

AUDITION PACK



Production details

Our production of *The BFG* will take place at:
ComedyHaus
Albisriederstrasse 16
8003 Zurich

Production dates

Saturday 9th April 2022 at 2.30pm and 6.30pm
Sunday 10th April 2022 at 2.30pm and 6.30pm

Want to audition?

If you are aged between 10 and 18 you can book your audition time by signing up at www.simplytheatre.com

Audition details

Auditions for *The BFG* will take place on the **22nd and 23rd January 2022** at **Simply Theatre Studios, Zurich**. If you are selected for a CALLBACK, you will need to be available on the afternoon of **Sunday 23rd January**.

If you want to audition but cannot make these dates please let us know in advance and we may be able to help.

Audition times are:

Saturday 22nd January

Session 1: 14.45 – 15.45

Session 2: 15.55 – 16.55

Session 3: 17.00 – 18.00

Sunday 23rd January

Session 4: 11.00 – 12.00

Recall auditions: 14.00 – 17.00 (by invite only)

Please indicate which audition slot you would like when booking your time.

What will I be doing in the audition process?



As part of your audition, you will be asked to perform a small monologue. These monologues are listed towards the end of this pack. This monologue should be memorised. When learning your monologue, remember to consider where you think your character is at the time of this monologue, who (s)he may be talking to, and what they are feeling. How can you get this information over to your audience (audition panel) through your audition?

You may feel free to choose any of the monologues for your audition, as no matter what you perform at audition you will still be considered for all parts. This said, if you are particularly keen on playing a specific part then it would be a good idea to prepare the appropriate one for audition.

During the audition, you may be asked to perform your scene in different ways. You may also be asked to work on other small scenes from the play and take part in some group improvisations. The auditions will feel a bit like a workshop, and so while you should prepare thoroughly and do yourself justice, you don't need to be nervous.

For more information on preparing for audition and the audition process, please see our guide towards the end of this pack.

Please be aware that being involved in this production is a definite commitment. Each cast member must be present for ALL rehearsals when they are required.

The only exception to this is if we have been notified of an absence at the time of audition. For your information, and to help you decide if you can commit to this project, there is a detailed conflict schedule as part of the application form at the end of this pack.

Full scripts for the show will be provided following the completion of a successful audition. If you are successful and gain a part in the production, we ask each participant to pay a small fee to help towards production costs.

The fee for Academy students enrolled on weekly Academy courses is a one-off payment of 450chf. Students who are not members of the Academy will be asked to pay a fee of 750chf.

A SIMPLY THEATRE ACADEMY PRODUCTION

THE BFG



ABOUT THE SHOW

The story follows a young orphaned girl named Sophie, living in a girl's orphanage run by the cantankerous Mrs. Clonkers. One night, Sophie sees a cloaked giant blowing something via a trumpet-like object into a bedroom window down the street; whereupon the giant carries her to his homeland of Giant Country. There, he identifies himself as the Big Friendly Giant (better known simply as the BFG), who on a nightly basis blows bottled dreams into the bedrooms of children, and explains the other type of giants that eat humans, mostly children. Because the BFG refuses to eat people or steal food from humans, he subsists on a foul-tasting vegetable known as a snozzcumber.

Sophie and the BFG quickly become friends; but Sophie is soon put in danger by the sudden arrival of the Bloodbottler Giant, who suspects the BFG of harboring Sophie. Sophie hides in the snozzcumber, unknown to the BFG, and the BFG offers the snozzcumber to the Bloodbottler, hoping that its foul taste will repel him from the area; whereupon the Bloodbottler spits out the snozzcumber and Sophie, and leaves in disgust. When Sophie announces she is thirsty, the BFG treats her to a fizzy drink called frobscottle, which causes noisy flatulence: this is known as Whizzpopping. The next morning, the BFG takes Sophie to Dream Country to catch more dreams, but is tormented by the other giants along the way; notably by their leader, the Fleshlumpeater, the largest and most fearsome.

