range: 18 - Mid 40's

The Swing covers multiple Masked Court characters across the experience and is a critical member of the company day to day. This is a physically demanding role, requiring the ability to move confidently between characters, costumes and performance throughout a full performance day, both indoors and outdoors and in all weather conditions.

We are looking for a highly experienced and genuinely versatile performer with excellent physical stamina, who is completely at ease within immersive performance environments. Quick thinking, strong instincts for visitor engagement and the ability to maintain character, energy and performance quality throughout the day are essential.

Key skills: *Versatility across multiple characters. Immersive performance experience. Physical stamina. Outdoor performance resilience. Musical instrument an advantage.*

Fee: *Total engagement fee: £5,253.33*

The engagement runs across 37 days, including 6 rehearsal days and two 8-day performance blocks. Working days vary week to week between 5 and 6 days. Performance fees are calculated at equivalent to £800 per week pro rata, based on a 40-hour week. Appropriate scheduled breaks are incorporated throughout performance days.

The following dates are subject to confirmation and would be engaged at additional fees:

Soft Launch: 26 November

Relaxed Performance: 8 December

