# CU > PRESENTS







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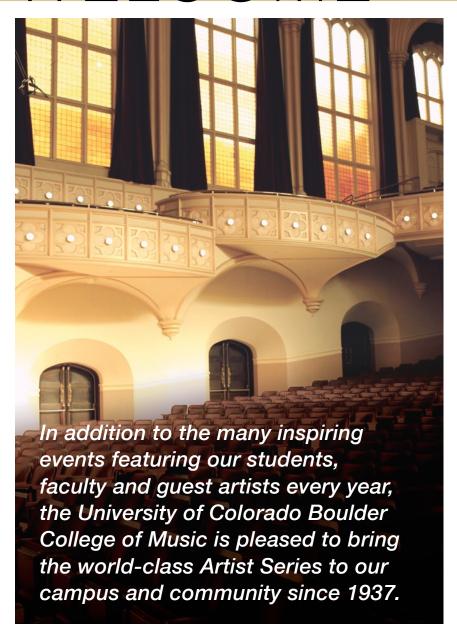








## WELCOME



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## CU \* PRESENTS

#### MARCH-APRIL 2025

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College of Music: The Pirates of Penzance promotional art; Big Fish promotional art.

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by

## **Start Here**



## 1975

Takács Quartet formed by four students at Franz Liszt Academy, Budapest: Gábor Takács-Nagy, Károly Schranz, Gábor Ormai and András Fejér.



->-

First Prize and the Critics' Prize at the International String Quartet Competition in Évian-les-Bains, France.

## 1985-1986

The members of the Takács Quartet and their families move to Boulder, Colorado, to take up a residency at the University of Colorado Boulder.

### 1979

Gold Medals: Portsmouth (now Wigmore Hall) International Quartet Competition and Bordeaux Competition.

## 1987

First Takács Quartet recordings for the Decca label released.

## 1992

After 18 extraordinary years as first violinist, Gábor Takács-Nagy leaves the group.

## 1994

Gábor Ormai retires for health reasons.

## 1993

Edward Dusinberre joins the Takács Quartet as first violinist.

## 1995

Roger Tapping joins the Takács Quartet as violist in March.

Gábor Ormai's death from cancer on July 7.

## 1998

Decca release of complete Bartók quartets wins a Gramophone Chamber Award, first Grammy Award nomination.

## 2001

Extensive U.S. tour, with poet Robert Pinsky, of a project on the theme of love featuring music and poetry.

## 2000-2004

Takács Quartet records all Beethoven quartets for Decca, garnering numerous awards worldwide including a Grammy Award.

## 2005

Geraldine Walther joins the Takács Quartet as violist.

Takács Quartet named artists-in-residence at at London's Southbank Centre.

### 2006

Takács Quartet releases first recording for Hyperion Records.



Timeline continues on page 10.



**PRESENTS** 



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## UPCOMING EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

# CU > PRESENTS



COLLEGE OF MUSIC The Pirates of Penzance By Gilbert and Sullivan March 14-16, 2025



COLLEGE OF MUSIC Big Fish By John August and Andrew Lippa April 24-27, 2025



TAKÁCS QUARTET
April 13 and 14, 2025
All performances stream for one week after Sunday concert.



ARTIST SERIES Martha Graham Dance Company April 26, 2025



## CU≯PRESENTS 2025-26 SEASON



## **Takács Quartet**

Renew your tickets through March 21 Season tickets on sale May 19 Single tickets on sale Aug. 18

## **Artist Series**

Renew your season tickets starting March 24 Season tickets on sale May 19 Single tickets on sale Aug. 18

## **Eklund Opera**, **Musical Theatre** and **Theatre & Dance**

Season tickets on sale July 7 Single tickets on sale Aug. 18

Opportunities to add on Holiday Festival tickets available with season ticket orders.

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- By phone at 303-492-8008

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### VISITOR **INFO**

#### LATE SEATING

Latecomers are seated at the discretion of the house manager. You may be seated in a seat other than your ticketed seat; you can move to your ticketed seat during intermission.

Late seating is unavailable in the:

- Music Theatre (Imig Music Building)
- Loft Theatre (University Theatre Building)

#### NO SMOKING

CU Boulder is smoke-free.

#### **PHOTOS / RECORDINGS**

Photography and video / audio recordings of any type are **PROHIBITED** during the performance.

▼ Continued from page 6.

## 2007

At Carnegie Hall, a special project with the late actor Philip Seymour Hoffman featuring text from Philip Roth's novel *Everyman* and Franz Schubert's *Death and the Maiden*—subsequently repeated in Toronto and at Princeton University with Meryl Streep.

## 2011

Takács Quartet wins Royal Philharmonic Society's Chamber Music and Song Award for their Beethoven cycle at the Southbank Centre.

## 2014

Takács Quartet becomes the first ensemble to be awarded the Wigmore Hall Medal.

### 2012

Takács Quartet named associate artists at Wigmore Hall.

Takács Quartet inducted into Gramophone magazine's Hall of Fame.

## 2016

Edward Dusinberre's book—Beethoven for a Later Age—is published by Faber and University of Chicago Press: A story of the Takács Quartet's evolution in the context of the group's experience with Beethoven's quartets and how these pillars of the repertoire came to be written. The book wins the Royal Philharmonic Society's Creative Communication Award and is serialized in BBC Radio 4's Book of the Week.

## 2018

Károly Schranz, founding second violinist, retires after 43 years.

Harumi Rhodes joins the Takács Quartet as second violinist.

## 2020

Following the retirement of Geri Walther, Richard O'Neill joins the Takács Quartet as violist.

## 2021-2022

Takács Quartet undertakes an extensive U.S. tour with bandoneon virtuoso Julien Labro, performing newly commissioned works by Labro, Clarice Assad and Bryce Dessner.

## 2021

Takács Quartet wins Gramophone Chamber Award for Amy Beach and Edward Elgar piano quintets with Garrick Ohlssohn (recorded with Geraldine Walther, viola).

Takács Quartet wins Recording of the Year from Presto Classical for quartets by Felix and Fanny Mendelssohn.

World premiere of *Six Rencontres* by Stephen Hough, composed for the Takács Quartet and recorded for Hyperion (2023).

