

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Alert for Theatre Editors, Reviewers and Calendar Listings

**Chance Theater proudly presents the
Orange County premiere of the musical...**

Big Fish

**The 4th show in our 20th Anniversary Season is the glorious musical
adapted from Daniel Wallace's novel and Tim Burton's acclaimed film, and featuring
spine-tinglingly beautiful music and lyrics by Andrew Lippa**

June 7, 2018 ... Anaheim, California ... Chance Theater, Anaheim's official resident theater company, is excited to announce the fourth show in its 20th Anniversary Season ... ***Big Fish***. Written by John August with music and lyrics by Andrew Lippa, directed by Oanh Nguyen, choreographed by Kelly Todd, and musically directed by Robyn Manion, ***Big Fish*** will **preview from June 29 through July 6; regular performances will begin July 7 and continue through July 29 at Chance Theater @ Bette Aitken *theater arts* Center on the Cripe Stage.**

Big Fish is a fantastical musical that illustrates the larger-than-life anecdotes of Edward Bloom, a man nearing the end of his life. This fact has compelled his grown son Will to embark on an adventure of his own — to unravel his real dad from the myths of his tall tales. Filled with magic, love, luck, and crazy coincidences, this rollicking fantasy set in the American South is a tribute to the power of dreaming big.

"A thoroughly entertaining musical, overflowing with heart!" -- *Theater Mania*

"DON'T DARE MISS THIS! A show for everyone who loves musicals." -- *Variety*

MEET THE TEAM

John August (Book) is an American screenwriter, director, producer and novelist. He is known for writing the films *Go* (1999), *Charlie's Angels* (2000), *Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle* (2003), *Big Fish* (2003), *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* (2005) and *Frankenweenie* (2012), and the novel *Arlo Finch in the Valley of Fire* (2018). He hosts the popular screenwriting podcast *Scriptnotes* with Craig Mazin, maintains an eponymous screenwriting blog and develops screenwriter-targeted software through his company, *Quote-Unquote Apps*. August has written the screenplay for Walt Disney Pictures' upcoming live-action musical fantasy film *Aladdin*, alongside Vanessa Taylor and director Guy Ritchie. In July 2016, August signed a deal to write a three-book series aimed at middle-grade children, inspired by his experience as a Boy Scout. The first book in the series, *Arlo Finch in the Valley of Fire*, was published on February 6, 2018 by Roaring Brook Press, an imprint of the Macmillan Children's Publishing Group. Its origins and creation were documented in

August's podcast *Launch*. The sequels will follow in 2019 and 2020. He is a member of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, voting in the Writers branch. In 2016, he was awarded the WGAW's Valentine Davies Award for his dignified contributions to the entertainment industry and the community-at-large, and has been nominated for a BAFTA and a Grammy.

Andrew Lipka (Music & Lyrics) His oratorio, *I Am Harvey Milk* (words and music), was premiered by the San Francisco Gay Men's Chorus and the recording, released in October, 2013, reached number 2 on the iTunes Classical Chart. He wrote the Tony-nominated music and lyrics for the Broadway musical *The Addams Family*, book by Marshall Brickman and Rick Elice (*Jersey Boys*), which opened in April of 2010 and starred Nathan Lane and Bebe Neuwirth. Mr. Lipka wrote the music for the Broadway production of Aaron Sorkin's new play *The Farnsworth Invention* directed by Des McAnuff. *Asphalt Beach* (music and lyrics) was premiered at Northwestern University by the American Music Theatre Project in October, 2006. *The Wild Party* (book/music/lyrics) was given its world premiere in 2000 at the Manhattan Theater Club in New York City. *The Wild Party* won the Outer Critics Circle Award for best Off-Broadway musical of the season and Mr. Lipka won the 2000 Drama Desk Award for best music. 2004 saw the premiere of *A Little Princess* (book and lyrics by Brian Crowley) at Theatreworks in Palo Alto, CA. In 1999 he contributed three new songs to the Broadway version of *You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown* (including "My New Philosophy" for Tony-Award Winner Kristin Chenoweth) and created all new arrangements. He wrote the music and co-wrote the book (with Tom Greenwald) for *John & Jen*, which premiered in New York City in 1995 at The Lamb's Theater. Additionally, he is an accomplished singer having been heard in many venues in New York and, in 2005, as a guest artist at the Adelaide Cabaret Convention in Adelaide, Australia. In addition, Mr. Lipka produced the original cast recording of *Bat Boy* for RCA Victor and his singing voice can be heard on The Sondheim Album on Fynsworth Alley and *If I Sing* on PS Classics. Vocal selections from *The Addams Family*, *A Little Princess*, *The Wild Party* and *John & Jen* are published by Hal Leonard. Hal Leonard also released The Andrew Lipka Song Book in Winter, 2013. Awards include a Tony and Grammy nomination, sharing in an Emmy for the Nickelodeon TV series *The Wonder Pets*, the Gilman/Gonzalez-Falla Theater Foundation Award, ASCAP's Richard Rodgers/New Horizons Award, The Drama Desk, The Outer Critics Circle and second place for the Alice B. Deucey Award for all-around outstanding fifth-grader (lost to Cynthia Fink). Memberships include ASCAP, Actor's Equity and the American Federation of Musicians. A graduate of the University of Michigan, Mr. Lipka serves on the council of The Dramatists Guild. He was born in Leeds, England but grew up in suburban Detroit.