England

In Dream Country, the BFG demonstrates his dream-catching skills to Sophie; but the BFG mistakenly captures a nightmare, and uses it to start a fight among the other giants. Sophie later persuades him to approach the Queen of England toward imprisoning the other giants. To this end, the BFG creates a nightmare, introducing knowledge of the man-eating giants to the Queen, and leaves Sophie in the Queen's bedroom to confirm it. Because the dream included the knowledge of Sophie's presence, the Queen believes her and speaks with the BFG.

After considerable effort by the palace staff to create a table, chair, and cutlery of appropriate size, the BFG is given a lavish breakfast, and the Queen telephones the King of Sweden and the Sultan of Baghdad to confirm the BFG's story – the giants having visited those locations on the previous two nights – then summons the Head of the British Army and the Marshal of the Royal Air Force. The said officers, though initially belligerent and skeptical, eventually agree to cooperate. Eventually, a fleet of helicopters follows the BFG to the giants' homeland, where the giants are tied up, suspended under the helicopters, and carried to England, where they are imprisoned in a pit. The only one not easily caught is the Fleshlumpeater; but he is soon tricked into allowing his own capture.

Epilogue

Afterwards, a huge castle is built as the BFG's new house, with a little cottage next door for Sophie. While they are living happily in England, the BFG writes a book of their adventures, which is then identified as the novel itself.[2]

CHARACTERS

Sophie: The young, sweet orphan girl who becomes friends with the BFG and saves the children of England. Sometimes the actor will play Sophie herself. Other times the actor will speak as Sophie while manipulating her as a small hand puppet.

Dad / THE BFG: The only friendly giant in Giant Country. He has a big booming voice and struggles with the human language. Played as male or female.

Mum / The Queen: The Queen of England. Played with an RP accent and very British upper-class physicality

THE GIANTS:

Bonecruncher, Fleshlumpeater, Bloodbottler, Meat Dripper, Gizzardgulper, Childchewer: They are the mean giants of Giant Country. They pick on the BFG and every night they venture into the world to eat children. They are dumb, bumbling giants. The actors playing these parts have to be extremely physical.

Other named roles:

Head of Army

Head of Airforce

Mary

Undermaid

Miss Plumbridge / Queen of Sweden

Headmaster / Mr Tibbs

All cast members will be part of the ensemble and will play Sophie's friends / family members as well as their own assigned character role(s)

AUDITION EXTRACTS

Please select whichever monologue appeals to you the most from the selection below as no matter what you choose you will be considered for all roles.

SOPHIE

(Starting the story) It was late at night in the orphanage. In the dormitory, Sophie couldn't sleep. A brilliant moonbeam was shining right on to her pillow. She slipped out of bed to get a drink of water. Sophie went back to bed. She tried very hard to doze off. The time ticked by. The house was absolutely silent. Perhaps, thought Sophie, this is what they call the witching hour, that special moment in the middle of the night when everyone is in a deep, deep sleep, and all the dark things come out from hiding and have the world to themselves. She crept to the window. And suddenly she saw ... a giant! He stopped at the house opposite, bent down to look in a bedroom window and then ... *(With a gasp)* He saw Sophie. She pulled back from the window, flew across the dormitory and jumped into her bed and hid under the blanket, tingling all over.

THE BFG

I, Sophie, is a dream-blowing giant. I blows dreams into the bedrooms of sleeping chiddlers. Nice dreams. Lovely golden dreams. Dreams that is giving the dreamers a happy time. See these jars? I is keeping the dreams in them. I collect them. Dreams is very mysterious things. They is floating around in the air like wispy misty bubbles, searching for sleeping people. Come on. I is showing you. You is coming dream-collecting with me. Hold your breaths and cross your figglers. Here we go. Let us see what dreams we is catching! *(He holds up the golden jar)* Oh my! It's a phizzwizard! A golden phizzwizard. This will be giving some chiddler a very happy night when I is blowing it in. I is hearing the dream's special music. I is understanding it. Shall I be showing Sophie this dream? Concentriate. Watch and be listening.

