



Welcome to The Lyric Players production of Big Fish which will be performed at Cecil Hepworth Playhouse Walton on Thames 17th – 20th September 2025

Director & Choreographer – Christine Morris

Musical Director – Rachel Weber

History of the Musical

Big Fish has music and lyrics by Andrew Lippa and book by John August. It is based on Daniel Wallace's 1998 novel, *Big Fish: A Novel of Mythic Proportions* and the 2003 film *Big Fish* written by John August and directed by Tim Burton. The musical opened on Broadway in October, 2013 where it ran for 98 performances.

The Story

Act 1

The curtain rises in Alabama on Edward Bloom, who is skipping rocks on the river. His son, Will, who is about to get married, comes to ask Edward not to make a toast or tell any of his crazy stories at the wedding. Edward cannot understand why Will feels this way, but assures that he will oblige. Entering a flashback to when Will was a child, Edward tells him a story. Edward is walking down the river when he meets a man trying to catch fish to no avail. So Edward teaches him that the proper way to catch fish is by doing the "Alabama Stomp," saying "If you give a man a fish, you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish, you feed him for a lifetime. Teach a man the Alabama Stomp, you feed his soul!" The entire company joins in with them and they are able to catch many, many fish. At the very end of the song, a giant fish jumps out of the water into the fisherman's arms ("Be the Hero"). When he finishes his story, Edward's wife Sandra tells them it's time for Will to go to bed. Edward refuses behind her back and tells Will another story of a witch that Edward met as a teenager, who showed Edward and his high school enemy, Don Price, how they would die ("The Witch").

The story returns to present day to where Edward suspects that Will's fiancée, Josephine, is pregnant. He tells Will of his suspicion and after jokingly pushing a response from Will, his suspicion is confirmed. But Will tells Edward that he cannot go around telling people because it is too soon and "statistically, it might not happen." At the wedding reception, Edward noisily decides to make a toast saying he has "recently decided to become a grandfather," and that he has reason to believe that his wish "may come sooner than expected." This whole situation, of course, angers Will and as Josephine takes the shocked crowd to catch the bouquet, Will and Edward argue. Will is angry that he did not follow his requests, and Edward wishes to stop getting treated like a child. After Sandra breaks the argument before "one of [them] says something [they] can't take back," the reception ends. While leaving the celebration, Edward's doctor, one of the guests, notices that Edward seems to be in pain and suggests that he come in for an examination. At the hospital, Edward and Sandra discover that the cancer Edward has been fighting has spread beyond where they imagined. Though Edward has been hiding his cancer from Will, his doctor thinks he and Will should have a talk about it. Concurrently, in a hospital back where Will and Josephine live in New York City, they discover that their child is a boy ("Take Another Look"). Later that day, in Central Park, Will sings of the wonder and mystery of his future child, and promises to strengthen his relationship with his father, who he sees as a stranger ("Stranger"). But his joy is interrupted by a phone call from his mother, telling him about Edward's condition and asking him and Josephine to come home.

In Edward and Sandra's shed in Alabama, Sandra tells Will that although he and Edward can be a handful, she loves them both ("Two Men in My Life"). They travel to their back yard, and Edward and Josephine enter and it appears she is being entertained by his stories. She is enamored by his life and stories and wishes to hear them all, so he launches into another tale of his high school days. He was the hero of his small town, Ashton, and was the boyfriend of the head cheerleader, Jenny Hill ("Ashton's Favorite Son"). The town of Ashton, Alabama is scared because of a giant living in a nearby cave, so to get to the bottom of the situation, Edward volunteers to go talk to him. He has no fear because he knows he would not be killed by the giant. The witch told him exactly how he would go, and this is not it. He goes to the cave and introduces himself to the giant, named Karl, and convinces him to join him on a journey away from Ashton ("Out There on the Road").