Oanh Nguyen (Director) has been serving as Chance Theater's founding Artistic Director since 1999. Oanh is a recipient of TCG's New Generations Grant and the TCG Nathan Cummings Young Leaders of Color Fellowship. He was awarded the Outstanding Artist Award by Arts Orange County, profiled in *Orange County Register's* "Most Influential People" series and *OC Weekly's* People Issue, inducted into Anaheim High School's Hall of Fame and was a commencement speaker for Chapman University College of Performing Arts. Oanh was Producing Associate at South Coast Repertory for four years. He also served on the advisory board of the Anaheim High School Performing Arts Conservatory, the board of Network of Ensemble Theatres, LA's 99-seat Transitional Committee and OC Theatre Guild, multiple committees for the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society and grant panels for the likes of the National Endowment for the Arts and Theatre Communications Group. Oanh is a proud member of SDC and SAG-AFTRA. His directing credits include productions at Chance Theater, East West Players, the J. Paul Getty Museum, Segerstrom Center for the Arts, and South Coast Repertory, and served as the Associate Director for the international tour of David Henry Hwang's *Chinglish* (Berkeley Repertory, South Coast Repertory, Hong Kong Arts Festival). His selected film credits include *Two Brothers* directed by Jean-Jacques Annaude, *Rush Hour 3* directed by Brett Ratner, and *Lonely Boy* directed by Dale Fabrigar (Best First Feature Grand Jury Prize at the 2013 Louisiana International Film Festival and Audience Award Winner at the 2013 BolderLife Festival).

The cast of **Big Fish** includes Resident Artists Laura M. Hathaway (*Parade*), Monika Pena (*Violet*), and Rachel Oliveros Catalano (*Little Women*), as well as returning artists Jason Brewer (*The Secret Garden*), Devin Collins (*Violet*), and Matt

Takahashi (*She Loves Me*). Jeff Lowe, Jared Price, Mandy Foster, John Carroll, Michael J. Isenock, Matt Bolden, Sydney DeMaria, and Lydia Margitza are making their Chance debuts with this production.

The production team for **Big Fish** includes choreographer Kelly Todd (*Hairspray*), music director Robyn Manion (*Violet*), scenic designer Bradley Kaye (*Tribes*), lighting designer Masako Tobaru (*Parade*), costume designer Bradley Lock (*Hairspray*), Projection designer Nick Santiago (*Tribes*), sound designer Ryan Brodtkin (*Parade*), puppet designer Matthew Aldin McGee, props designer Megan Hill (*Good People*), dialect coach Glenda Morgan Brown (*Good People*), and dramaturg Jessica Johnson.

Tod & Linda White are the Executive Producers. Bette & Wylie Aitken are the Season Producers for the entire 2018 schedule.

ABOUT CHANCE THEATER

Proud to be one of the leading ensemble-driven theatre companies in Southern California, CHANCE THEATER recently received a National Theatre Company grant from American Theatre Wing. The Chance has won six Ovation Awards, including two for Best Production of a Musical – Intimate Theater for its West Coast premiere of *Triassic Park – The Musical* and Southern California premiere of *Jerry Springer – The Opera*, as well as four LADCC Awards, including the Polly Warfield Award for Outstanding Season. The Anaheim City Council named Chance Theater “the official resident theater company of Anaheim”, and Arts Orange County has twice named the Chance as “Outstanding Arts Organization”. Known for using bold and personal storytelling to promote dialogue and connection within the Southern California theatrical landscape, the Chance is committed to contributing to a more compassionate, connected and creative community. As a constituent member of Theatre Communications Group, Network of Ensemble Theaters, and the LA Stage Alliance, Chance Theater continues to bring national attention to the Southern California and Orange County theater scenes.

CALENDAR LISTING

WHAT: **BIG FISH**

Adapted from Daniel Wallace’s novel and Tim Burton’s acclaimed film, and featuring spine-tinglingly beautiful music and lyrics by Andrew Lippa (*The Addams Family* and *The Wild Party*), *Big Fish* is a fantastical musical that illustrates the larger-than-life anecdotes of Edward Bloom, a man nearing the end of his life. This fact has compelled his grown son Will to embark on an adventure of his own — to unravel his real dad from the myths of his tall tales. Filled with magic, love, luck, and crazy coincidences, this rollicking fantasy set in the American South is a tribute to the power of dreaming big.

WHEN:

Preview Performances:

June 29- July 6, 2018

Fridays and Saturday at 8pm

Sunday at 7pm

Regular Performances

July 7- 29, 2018

Fridays at 8pm

Saturdays at 3pm & 8pm

Sundays at 3pm

REVIEWERS and OTHER PRESS are encouraged to attend:

Opening Performance on Saturday, July 7 at 8pm

WHERE: Chance Theater @ Bette Aitken *theater arts* Center on the Cripe Stage
5522 E. La Palma Ave., Anaheim, CA 92807

TICKETS: \$35.00 - \$45.00. Call (888) 455-4212 or visit www.ChanceTheater.com.
Discounts available for children (ages 4+), seniors, students and military.

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