GIANT

I is hearing you jabbeling. Who is you jabbeling to, runt? You is talking to a human bean! I is guessing you has snitched away a human bean and brought it back to your bunghole as a pet! So now I is winkling it out and guzzling it as extra snacks before supper! Piffing little swishfiggler! Squimpy little pogswizzler! *(sniffing and searching)* Where is it? Where is it? *(He see the snozzcumber)* So this is the filthing rotsome clubbage you is eating! You must be cockles to be guzzling such rubbsquash! Human beans is juicier. Just this once I is going to taste these rotsome eats of yours. But if it is filthsome, I is smashing it over your sludgy little head! *(He picks up half the snozzcumber He mimes taking a bite)* eeeeowtch! *He spits.* You little swinebuggler! You little pigswiller! It's disgusterous! You must be buggies to be swalloping slutch like that! Every night you could be galloping off happy as a hamburger and gobbling juicy human beans. And you is an insult to the giant peoples! You is not fit to be a giant! You is a pibbling little pitsqueak! You is a ... a ... a cream puffnut!

Queen

Oh Mary! I've just had the most frightful dream! It was awful! I dreamt, Mary, that girls and boys were being snatched out of their beds at boarding-school and were being eaten by the most ghastly giants! The giants were putting their arms in through the dormitory windows and plucking the children out with their fingers. It was all so ... so vivid. *(unfolding the newspaper)* Great Scott! *(She reads)* "Children vanish mysteriously from boarding-school beds. Bones found underneath dormitory windows!" *(She gasps as she scans the small print)* Oh, how ghastly! It's absolutely frightful! Those poor children! Those children were taken away almost exactly as I dreamt it.

SIMPLY THEATRE AUDITIONS – HELP FOR AUDITIONEES AND PARENTS

We want to demystify the auditions process and help everyone, particularly those who are new to auditions or curious about the process, understand what happens and how decisions are made. Everyone auditions for things at various points in their lives, and we all have to face the highs of success or the lows of not getting what we want. However, it can be easier to deal with some of the frustration at not succeeding if one has a clearer, more realistic idea as to why this might be the case, hence this article.

We also want to offer some practical advice as to how best to prepare for auditions as well as how to make the decision to apply in the first place. Again, there is often a fear that only those who have auditioned extensively in the past have any chance of getting a role, or that others have some sort of mystical, secret knowledge which means they get the roles. We hope to clear some of these issues up in this article.

Finally, we are committed to making our auditions a rewarding and fair experience as best we can. (Ultimately, of course, there will only be one person who gets the role, and many more people will be rejected. This is the nature of the theatre, for there are always many more good actors than there are good roles.) Moreover, we firmly believe that auditions should not be about intimidating people, or making them feel judged, but instead a chance to try to see how they respond to a role, to share the material they have prepared freely and confidently, and to bring the very best out of them in the process. We want auditionees to leave an audition session feeling like they have worked hard, been given every reasonable opportunity to show what they can do, and that they could not have done any better. So this article is also intended to suggest to you how you can play your part in this.

What can I expect at auditions?

Audition formats vary widely:

- Some require the auditionee to present a monologue or song to a panel, with no-one else in the room. Here the director might just want to see whether, to their mind, you 'fit' the role or not, as well as how you work under pressure.
- Some will ask you to work with one other person as you present your speech or a piece of dialogue. This person might be another auditionee, or perhaps another actor, or a member of the panel. Here, they will be exploring both whether you fit the role, as well as how flexible and responsive you are when working with others. They may also be asking you to work with another actor that they have in mind for the role, to see if you look right together. For example, it is a sad reality that audiences may find it difficult to believe in a 5ft Romeo with a 6ft Juliet!
- Some will take the form of a workshop, where the emphasis is on asking you to do different things. Here they might be wanting to see how you work in an environment similar to the rehearsal room, they might be trying to give you a greater insight into the play so that you can make a stronger connection to the work. They also might be trying to see how you engage with others, for casting as well as for working purposes. They might also just find this way of auditioning suits their own skills and observational abilities better, giving them more time to watch you.