The Takács Quartet's 50th anniversary season is generously sponsored by Chris and Barbara Christoffersen.

Renew your season tickets for 2025-26 through March 21 at cupresents.org.

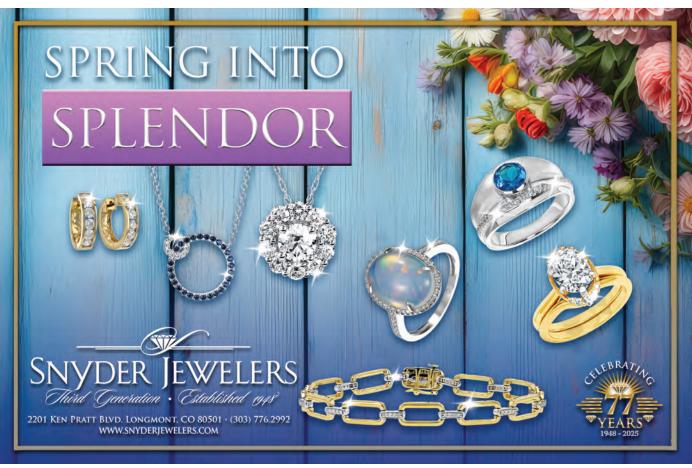
## 2023

Takács Quartet undertakes extensive performances of a new work—*Flow* by Nokuthula Ngwenyama—commissioned for the Takács Quartet.

## 2024

World premiere of *Kachkaniraqmi* by Gabriela Lena Frank for solo string quartet and string orchestra, with Peter Oundjian and the Colorado Music Festival Orchestra.





## SPOTLIGHT



## Stature? Yes. Stasis? No Way.

By Lisa Kennedy

Martha Graham was lauded as the "Dancer of the Century" and the "Icon of the Century." The dancer and choreographer, who died in 1991 at 96, received both the Presidential Medal of Freedom and the then newly minted National Medal of Arts. And this is the most abridged of her accolades.

When it launched "Graham100," the Martha Graham Dance Company got a head start on a three-season celebration of its 100th anniversary. That it is the oldest dance company in the United States and still going strong is thrilling. But let's be honest. There's nothing quite like a centenary to demonstrate staying power, yet also threaten a decline or a kind of settling. And what would run more counter to a dance company's raison d'etre than to cease moving?

So, how does a vaunted institution stay true to its iconic founder and expand upon her vision? Commission new work and bring choreographers influenced by Graham's technique into its repertory is the creative answer artistic director Janet Eilber and the company offer.

CU Boulder Professor of Dance (and Interim Dean of Undergraduate Education) Erika Randall has another answer that's as reckoning as it is celebratory. "What I'm so interested in about Graham is that you can give her trouble. You don't have to just worship her and say she was the most iconic pioneer of modern dance," says Randall.

"I love giving her trouble," she adds. "And she can take it. Because she still holds up, because of how she gave trouble to the patriarchy." Randall will be presenting what promises to be a spirited and spiky pre-concert talk when the Martha Graham Dance Company returns to Boulder with Cave, Immediate Tragedy and We the People on April 26.

For We the People, Jamar Roberts set his protest piece to the music of Rhiannon Giddens (arranged by Gabe Witcher). If Giddens' pluck and twang seem contrapuntal to the face-off energy of the piece-which made The New York Times' 2024 Best Dance Performances—it's supposed to.

What wasn't at odds was Alvin Ailey veteran Roberts' feelings about Martha Graham. "The Graham vocabulary has always been in my body," he told The New York Times. "It's always been in my work."

Devotees who find "Graham to be their jam"-to quote Randall-should be intrigued by Immediate Tragedy. The work thought lost has been reimagined by Eilber and composer Christopher Rountree. Eilber built upon a sequence of photographs shot in 1937 of Graham's solo lamenting the Spanish Civil War. The piece premiered virtually in the differently fraught shadow of the pandemic in 2020.

With this trio of the new, the newer and the old made new, the company honors its century by embodying one of Graham's observations, "Dancing is just discovery, discovery, discovery."

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## SPOTLIGHT



## Creating sustainability through music education

By MarieFaith Lane

The University of Colorado Boulder is widely recognized for its commitment to sustainability-most often associated with protecting the environment. At the College of Music, that definition extends further.

Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Professor of Music Education Margaret Berg highlights the importance of human sustainability-that is, the well-being of individuals and communities. By integrating both human and environmental sustainability into music education, our college is helping students develop into responsible, thoughtful professionals who are prepared to make an impact on our interconnected society.

"Human sustainability is about more than just resources," Berg explains. "It's about the self-students and teachersthe community around the school or studio, and the larger systems like colleges or universities." This multifaceted approach emphasizes the significance of emotional resilience, community building and cultural inclusivity in shaping the future of music education.

Berg's Sociology of Music Education course amplifies the College of Music's unique focus on preparing students for roles beyond music performance; the college's universal musician approach to achieving its mission encourages interdisciplinary learning and broadly-based student development. "A teacher taking a more holistic approach will make a difference," says Berg, emphasizing the value of connecting music education with sustainability in the classroom and beyond.

Aligned with CU Boulder Chancellor Justin Schwartz's priority to accelerate sustainability on our campus, human sustainability in music education complements the College of Music's progress toward reducing its environmental impact-from "green" digital program books, energyefficient LED lighting in Grusin Music Hall and music tablets that replace paper scores. Additionally, the use of braille building placards and other accessibility measures reflects the college's commitment to inclusivity in all forms.

Integrating human and environmental sustainability equips students with the knowledge, skills and awareness to engage with both their immediate communities and the planet. In the classroom, Berg advocates for experiential learning practices that promote ecological literacy and environmental activism. For example, music educators can encourage students to engage with local sounds and landscapes, fostering an awareness of the natural world and its challenges. "We can integrate local ecosystems into the repertoire selection process," Berg suggests, noting that Colorado's mountains or water issues might inspire student projects.

Berg further emphasizes the significance of core reflection which encourages educators and students to assess their well-being and resilience. "It has to start with the human," she says. That is, to sustain both the work and the community, we must take care of individuals first-teachers and students alike. Core reflection allows teachers to identify their strengths and recognize the need to care for their own mental and emotional health to avoid burnout. In this way, self-care becomes foundational to sustaining longterm success in educational settings.

