

# **James and the Giant Peach**

**by Roald Dahl adapted by David Wood**

**Director:** Joseph Bentley

**Production dates:** 10th - 17th December 2022 with matinees on 10th, 11th, and 17th December.

**Auditions:** 18:00 Sunday 4th September 2022 at Brighton Little Theatre

**Rehearsals:** From Sunday 30th October 2022, four times a week, probably Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday evenings, and Sunday afternoons, with some flexibility depending on cast availability. Probably an extra one or two in the week before the show. Also an extra date TBC before rehearsals commence for an initial read through and measuring up by the costume team.

Wizzpopping wonder and fruit filled fun about in this stage adaptation of Roald Dahl's greatest adventure story. James is a lonely child who is forced to work like a slave for the most revolting aunts in the world. One day a mystical figure gives James a bag of magic crocodile tongues. When James spills them near the old peach tree, the most incredible things happen!

This will be a return to BLT's tradition of staging adaptations of classic children's books for family audiences at Christmas. It will be full of fun and laughter, and I promise that anyone involved will have a tremendous time. After all, what is Christmas without an exciting theatrical adventure?!

The adaptation is written for a cast of six with heavy doubling, but I hope to have at least a cast of twelve with much less doubling. James and the insects narrate the show and are large parts, and the others will have plenty to do and be crucial to the ensemble. The Old Man, James' Parents, and the New York Tour Guide can potentially double with other small speaking roles, TV Reporter, Captain, First Officer, and Second Officer. We will also need a crowd of Cloud Men!

Music will be integral to this production, with many of Dahl's poems being set to music by Liz, our MD. Any musical ability is desirable but not essential, and if you play any instruments, Liz may be able to incorporate your skills. All characters will need to sing, but please don't be put off if singing isn't something you're confident in. We are not looking for perfect singing voices, but just an ability to deliver a performance accompanied by music, even if that is ultimately some rhythmic speaking of the verse. However, if you are cast and you are a singer, then we'd love to use your skills!

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All characters are being cast without adherence to genders as written. Please feel free to find your own interpretation and go for parts that you may not have thought you could do. Most characters (even James!) can be played as any gender, or without gender bias at all. Aunts Sponge and Spiker will still be played female, but could be cast from either male or female actors.

<b>Character</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Playing age</b>
James	Our young hero; from a downtrodden lonely child, they develop into a brave 'captain' of the insect band; they act as narrator too. To be played by an adult actor but with the innocence and adventurous imagination of a child.	6-10
Grasshopper	Genial, courteous, avuncular, musical; they help narrate. Our Grasshopper doesn't need to be elderly as written, but should embody the wisdom and thoughtfulness that we often associate with age. They play the violin often, which is an important feature of the character. If you can play a small string instrument we may use your skills, but this can also be staged using recordings - don't be put off if you don't play!	Any
Spider	Occasionally sharp, even a little sinister, but ultimately kind with a softness and allure that is almost flirtatious. Their marathon thread-spinning to help save the peach is truly heroic (especially as there's no silk worm to help them in this adaptation!)	Any
Centipede	A spunky, cocky, warm-hearted Jack-the-lad. Frequently spars with Earthworm, but good-naturedly.	Any
Ladybird	Posh though not prissy, pretty though not vain, volatile though level-headed. The most 'motherly' of the insects.	Any
Earthworm	Not only blind, but a pessimist, a doom merchant whose standing in the group and whose self-esteem improves no end, thanks to James.	Any
Aunt Sponge	One of James' horrible aunts, she is short and overweight, at least by comparison with Spiker. We will enhance this with costuming - don't be put off if you are terrifically in shape! She is monstrous to James and suffers a misplaced belief in her own beauty. Think of Cinderella's Ugly Sisters and then add some more. Terrific fun for an over-the-top character actor. Can be played by any gender but played female.	Any
Aunt Spiker	The second horrendous aunt. She is taller and slimmer than Sponge. As with Sponge, she is appallingly nasty to James with an overdeveloped sense of her own greatness. Again, a wonderful opportunity for panto-esque delivery of one of these two 'ghastly hags'. Can be played by any gender but played female.	Any

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Old Man	An enigmatic and mystical figure who presents James with a paper bag full of magical crocodile tongues and sings about how they can change James' life.	Any
James' Parents	Two actors to play James' parents. They are loving, gentle and kind, seen only briefly before they meet a horrible end with a rampaging rhinoceros when James is only four years old.	20s-50s - any age that they could conceivably have a four year old child.
New York Tour Guide	Introduces the show from Central Park outside James' peach stone house. They will get the audience energised for the adventure ahead - a warm up act.	Any

***BLT actively encourages auditionees from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) communities and any of the above parts could be played by any race.***

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