Back in the present, Josephine and Will are looking through Edward's old files. Josephine is excitedly talking about Edward's stories while Will expresses his concern that his father will die and he will not know who he is. Josephine suggests that if he makes a list of his father's stories and each of their morals, he will learn what kind of a person his father really is. He begins listing some of them, but is interrupted when Josephine finds a deed to a house in Ashton signed by Jenny Hill and Edward. She thinks this proves that Edward must be telling the truth, but Will denies it and questions why the deed exists in the first place. However, Josephine's interest sparks a conversation of Edward and Sandra's meeting. While Will believes they met in college, Josephine explains that is not what Edward told her. Will asks which version of the story she was told, and there is another flashback: Edward has taken Karl to try out for a circus. When they get there, three girls are auditioning with their song and dance routine ("Little Lamb from Alabama"). Edward notices one of the girls, Sandra, and it is love at first sight ("Time Stops"). He convinces the ringmaster, Amos Calloway, to hire Karl, and then agrees to work for the circus for free in exchange for one clue about Sandra each month ("Closer to Her"). After three years of working at the circus, Edward asks why he will not tell him her name, and Amos says that "secrets are the backbone of society." Later that night, Edward finds Amos in his true form: a werewolf. Upon learning Amos' big secret, Edward finally convinces him to tell him what he wants to know. Her name is Sandra Templeton, she goes to Auburn University and she loves daffodils.

Edward travels over 700 miles in a cannon to Auburn University and finds Sandra only to discover that she is engaged to Don Price, Edward's high school rival. When Don sees Edward talking to Sandra, he beats him to the ground. Sandra breaks up with Don on the spot, and when Don asks, "You love this guy?" She responds, "Well he's just a stranger, but I prefer him to you." Edward proposes to Sandra, and though she is hesitant at first, he assures that they will love each other forever as he promises her a life full of daffodils ("Daffodils").

Act 2

The show continues as Edward leads young Will and some other boys in a boy scouts troop to make a bonfire. He tells them the story of when he was in the war. Sandra and some show girls were performing for the military troops when a masked man appears on stage to kill the general. Edward goes on stage and discovers that this masked man is Red Fang, the infamous sniper. After a long battle on stage alongside the showgirls, he successfully kills Red Fang ("Red, White, and True"). Edward tells the boys that "some people say it was the turning point of the war." But when young Will asks which war, he is unable to answer. This adds to young Will's growing doubts of his father's stories. Later on, Edward tells Sandra and Will he has to travel for a while for his work as a traveling salesman. Will is upset, but Edward tells him he must be brave and Fight the Dragons ("Fight the Dragons").

In the present, Will nervously prepares to confront Edward about the deed he and Josephine found, as he has always been suspicious that Edward had been having an affair ("Stranger" (Reprise)). Edward is lying in bed when Will comes in and asks about the Ashton, but before he can address his suspicions, Edward grows angry and yells at him for wrongly accusing him of something. He yells at him to get out and Sandra comes in to calm him down and get him to sleep. He falls into an uneasy sleep and has a dream that he and Will have a Western-style duel and trial over the issue with the outcome being a sentence of hanging for lying and having a house with Jenny (The Showdown). He wakes up screaming, and as Sandra calms him and comforts him, it begins to rain. Edward says the roof should hold up for another ten years after he's gone, and Sandra tells him "I Don't Need a Roof" to feel at home as much as she loves him. He falls asleep in her arms as she begs, "Stay with me" ("I Don't Need a Roof").

Will, unable to get answers from Edward, goes to visit Jenny Hill in Ashton to find the truth. When he blatantly asks if she was having an affair with Edward, she says by telling him what happened she's afraid that she will warp his own view of his dad. He says that his father "talks about things he never did," and that he "probably did things he never talked about," and he just wants to separate fact from story. Jenny tells him the story of what happened when Edward returned to Ashton when Will was just a small boy. Another flashback. Edward returns to Ashton to learn that the town was going to be flooded, and he finds that the citizens and the mayor, Don Price, have chained themselves to the statue in the center of town out of protest. However, he learns they only have an hour before the flood covers the town and that no one with power even knows they are there. Despite Don's resentment of Edward, Don's brother Zacky and the people of Ashton convince Edward to take action with reluctant permission of Don. He visits Amos and Karl, who have both become rich and successful after being inspired by

Edward. Using the land given from Amos and the money from Karl, he provides the citizens with a new town saying that Ashton isn't a place, it's a community. He convinces them all to move there instead of drown in the inevitable flood ("Start Over"). Everyone leaves except for Jenny, who explains her heartbreak when Edward never returned and how she has loved him all this time. Edward says that he's returned now and wants to start a new life with her. He buys a house for himself and Jenny that he has signed for, but suddenly regrets his decisions and expresses his love for his wife saying he can only truly love her. He leaves Jenny with another broken heart, never to return again ("Start Over" (Reprise)). At the end of Jenny's story, Will receives a phone call and must go visit his father in the hospital.