Adds Berg, "Nature is constantly creating and evolving, and engaging with the arts is a creative act that empowers both students and teachers to respond to the challenges of climate change, for example, in productive and meaningful ways. This is invaluable, as it engages their hearts and fosters powerful, thoughtful responses.

"It's a profoundly healthy way to navigate such challenges."



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## **CAST**

Edward Bloom

Quint Hill (all shows)

Will Bloom

Indigo Jones (all shows)

Sandra Bloom

Carly Freeman (*April 24/April 26 7:30 p.m./April 27 2 p.m.*) Lydia Blaisdell (*April 25/April 26 2 p.m./April 27 7:30 p.m.*)

Josephine Bloom

Isabel Harrison (April 24/April 26 7:30 p.m./April 27 2 p.m.) Norah Schaefer (April 25/April 26 2 p.m./April 27 7:30 p.m.)

Karl the Giant

Zane Larson (all shows)

Amos Calloway

Angie Torres (April 24/April 26 7:30 p.m./April 27 2 p.m.)

Jada Abbott (April 25/April 26 2 p.m./April 27 7:30 p.m.)

The Witch/Alabama Lamb 1

Alecia Marquardt (*April 24/April 26 7:30 p.m./April 27 2 p.m.*) Sophie Green (*April 25/April 26 2 p.m./April 27 7:30 p.m.*)

Jenny Hill

Jude Hill (all shows)

Don Price (Edward U/S)

Ty Lowrey (all shows)

Young Will

Timothy Underbrink (all shows)

#### **ENSEMBLE**

Sharecroppper/ Swamp Goddess Cammy Garcia

Cheerleader/ Swamp Goddess Kaya Leyendecker

Alabama Lamb 2/Swamp Goddess/Dance Captain Courtney San Pedro

Mermaid/Dance Captain

(Jenny U/S) Adele Trapp

Dr. Bennett (Will U/S)

Sam Kjelstrom

Zacky Price/Judge Peyton Busch

New York Doctor/ Shotgun Toter Olivia Daly-Short

Red Fang/Frustrated Fisherman (Karl U/S) Alex Mehigan

Mayor/Grocer Seth Edgar Girl with Orange Cat/Nurse

Catherine Davis
School Teacher/
Grocer's Wife

Ava Scott

Barber/Cowboy Reed Jacobs

General Patterson/ Sheperd Don (U/S)

**Troy Baker** 

Juggler/Giant's Girlfriend

Leah Patterson

Farm Girl/Swamp Goddess

Claire Casey

Over-Excited Scout/

Ashton Boy Oliver Harrelson

WIII's Son/Additional Scout/

NY Kid

**Ansel Merges** 

Swings Noelle Treece Abby Shust Sarah Bicking

## MUSICAL THEATRE

## **Big Fish**

Book by John August
Music and lyrics by Andrew Lippa
Based on the novel by Daniel Wallace
and the Columbia Motion Picture written
by John August

**April 24 | 25 | 26 | 27** 2025 Music Theatre

## **CREATIVE TEAM**

Director
Assistant Director
Music Director
Choreography
Scenic Design
Costume Design
Lighting Design
Sound Design

Video / Projection Design

Hair/Wig and Makeup Design Production Director Technical Director Costume Rental Coordinator

Intimacy Coordinator
Fight Director
Dramaturg

Stage Manager

Assistant Stage Manager

Stilt Consultant

Justin Johnson
CJ Lwellynn-Ryan
Victor Walters
Justin Boccitto
Johnmichael Bohach

Ann Piano Karalyn Pytel Dan Sjaastad Johnmichael Bohach

Jenny Hager Ron Mueller Jeffrey Rusnak Ann Piano Ellie Griffin Edie Roth Justin Johnson Ellie Griffin Joseph Whitney Alysha Perrin

Originally produced on Broadway by Dan Jinks, Bruce Cohen and Stage Entertainment with Roy Furman, Broadway Across America/Rich Entertainment Group, John Domo, The Nederlander Organization and Edward Walson in association with CJ E&M, Dancing Elephant Productions, Parrothead Productions, Harvey Weinstein/Carole L. Haber, Peter May/Jim Fantaci, Ted Liebowitz/Joe Piacentile and Columbia Pictures.

BIG FISH is presented through special arrangement with and all authorized performance materials are supplied by Theatrical Rights Worldwide 1180 Avenue of the Americas, Suite 640, New York, NY 10036. theatricalrights.com

## **SYNOPSIS**

Based on the celebrated novel by Daniel Wallace and the acclaimed film directed by Tim Burton, Big Fish tells the story of Edward Bloom, who has lived a full and fantastical life, populated by witches, giants, and mermaids, marked by true love that stops time in its tracks, and framed by heroics that push the limits of believability. His adult son, Will, is no longer amused by his father's fantastical tales, insisting on a rational rather than a fantastical account of one's life. When Edward's health declines, and Will learns that he and his wife, Josephine, will have a son of their own, Will decides to find out his father's "true" life story, once and for all. Big Fish is a heartfelt, powerful, and truly magical musical about fathers, sons and the stories that we use to define our identities. With spine-tinglingly beautiful music and lyrics by Andrew Lippa, and a funny, heartwarming book by John August, Big Fish is a magnificent "big fish" of a tale, itself—spectacular, fantastical and overflowing with love.

## NOTE FROM THE DRAMATURG

At the heart of Big Fish lies an exploration of the intersection between myth and reality, truth and fiction, and the personal need to create meaning through storytelling. The musical adaptation, rooted in Daniel Wallace's novel and Tim Burton's 2003 film, challenges our understanding of memory, legacy, and the identities we build through the narratives we construct about our lives.

The central character, Edward Bloom, is a master storyteller, a man whose life is defined by larger-than-life adventures. He spins tales that blur the lines between fact and fantasy: he has befriended giants, kissed a mermaid and crossed paths with a werewolf. His stories are not merely fanciful diversions—they are the very fabric of his identity. Edward's need to embellish and mythologize his life is not only an act of self-creation, but a way to assert control over the passage of time, mortality and the complexities of human experience. His stories grant him agency in a world where everything, from relationships to achievements, is fleeting.