How do I prepare for auditions?

Here are some very simple tips:

- If you have to prepare some text and know it off by heart, do it thoroughly. In the audition you want to be focusing on the character and what they are saying and doing, rather than being the actor desperately trying to remember their words. The audition room will be different from your bedroom, so try performing your speech in different locations. The director will want to know that you are reliable if they are going to trust you with the responsibility of a role in the production.
- Engage imaginatively with what the character is saying and why they are saying it. Remember that they are speaking to someone else, so engage with what you want them to understand. Even if the character is speaking to themselves, they are still doing so for a reason, so try to engage with what you think that might be.
- Whispering the words to yourself often allows you to hear what you are saying in a very direct, honest way. Doing this might allow you to hear things in the speech that you hadn't noticed before.
- To make sure you have learned it fully and deeply, do other activities whilst speaking the speech. The more you do this, the sturdier your learning of the speech. Also, quite often this will encourage you, unconsciously, to say it in different ways. This will be helpful in making you more confident, especially if a director is likely to ask you to do it differently.
- Finally, and vitally, the answers to many questions about the speech will be in the play itself. Find out ALL the simple facts about your character, and make sure you have an understanding of what has recently happened to them and what is happening to them at this point in the play. If you don't know, not only will it be very difficult to perform the speech with any sense of integrity or accuracy, but you will feel silly if a director asks you about the character you are playing and you can't answer.

How do you cast a production?

If you really want to understand the casting process, try doing it yourself. Think of a favourite character from a play, film, book, TV programme. For example, James Bond. We associate him with good looks, strength, tenacity, charm, suavity and ruthlessness. Imagine Daniel Craig, Pierce Brosnan, or an actor like Damien Lewis playing the role – we find it very easy to believe he has those characteristics. Now imagine Ricky Gervais playing the role. He is a similar age to Daniel Craig, and a capable actor, but despite his best efforts it would be hard to believe that he is 007.

Overall, a director is usually trying to find someone who is most immediately 'naturally' suited to the role. We say 'immediately' because, although actors are often capable of great transformation, the reality of limited rehearsal time means that one is often looking for the actor who, in auditions, gets closest to the way the director understands the character.

The simple truth about auditions is that most people are rejected because they are not the most 'right' person for the role. Other factors might be a lack of experience, a lack of security in performance, a sense that the auditionee hasn't shown enough of themselves despite opportunities, not responding clearly to direction, a sense that the auditionee might not have understood who their character is or why they are saying what they are saying, a lack of chemistry with other actors, a difficulty in processing instructions clearly....

As you can see, it is therefore unlikely that the reason for rejection will be 'lack of talent' or 'lack of innate ability'.

How do I know if I should audition or not?

At *Simply Theatre* we would be putting ourselves in an invidious position if we began to suggest to particular individuals that they should audition. This would immediately create favouritism, false hopes and resentment. Moreover, we insist that we run an open door auditions process, and therefore invite anyone who believes they have the commitment, the energy, the passion and the determination to engage fully with a sustained and challenging rehearsal process, to audition for one of our productions. If you have a keen hunger and are prepared to put the work in, then go for it!

Tips for the big day...