When he arrives to the hospital, he asks if Edward is going to be okay. Sandra and Josephine simply and solemnly shake their heads 'no.' There is nothing left that can be done. Sandra and Josephine go downstairs to get him some water and leave Will alone with his unconscious father. When his doctor, a long-time friend of Edward's, comes in, Will asks how he would describe his father. He responds saying he was a strong man with a good heart. When asked if Edward could hear them, he responds, "It's hard to say whether or not someone can hear you. Harder still to know if they're listening." The doctor leaves leaving Will alone, once again, with his father. He talks to him saying that if you put all his stories together, they create a myth, and he finally understands the reason for his stories. He is interrupted by Edward stirring and urgently asking Will to tell him the story of how he dies. Will urgently explains that he does not know because he was never told the story. He asks how it starts to which Edward responds, "like this." Will continues from there and makes up his own story of Edward escaping the "prison cell," realizing the reason he is sick is because he has been out of the water too long. They drive to the river where everyone from his stories is waiting for him as Will sings that Edward has finally finished telling his perfect tale ("What's Next"). At the river, Edward sings his love for all his memories and friends. When he notices that someone is missing, Sandra appears and they embrace one last time. They lead him back to his hospital bed as they disappear one by one, leaving Edward alone with Will. Edward's life has come to an end ("How It Ends").

The funeral takes place at the river's edge where it is apparent that Will is telling the same story that Edward told in the opening number. As the guests drop a flower and shake Will's hand one by one, he sees that each appears to be reflections of the characters from Edward's stories. Last in line, a tall man drops his flower and smiles at Edward's grave. Will shakes his hand and asks for his name. He simply responds, "I'm Karl". A few years later, Will and his son return to the river as he begins to tell him stories, just as Edward did to him ("Be the Hero" (Reprise)).

Principal Parts to be auditioned

Character	Male / Female	Vocal Range	Description	Audition Pieces
Older Edward Bloom	Male	Bari-tenor G2-G4	Older man, charming, charismatic storyteller. Devoted yet absent father nearing the end of his life and wanting to reconnect with his son. Songs – Be the Hero, Fight the Dragons, Showdown, Start Over, How its Ends.	4 5 22 23 97 Song be the hero
Young Edward Bloom	Male	Bari-tenor G2-G4	Young Edward is an enthusiastic, optimistic, Energetic romantic. He needs to steal our hearts and make us buy into the fabulous myths that he enters. He is the quintessential hometown boy hero. Songs – Out there on the road, Time Stops, Closer to Her, Daffodils, Red, White and True.	16 17 44 70 Song Daffodils
Older Sandra	Female	Soprano with mix/belt G3-E5	Sandra is patient, calm – the perfect balance to Edward's enthusiasm. She adores and appreciates Edward and tries to bring reconciliation to her husband and son. Songs – Two Men in My Life & I Don't Need a Roof	23 24 25 97 Song I don't need a roof
Young Sandra	Female	Soprano with mix/belt G3-E5	Young woman prior to marriage to Edward. Sweet, lovely and fresh faced and innocent. Excited by the possibilities of life and appreciates Edward's romantic viewpoint. Songs: Alabama Lambs, Time Stops, Daffodils, Red, White and True	71 72 73 Dance audition Song Alabama Lambs