This tension between storytelling and truth becomes a central conflict between Edward and his son, Will. As Will grows up, he becomes increasingly disillusioned with his father's exaggerated tales, believing them to be evasions of deeper truths. Will's journey in the play is a quest for authenticity, a desire to strip away the layers of fiction that his father has built around himself. However, what Will ultimately discovers is that these stories, no matter how fantastical, serve a deeper purpose—they are not mere fabrications but reflections of Edward's desire to inspire his son, to leave a legacy, and to find meaning in his existence.

This conflict also serves as a critique of the binary between truth and fiction. In Big Fish, the "truth" is not a singular, static entity but a fluid, subjective experience that shifts depending on who tells the story and how it is told. The musical invites us to consider the value of a "big fish" tale, not for its factual accuracy but for its emotional resonance. The act of storytelling becomes an act of living-not just recounting events but creating a world in which those events hold meaning.

In examining the father-son relationship, Big Fish forces us to confront how we perceive our loved ones, and how we reconcile the difference between the image of a person we've built in our minds and who they truly are. Edward's mythic self is both a shield and a reflection of his fears, desires and love for his family. Will's quest to strip away the layers of myth is a poignant reflection of the adult need for truth, even if that truth, once uncovered, is not as neat or comforting as the fantastical stories we are told as children.

In its whimsical musical numbers and vibrant visual style, Big Fish reminds us that the stories we tell have power not just to entertain, but to shape our relationships, our legacies, and our understanding of who we are. Through Edward's larger-than-life tales and Will's pursuit of reality, the production invites us to embrace the complexity of storytelling. In doing so, it offers a meditation on how each of us chooses to live, whether through the honorable pursuit of truth or the creation of a more beautiful, more meaningful myth.

Ultimately, Big Fish challenges us to ask: How much of our lives are truly "real," and how much of who we are is simply the story we choose to tell? Perhaps, in the end, both are equally necessary.

## NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

This note is difficult to write. My father, who is 81, faces several health issues. That means he likely won't be with us much longer. He likes to joke around but can also be very serious. He introduced me to my favorite show – Doctor Who. We would watch it together. Growing up, he wasn't especially affectionate and was often distant throughout my adult life, first living in China and later, on Vancouver Island, Canada. As a middle-aged adult, I now understand that this was simply part of how he was raised, so I don't hold it against him. In fact, we are much closer now.

"Fathering is not something perfect men do, but something that perfects the man." —Frank Pittman

In many ways, my relationship with my father contrasts with Edward and Will in *Big Fish*. My dad was the practical, logical one, and I was the storyteller. He was a science teacher and wrestling coach, while I was the theater nerd, movie buff and puppeteer constantly in search of the next electrifying story to tell. I often felt he would have preferred me to be more stoic, more manly, more like the typical "breadwinner." Instead, I could be found dancing around with my siblings, acting out *Grease*, *The Wiz*, *Xanadu*—even *Thriller*. I began acting early, playing Schroeder in *A Charlie Brown Christmas* in fifth grade. Despite any reservations he might have had about my artistic pursuits, he was always there to support me, video camera in hand, documenting every moment.

"My father gave me the greatest gift anyone could give another person; he believed in me." - Jim Valvano

I strongly believe there's a misunderstanding of what it means to be a father, or even a man, in today's world. Society teaches us to repress our emotions, to toughen up and to never cry. We're told that by sharing our vulnerabilities and fears, we somehow become "less of a man." I couldn't disagree more. So, when I have the chance to direct a show like *Big Fish*, where men explore their insecurities and learn to understand each other in a tender, loving way, I see a solidarity on stage that I rarely get in real life. That it is ok to be all of who I am.

"I don't just want to be a good man. I want to be a good human. And I believe that the only way that can happen is if men learn to not only embrace the qualities we are told are feminine in ourselves, but to be willing to stand up, to champion, and learn from the women who embody them." —Justin Baldoni

Following this quote, I hope that once you've seen our show, you'll recognize the incredible impact that the women standing beside these men—Sandra and Josephine—have on the story. Without them, Edward and Will may never have found their way to back each other or even had the capacity to recognize the need to do so. This is a bucket-list show for me, and I can't express enough how much I love the work our production team and especially these students have brought to this production. They've truly enhanced my life and uplifted my soul in the process. You're in for a treat.

I dedicate this production to my father and, unabashedly, want to tell him: "I love you, Dad."

## **MUSICAL NUMBERS**

#### **ACT ONE**

**Prologue** 

Be The Hero

Edward and Ensemble

I Know What You Want

Edward, Witch and Swamp Goddesses

Stranger

Will

Two Men In My Life

Sandra

Ashton's Favorite Son

Jenny Hill and Townsfolk

Out There On The Road

Edward, Karl, Jenny Hill and Townsfolk

Little Lamb From Alabama

Sandra and Two Friends

**Time Stops** 

Edward and Sandra

Closer To Her

Edward, Amos and Circus Folk

**Daffodils** 

Edward and Sandra

#### **ACT TWO**

Red, White, And True

Edward, Sandra and Ensemble

**Campfire Dance** 

Fight The Dragons

Edward and Young Will

Stranger (Reprise)

Will

Showdown

Edward. Will and Ensemble

I Don't Need A Roof

Sandra

Start Over

Edward, Don Price, Amos, Karl, Ensemble

What's Next

Edward, Will, Don Price, Zacky Price and Ensemble

How It Ends

**Edward** 

The Procession

Ensemble

Be The Hero (Reprise)

Will

### PERSONNEL

JADA ABBOTT (Amos) (she/her) is a mezzo soprano from Eagle. She is a junior studying under Andrew Garland and Julie Simson. CU Boulder credits include *Heathers*, 9 to 5 and *Titanic*. She plans to pursue a master's in education after graduation. In her off time, Abbott enjoys rafting, skiing, camping and going to concerts. Abbott wants to thank her friends and family for their support and send her love. She hopes you all enjoy the show!