- Be confident and try to enjoy the audition as much as possible- remember the team will be there to help and support you, not to judge you!
- Arrive with plenty of time to spare so that you do not add to your nerves.
- Warm yourself up in advance both physically and vocally using exercises you will have used in Academy classes to help warm up the voice and body. If you are short on time, you can easily do vocal warm-ups in the car on the way there!
- Good preparation in advance of your audition is key to helping you feel calm and confident on the day, giving you the best chance of showing yourself off to the best of your ability.
- It is advisable to learn the pieces of script if possible, again to be able to perform it fully and confidently.
- Arrive in comfortable clothing (no skirts as they hinder movement) that is easy to move around in for the dance audition. No jewellery please.
- Students with long hair should ensure they have their hair tied back.
- Try to enjoy the audition and use it as a fun, learning experience.
- Do not make the mistake of believing that you have a part before you do! Building yourself up too much can lead to disappointment.
- Go into the audition with an open mind, looking at it as an opportunity and new experience from which you will learn.
- Do not worry if something goes wrong in the audition. The audition team is there to see the potential, not to see a finished, polished routine.
- Presentation is important. Ensure that even if you feel nervous and everything goes wrong, you smile, project your voice and try to come across as enthusiastically and confidently as possible.

Good Luck!

THE BFG
AUDITION FORM (2 pages)
To be completed and returned at your audition

Student's Name (as it should appear in the programme) _____

Age at time of audition _____

Course attended _____

Gender _____ Male / Female

Student's Email _____

Parent/Guardian's Details

Full Name _____

Email (for production notices) _____

Home Phone _____ Mobile _____

Please list your last 3 Academy auditions (if any)

Terms and Conditions

- All students must have the permission of a parent/guardian in order to audition and participate.
- If successful, on gaining a part, students must agree to pay the show fee of 450chf/750chf for non-members in full, in advance of the rehearsal start date.
- **On accepting a role, each cast member agrees to attend all relevant rehearsals unless agreed AT THE TIME OF AUDITION with the production team.**
- Simply Theatre Academy reserves the right to withdraw a cast member from the show if their behaviour is deemed detrimental to process, or if they miss too many rehearsals without permission.
- No refunds will be given once rehearsals have commenced.
- Photographs and videos may be taken of students during Simply Theatre Academy shows / rehearsals for promotional purposes. Simply Theatre Academy reserves the rights to use these photos in print, media and online.

I agree to the terms and conditions above and give my permission.

Signature of parent/guardian named above: _____ Date: _____

Signature of student named above: _____ Date: _____

THE BFG CONTINUED (page 2 of 2)

CONFLICT SCHEDULE

We need to know your conflicts so we can set the final casting and rehearsal schedule. Please do understand that the more conflicts you have, the more difficult it will be to cast you.

Month/Date	Day	Times	YES, I can attend rehearsal	NO, I cannot attend rehearsal	REASON why I am not available
January 29	Saturday	1pm - 6pm	Attendance Required	Attendance Required	
January 30	Sunday	10am-6pm	Attendance Required	Attendance Required	
February 5	Saturday	1pm - 6pm			
February 6	Sunday	10am - 6pm			
February 26	Saturday	1pm - 6pm			
February 27	Sunday	10am - 6pm			
March 5	Saturday	1pm - 6pm			
March 6	Sunday	10am-6pm			
March 12	Saturday	1pm - 6pm			
March 13	Sunday	10am-6pm			
March 19	Saturday	1pm - 6pm			
March 20	Sunday	10am-6pm			
March 26	Saturday	1pm - 6pm			
March 27	Sunday	10am-6pm			
April 2	Saturday	5pm - 9.30pm	Attendance Required	Attendance Required	
April 3	Sunday	5pm - 9.30pm	Attendance Required	Attendance Required	
April 4	Monday	5pm – 9pm	Attendance Required	Attendance Required	
April 5	Tuesday	5pm – 9pm	Attendance Required	Attendance Required	
April 7	Thursday	5pm – 10pm	Attendance Required	Attendance Required	
April 8	Friday	5pm – 10pm	Attendance Required	Attendance Required	
April 9	Saturday	Call times TBC	Attendance Required	Attendance Required	
April 10	Sunday	Call times TBC	Attendance Required	Attendance Required	

Your Signature _____

Guardian/Parent Signature _____

PLEASE BRING TO YOUR AUDITION COMPLETED