Will Bloom (Adult)	Male	Tenor C#3-G4	Will is a critical part of the story. He is an earnest, serious, thoughtful young man wanting to reconnect with his father but unable to appreciate Edward's romantic view of life. He is a successful professional and a new husband. He has to be able to us on a journey of understanding and make us believe the complex relationship and final heartfelt embrace of his father's legacy. Songs – Strangers, Strangers Reprise, Showdown, What's Next, Be the Hero Reprise.	22 23 77 112 Song Strangers
Will Bloom (Child)	Child 9 – 12 years	Unbroken Voice	Intrigued by his father's stories, but already starts to doubt their truth	4 5 10
Josephine Bloom	Female	Mix/belt to C#5.	Will's wife. Successful adult, sweet, intelligent and compatible with Will. Josephine often acts as the bridge between Edward and Will explaining the deeper meaning of the story.	54 55 56
Karl The Giant	Male	Bass, A3 to D4	Edward's best friend. Karl is shy, exceptionally intelligent, hermit like and has a quiet charisma. He needs a booming voice and large personality. Songs – On the Road, Start Over	48 49 50 Song On the road
Amos Callaway	Male	Baritone, C3-F5, touches a G5	Amos is the rather eccentric, quirky owner of the circus that employs young Edward. He also happens to be a werewolf (in Edward's Tales) Songs: Closer to Her , Start Over	61 62 63 Song Closer to her
Witch	Female	High belt, useable F3-F5	Commanding performer with great confidence and storytelling ability. She convinces Edward to pursue a Big Life without fear. Songs – I Know What You Want	14 15 16 17 Song I know what you want
Young Jenny Hill	Female	Mix/belt to E5.	Edward's devoted first girlfriend. She is beautiful, a dreamer. Songs – Ashton's Favourite Son, Out there on the Road	44
Adult Jenny Hill	Female	Mix/belt to E5.	Very tired, disillusioned version of the younger Jenny. She has dignity and honesty. She is crucial in helping Will understand Edward	99 100
Don Price	Male	Baritone, C3-F#4	Older snarky bully, Sandra's first fiancé. Songs – Out there on the road, Start Over	13 14 15 16
Zacky Price	Male	Baritone/Tenor up to F#.	Nerdy Brother and shadow of Zacky Price	13 14 15 16
Doctor Bennett	Male	Baritone, C3-F5, touches a G5	Older man. Warm, kind, frank soft spoken friend and physician of Edward.	29 30 31 32
Red Fang	Male		Assassin, World war 2 villain	Will cast from ensemble
Ashton Mayor	Male		Typical small town good guy mayor	Will cast from ensemble

Alabama Lambs	Female		Two of Sandra's friends. Perform with Sandra at the circus. Must be able to dance	Dance audition Song Alabama lambs
Fisherman	Male		Hometown redneck. Must be able to dance	Will cast from ensemble

Ensemble

Big Fish requires a large ensemble who will be needed for movement and singing. Numbers with ensemble:

Be The Hero (townspeople, fishermen)

I Know What You Want (dancers only)

Wedding Scene (Wedding Guests)

Ashton's Favorite Son (Ashton townspeople)

Out There On The Road (Ashton Townspeople)

Closer to Her (Circus)

Auburn (pre daffodils) (College Students)

Red, White and True – (USO dancers and Soldiers)

Showdown – (Westerners)

Start Over (Ashton Townspeople)

What's Next (Hospital People)

Procession

Dancing

A small group of dancers will be required for various styles of dancing. To be considered you are required to attend a dance audition

Tues 27th May – Audition Music Rehearsal – Guide Hall

Sunday 1st June – Ensemble auditions ,Dance Auditions, Principal Auditions – Guide Hall – times will be sent out to you.

June

10th, 12th, 17th, 19th, 24th, 26th

July

1th, 3th, 8th, 10th, 15th, 17th, 22th, 24th, 29th, 31st

August

5th, 7th, 12th, 14th, 19th, 21st, 26th, 28th

September

2nd, 4th, 9th, 11th

Sunday Rehearsals – 31st Aug, 7th Sept (full runs) there are 2 more that will be allocated after cast availability.

Get In & Band Call – Sunday 14th September

Tech – Monday 15th September

Dress Rehearsal – Tuesday 15th September

Performances – 17th – 20th September (no Saturday matinee)

Rehearsal Venues and Times

Tuesdays The Guide Hall, Cheam Village – 8pm – 10pm

Thursdays Christ Church with St Phillip Ruskin Drive Worcester Park KT4 8LG – 8.00pm – 10.00pm

Sundays The Guide Hall, Cheam Village – 1pm – 6pm

How to Audition & Join The Lyric Players

Principal Auditions - All principal auditions with The Lyric Players are open and you do not have to be a member of the company to audition. Auditions are open and will be watched by others auditioning and members of the society. The audition panel will be made up of the Director, Musical Director, member of the committee and 2 independent persons who can be a member of the society or someone connected to the company.

Dance Auditions – If you complete the dance audition and are successful in getting into the dancing then this will be taken as a company audition if you are not currently a member of the company.

Company Auditions – If you would like to join the ensemble and are not currently or have ever previously been a member of The Lyric Players then company auditions involve singing a short piece of music of your choice in front of a quorum of the committee.

If you are successful in your audition then you will be required to pay a membership fee which will be set at the AGM 3rd June 2025 and a show fee of £75.00.

We are always happy for show fees and membership fees to be paid in instalments so please have a chat to the membership secretary once rehearsals have commenced.

If you have any questions please contact secretary@lyricplayers.org