TROY BAKER (Shepherd/General Patterson), from Leadville, is a freshman at CU Boulder. He is pursuing a Bachelor of Music in musical theatre and studies under Andrew Garland and Julie Simson in their vocal studio. At CU Boulder, he has appeared in the ensemble in *Heathers*. Other credits include Jack in *Into the Woods*, Shrek in *Shrek the Musical*, and Captain Von Trapp in *The Sound of Music*. While off the stage, Baker enjoys skiing, volleyball and loves a good movie night with friends. Baker would like to thank all of his family and friends who have supported his extreme endeavors, as well as all the people he has worked with who have helped him grow as a performer. He hopes you love the show!

SARAH BICKING (Swing) is a freshman working towards a BFA in musical theater at the University of Colorado Boulder, studying voice under the amazing Alleigh Watson. Her favorite credits include Mrs. Wormwood in *Matilda*, French Teacher and Teary Girl in *Mean Girls the Musical*, and Delta Nu/Featured Ensemble in *Legally Blonde the Musical*. She is so excited to be a swing for this production, and has loved being able to grow as a performer throughout this experience. She would like to thank her family and friends for their constant support. She can be found on all social media platforms @sarah\_bicking\_official. Enjoy the show!

LYDIA BLAISDELL (Sandra Bloom) (she/her), soprano from Washington State, is a current junior in the Bachelor of Music in musical theater program at CU Boulder. She studies with Professors Matthew Chellis and Jennifer Bird-Arvidsson. Blaisdell has participated in seven total productions at CU Boulder; highlights include as Roxie Hart in *Chicago* and Heather Duke in *Heathers the Musical*. *Big Fish* is sure to be another highlight in her career here, and she is so thankful for the opportunity to portray such a complex and beautiful character. Blaisdell would not be in this production without the support of her family, friends and teachers, and thanks them for all of their support. Specifically, Blaisdell wants to thank her mother and father for always pushing her to follow her dreams and instilling in her a deep passion for the performing arts.

**PEYTON BUSCH** (Zacky Price) (he/him), tenor from Thornton, is a sophomore in the CU Boulder BMMT studying under Jennifer DeDominici. CU Boulder credits include *Titanic the Musical*, *Heathers the Musical* and 9 to 5. Busch would like to thank the production team and his friends and family.

CLAIRE CASEY (Farm Girl/Swamp Goddess) (she/her) is a mezzo soprano from Highlands Ranch and a freshman at CU Boulder pursuing a Bachelor of Music in musical theatre. She studies voice with Nicholas Perna. Casey is so excited to be a part of her first production at CU Boulder! When

not performing, she enjoys fitness, hiking and shopping at organic grocery stores! She would like to thank her family, teachers, friends and dog, Daisy, for their support and hopes you enjoy the show!

OLIVIA DALY-SHORT (New York Doctor/Shotgun Toter) is a freshman studying for a BM in musical theatre. She's from Evanston, Illinois and is in Jennifer DeDominici's voice studio. Recent credits: *Grease!* (MadKap Productions); *The Addams Family* (Uptown Music Theatre); Eklund Opera: *Pirates of Penzance*, *Hänsel und Gretel*; The Chicago Academy For the Arts: *Cabaret* (Sally Bowles), *As You Like It* (Rosalind), *9 to* 5 (Judy), *A Little Night Music* (Petra/Ms. Nordstrom), *Spring Awakening* (Martha) and *A Chorus Line* (Maggie).

CATHERINE DAVIS (Girl with Orange Cat/Nurse ) (she/her), soprano from Dallas, Texas, is a freshman at CU Boulder in the BMMT program. She recently appeared in CU Boulder's *The Pirates of Penzance*. Other credits include *Matilda, Into the Woods, Little Women, The Addams Family*, and *Cinderella*. In her free time, she enjoys hiking, reading, skiing and baking! Davis thanks her friends, family, and teachers for their constant support. Enjoy the show!

SETH EDGAR (Mayor/Grocer) (he/him) is a sophomore BMMT from Colorado Springs, and studies voice as a baritone under Jennifer DeDominici. This is Edgar's fifth production at CU Boulder, as he was previously a part of 9 to 5, Titanic, Heathers, and The Pirates of Penzance with Eklund Opera. Edgar enjoys music production and creating covers online, and he hopes you're inspired to become closer to your loved ones after watching Big Fish. Thank you for coming!

CARLY FREEMAN (Sandra Bloom) (she/her), soprano from Houston, Texas is a sophomore in the BMMT program at CU Boulder studying under Jennifer DeDominici. Previous CU Boulder credits include as *Heathers*, *Titanic* and 9 to 5. Freeman would like to give a big thank you to the production team for their wonderful work on this show, her cat, Luna, for running lines with her, and her mom for the outpouring love and support in all she pursues.

CAMMY GARCIA (Sharecroppper/Swamp Goddess) is a freshman from Windsor, pursuing a Bachelor of Music in musical theatre. She studies voice with Andrew Garland and Julie Simson, and is so excited to be a swing in this production of Big Fish! Past theatre credits include Martha Dunnstock in Heathers, Olive Ostrovsky in The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee, SpongeBob SquarePants in SpongeBob SquarePants: The Musical, The Red Cross Nurse/ The Queen of Hearts in Alice By Heart, Leanne in Puffs, and The First Witch in Macbeth. When she's not on stage, Garcia can be found hanging out with friends, listening to music or on a FaceTime call with her sister or mom. Speaking of, she would like to thank her mom and sister, wonderful friends, the cast, crew, and directing team and everyone who makes this show possible. Enjoy the show!

**SOPHIE GREEN** (The Witch/Alabama Lamb 1) is a mezzo soprano in her junior year at CU Boulder studying for a Bachelor of Music in musical theatre and a minor in Dance. She has had the honor of studying under both Jennifer

DeDominici and John Seesholtz. Recent performance credits include the Sargeant in *Pirates of Penzance* and Stewardess Hutchinson in *Titanic* with Eklund Opera, as well as assorted ensemble and swing roles in the CU Boulder College of Music's *Heathers*, 9 to 5, *Chicago* and *The Drowsy Chaperone*. In her free time, Green works as an RA in one of the university's residence halls and loves to read thriller and sci-fi novels, crochet and knit, draw and cook. Green would like to thank her family and friends for their endless love and support, and she is also deeply grateful to be part of this heartfelt tale today. Please enjoy, and don't forget to be the hero of your story!

ISABEL HARRISON (Josephine) is a senior studying under Jennifer DeDominici. She is a mezzo soprano originally from Colorado Springs. Some of her favorite experiences at CU include playing Kate Mullins in *Titanic* and Hunyak in Chicago. She most recently performed in Pirates of Penzance with the Eklund Opera Program. Outside of CU, she recently performed as Tabatha in Alice By Heart with Synthesis Theatre Co., and the Lady in Red with Dionysus Dancers. Harrison will graduate in May with a bachelor's degree in musical theater, minor in dance and a inging Health Specialist Certificate. After graduation, she will be participating in the Disney College Program in Florida. Outside of theater, Harrison enjoys video editing, sewing and constructing costumes, and spending time with her friends and family! Harrison is really grateful to work with her incredible peers one more time, and she hopes you enjoy the show!

OLIVER HARRELSON (Over-Excited Scout/Ashton Boy) is thrilled to be performing in *Big Fish* at CU Boulder. He has been doing musical theatre for seven years and has been in more tham 20 productions, his most recent performing in *Scrooge* (Young Ebenezer/Turkey Boy) at the Candlelight Dinner Theatre. He'd like to thank you for coming to see the performance and hope you enjoy the show!

JUDE HILL (Jenny Hill) (she/her) is a junior mezzo soprano in the musical theatre program (BM), studying under Abigail Nims. This will be her fifth production here at CU. Most recently, she has been seen as Young Republicanette in Heathers: The Musical, Cinderella in Into the Woods, and Madelaine Astor in Titanic, The Musical. She is incredibly grateful for everyone in her life who has supported her dreams of performance. She would not be where she is today without them. Hill is so excited to be a part of telling you the story of Big Fish and she hopes you enjoy the show!

QUINT HILL (Edward Bloom) (he/him) is a native of Charlotte, North Carolina in his junior year at the University of Colorado Boulder, studying under Matthew Chellis. He is so excited and honored to bring Edward Bloom to life. He would like to thank his family for their unwavering support of his craft. CU Boulder credits include, *Chicago* (Amos Hart), *Titanic* (Harold Bride) and 9 to 5 (Joe.) Enjoy the show!

REED JACOBS (Barber/Cowboy) is a sophomore studying advertising, business and theatre. Previous credits include: Heathers (Preppy Stud/Ensemble), Titanic (Edgar Beane), 9 to 5 (Doctor/Ensemble), Eurydice (Loud Stone), The Little Mermaid (Prince Eric), A Chorus Line (Gregory Gardner), and

Jekyll and Hyde (Simon Stride). He would like to thank the CU Boulder BMMT program as well as his parents for being so supportive and dedicated.

INDIGO JONES (William Bloom) (he/him), a tenor raised in Boulder, is a sophomore studying musical theatre. Jones is training to become a triple threat, building up his dancing, singing, and acting skills; you may have seen him in past productions like Heathers, Titanic or 9 to 5. Jones is happy you are back at a CU production, and if this is your first—Welcome!

SAM KJELSTROM (Dr. Bennett/Will U/S) from Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, is a freshman at CU Boulder pursuing a BM in musical theater. His most recent credits include Pirate/Policeman in Eklund Opera's The Pirates of Penzance. and The Light in the song "Shine a Light" in CU Boulder's Heathers: The Musical. In his free time, Kjelstrom enjoys skiing, hiking and napping. He would like to thank his friends and family for their endless support and to everyone dedicated to helping the BMMT flourish.

ZANE LARSON (Karl the Giant) (he/him) is excited to be in Big Fish with such a talented and kind cast! CU Boulder credits include Titanic, Company and Heathers. In his free time, Larson creates 80s pop music under the alias Mister Bodacious! He says he's "excited to be tall for once" and hopes people like the show! He dedicates his performance to his mom and dad for helping him grow for 22 (and a half) years!

KAYA LEYENDECKER (Cheerleader/Swamp Goddess) is a freshman at CU Boulder studying for a BM in musical theatre with a minor in dance. Born and raised in central California, Levendecker is now honing her vocal skills under the guidance of Jennifer DeDominici. At CU Boulder she has performed in Heathers with the College of Music and Pirates of Penzance with Ekland Opera. Notable hometown credits include Catherine Parr in Six, The Musical, Alice Murphy in Bright Star, Ariel in The Little Mermaid, Winnie Foster in Tuck Everlasting and Frenchie in Grease! Passionate about the arts from a young age, Leyendecker is thrilled to be a part of CU Boulder's dynamic musical theatre program. She would like to thank Jen and Justin, all of her fabulous teachers at CU Boulder, and her family and boyfriend for their unwavering support.

TY LOWREY (Don Price/Edward U/S) (he/him), freshman in the BMMT program from Orlando, Florida. This is his second performance with CU Boulder! You may have seen him in his debut performance as "dog" and "altar boy" in Heathers the Musical. Lowrey has the privilege to be working in Matthew Chellis' studio and is thankful for his mentorship. Lowrey thanks his family, Ryan Skiles, Lea Floden and Lauren Langa for where he is today!

ALECIA MARQUARDT (The Witch/Alabama Lamb 1) is a senior mezzo soprano in the BMMT program at CU Boulder. Theatre has always been her passion, and she feels so blessed to be able to do it every day. Past credits include Annie (Six) in Chicago, Second Officer Lightoller in Titanic, Doralee Rhodes in 9 to 5 and Stoner Chick in Heathers. She is so excited to bring the magic of theatre to you as The Witch, and hopes that this entire show will enchant you. She would like to thank her mom, grandma, the rest of her family,

her professor, Jennifer Bird-Arvidsson and Julie Simpson, and her friends for their continuous support in her theatrical endeavors. She would also love to thank the reader for their continued support of the arts.

ALEX MEHIGAN (Frustrated Fisherman/Red Fang) (he/they) is a 23-year-old senior graduating in May with a BM in musical theatre. Born and raised in Portland, Oregon, the Pacific Northwest is where he calls home. Mehigan is a voice student of mezzo soprano Jennifer DeDominici and has studied with baritone Andrew Garland. Stage credits include Jason "J.D." Dean in Heathers: The Musical, Amos Hart in Chicago, Emmett Forrest in Legally Blonde: The Musical, Prince Eric in Disney's The Little Mermaid, Arvide Abernathy in Guys and Dolls, Underling in The Drowsy Chaperone, Dick Bernly in 9 to 5, The Musical, and Tiny Tom in Urinetown: The Musical. Big Fish will be Mehigan's final production at CU Boulder. alexmehigan.com/about | IG: @alexmehigan

ANSEL MERGES (Will's Son/Additional Scout/NY Kid) (he/him), is a third grader from Longmont. This is his first professional show. He's very excited and hopes he makes you laugh. When he isn't acting he enjoys math, biking, skiing, dancing, running and playing his cello. He spends hours reading whenever he has the opportunity. He would like to thank Amanda Giguere for encouraging him to audition, his family for bringing him to rehearsals and his friends and family for coming to see the performance. He would like to thank Justin and Ellie for being patient and giving him jelly beans.

COURTNEY SAN PEDRO (Alabama Lamb 2/Swamp Goddess/Dance Captain) (she/her) is from Gurnee, Illinois. This is her first year at CU Boulder, where she is studying to receive her BMMT! Last time San Pedro was performing on this stage, she got the privilege to be Heather McNamara in the musical Heathers this past fall. Favorite credits include Wednesday Addams in *The Addams Family*, Katherine Plumber in Newsies, Mimi Marquez in Rent, Amy March in Little Women and Sandy Cheeks in SpongeBob SquarePants: The Musical. This process has required a lot of hard work and time spent on the show in and out of rehearsals, so she is ecstatic that the show is finally open and hopes you enjoy the show!

NORAH SCHAEFER (Josephine) (she/her) graduates in May with a BFA in musical theatre and a BSBA in management and entrepreneurship. Schaefer's recent performances include Violet in 9 to 5, Susan in Company, Oliver/Corin in As You Like It and leading roles in multiple student films. She also works as a stitcher in the Theatre & Dance costume shop. Schaefer would like to thank her family and professors for all of their support, and her friends for an incredible four years. She hopes you enjoy her final CU Boulder performance!

AVA SCOTT (School Teacher/Grocer's Wife) (she/her) is thrilled to be a part of her fourth mainstage production at CU Boulder. Previously, Scott appeared in Heathers, Working: A Musical and Titanic as a swing. Originally from Florida, Scott is a sophomore pursuing a Bachelor of Music degree in musical theatre. She would like to thank Justin, CJ, Ellie and the entire production team, cast, and crew for their amazing work on Big Fish, as well as her friends and family for endless support! Enjoy the show!

**LEAH TAYLOR** (Giant's Girlfriend/Juggler) (she/her), from Castle Rock, is a freshman BMMT. This is Taylor's first show at CU Boulder, but her participation and love for the arts goes back for many years. In her free time, Taylor enjoys reading, swimming and being outdoors. She thanks all the lovely people who have been supportive of her journey here at CU Boulder! Enjoy!

TIMOTHY UNDERBRINK (Young Will) (he/him), is currently in third grade in Denver. On his off time, you will find him dribbling on the soccer field, performing plays with his friends in his basement and enacting ultimate wrestling moves on his little brother. Underbrink has appeared in Town Hall Art Center's Miracle on 34th Street as Tommy and in Performing Arts Academy's Frozen Jr as Olaf. Thank you so much to his family, his teachers, and especially the amazing cast and crew of Big Fish—otherwise known as his new best friends—for supporting him through this process.

JOHN AUGUST (Author, book) received a 2004 BAFTA nomination for his screenplay for Big Fish. His other credits include Go, Titan A.E., Charlie's Angels, Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle, Corpse Bride, The Nines, Frankenweenie and Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, for which he received a 2006 Grammy nomination for lyrics. The first book in his middle-grade fantasy adventure series Arlo Finch was published by Macmillan in February 2018 and has been translated into 11 languages. Born in Colorado, he is a graduate of Drake University and USC's School of Cinematic Arts. On Twitter and Instagram @johnaugust.

JOHNMICHAEL BOHACH (Scenic Designer) (he/him), is a freelance scenic designer and properties artisan based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In 2006,he graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with degrees in theatre arts and architectural studies, and has since gone on to design more than 250 productions with a variety of theatre and opera companies, both locally and nationally. His newest endeavor has taken him into designing immersive pop-up barsthemes have included The House of Burton, The Neverland Experience, The Alice and The Tipsy Elf all of which debuted in Pittsburgh before touring in other major cities such as Philadelphia, Columbus, Cleveland, Indianapolis and Orlando. He has also partnered with Mixtape Cocktail Lounge in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania to seasonally rotate thru thematic experiences every few months. Those experiences included Mixtape Studio 54, A Very Merry Mixtape, Wonderland at Mixtape, Mixtape Magic Academy and SuperMixtape64. A portfolio of his work can be seen at johnmichaelbohach.com

JUSTIN BOCCITTO (Choreographer) is an award-winning theatre artist who has worked in the entertainment industry for more than 30 years. He's produced, staged and performed in more than a hundred live theatrical events including Broadway Cares Gypsy Of The Year, The Off-Broadway production of One Night With Fanny Brice, national tours, productions at NYMF, Paper Mill Playhouse, The Metropolitan Opera, The Ryman Auditorium and many more. As an educator he has instructed at Broadway Dance Center, The Juilliard School, NYU and Marymount Manhattan College. Some of his students have included Radio City Rockettes, Lady Gaga, Sophia Anne Caruso and Jennifer Damiano,

along with being asked to teach Stephen Colbert how to tap dance. Other notable artists Justin has worked with include: Nicole Fosse, Andrew Lippa, Elaine Stritch, John Kander, Tim Blake Nelson, Lauren Ambrose, Marvin Hamlisch, Chloe Arnold and Alan Cumming. He also appeared on the MTV series *MADE* and created *Common Ground*, a tap dance project based out of New York, Denver and Los Angeles. justinboccitto.comcommongroundtap.com. Much love to Dani for her infinite support.

ELLIE GRIFFIN (Stage Manager/Intimacy Director) (she/her) works as a stage manager, director, intimacy director and theatre educator. She holds a degree in theatre and film from Pitzer College. Select stage management credits include Reunion '85 ('24 tour), Twelfth Night..., Ten Things I Love about Shakespeare and She Kills Monsters. Select directing and intimacy credits include Nana's Naughty Knickers, The Prom, Machinal, Stupid F##king Bird and Legally Blonde. Additionally, Griffin teaches theatre in youth detention centers and schools with a youth advocacy nonprofit working to disrupt the school to prison pipeline through Restorative Theatre<sup>TM</sup>. Immense gratitude to Oz and Rem. Cheers to the incredible students and creatives who brought this show to life!

JUSTIN JOHNSON (Director) (he/him) works at the CU Boulder College of Music directing shows and teaching acting and musical theatre history courses. He has been involved in more than 70 productions either as an actor, production manager or director. Recent directing credits include The Cottage, 9 to 5, Mamma Mia, Chicago and The Drowsy Chaperone. Johnson has a master's in theatre and performance studies and recently won a Meritorious Acting Achievement Award from the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival for his performance as Ageon in The Comedy of Errors. He created and facilitated a program to train applied theatre practitioners that premiered at Bosch Bahá'í School in California and brought the same applied theatre work to the 2019 Newkind Festival in Tasmania, Australia. Johnson then used this work as a foundation to build his own theatre company, Radiant Hearts Theatre, which focuses on theatre for social change.

ANDREW LIPPA (Author, music and lyrics) Broadway credits include: Music and lyrics for Big Fish directed and choreographed by Susan Stroman; the Tony-nominated music and lyrics for the Broadway musical The Addams Family (directed by Jerry Zaks), as well as the music for Aaron Sorkin's Broadway play The Farnsworth Invention (directed by Des McAnuff). Other musicals include the Drama Desk award-winning musical The Wild Party (book/music/lyrics); A Little Princess (music); john & jen (music/book); Asphalt Beach (music and lyrics); and You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown (additional music/lyrics and arrangements), and the upcoming Love Somebody Now. His epic oratorio for men's chorus, orchestra and soloists, I Am Harvey Milk has seen over 40 productions including Disney Hall, Lincoln Center, and London's Cadogan Hall. Awards: Tony, Emmy, Grammy nominations; shared Emmy for Nickelodeon's "The Wonder Pets"; SFGMC Vanguard Award; The Gilman/Gonzalez-Falla Theater Foundation Award; ASCAP's Richard Rodgers/New Horizons Award; The Drama Desk Award; The Outer Critics Circle Award. A graduate of the University of Michigan, Mr.

Lippa serves as president of the board of The Dramatists Guild Foundation (dgf.org), recipient of the Tony Award for Excellence in the American Theater. He was born in Leeds, England, grew up in suburban Detroit, and is an ordained Interfaith minister.

CJ LLEWELLYN-RYAN (Assistant Director) has more than 20 years of experience in theatre production. She embraced working as a stage manager (SM) in community spaces across northwest England and helped nurture young talent at AMDA College of Performing Arts and the Youth Academy of Dramatic Arts in Los Angeles. After joining CU Boulder's Enrollment Management team in 2018, Llewellyn-Ryan returned to her theatre roots as SM for the College of Music's 2022 production of *Drowsy Chaperone*. After lending her skills as Sub-SM for the Department of Theatre & Dance's performance of *Company* in 2023 and as ASM for the College of Music's 2024 production of *Heathers*, Llewellyn-Ryan is excited to collaborate on *Big Fish* as assistant director!

ALYSHA PERRIN (Stilt Consultant) (she/her) is a dance/circus artist and stage manager local to Boulder. She earned her BFA in contemporary dance from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. Her journey in the arts led to a career teaching and performing a variety of dance styles, aerial disciplines, acro, and stilts. Through Frequent Flyers Aerial Dance, she completed her aerial and stilts teacher training, began her professional production and stage management work,and served as the education director. Perrin's relationship with CU Boulder began with stage managing a dance department thesis and has expanded to the Eklund Opera Program. She was grateful for the invitation to work with the musical theatre students of *Big Fish* and loves contributing to the learning and growth of the next generation of performing artists!

**EDIE ROTH** (Fight Director; she/her) is a senior at CU Boulder pursuing a BFA in acting. She received her fight director certification through Sordelet Inc., and has done intimacy

training with IDC (Level 1). Roth worked as the fight director for *John Proctor is the Villain* and *Heathers* (CU Mainstage); As You Like It and Dog Sees God (Sandbox); and assistant fight director for Let The Right One In and fight captain for The Play That Goes Wrong and Antigone (CU Mainstage). When not puzzling through violence and intimacy, she can be seen onstage with The Colorado Shakespeare Festival, CU Boulder Theatre & Dance, and Sandbox Student Series. @edie.roth

VICTOR WALTERS (Music Director) (he/him) is so excited to be making his debut with the College of Music at CU Boulder. He has performed as a collaborative/rehearsal pianist, keyboardist and music director all over the northern Colorado region. He is the currently the resident music director and staff pianist for the School of Theatre Arts and Dance at the University of Northern Colorado. He made his Carnegie Hall debut as a pianist for the Choirs of America Conference in New York City in 2022. Walters was nominated in 2023 and 2024 on BroadwayWorld.com for Best Music Director and Performance of an Orchestra. Walters' credits include Working, A Gentleman's Guide to Love and Murder, Almost Heaven: The Songs of John Denver, Seussical, Putnam County Spelling Bee, The Addams Family, Pippin, Tick, Tick... Boom!, Rogers and Hammerstein's Cinderella, Elf, Spring Awakening, A New Brain, Dames at Sea and more.

JOSEPH WHITNEY (Assistant Stage Manager) (he/him), is a stage manager operating out of Boulder. Whitney has stage managed productions of *Raised on Ronstadt* (Local Theater Company), *Gianni Schicchi/ll Tabarro* Double Bill (Boulder Opera Company), *Cendrillon* (MSU Denver) and the past three years of Parlando School for the Arts' New Musical Project. Whitney most recently came off assistant stage managing *Pirates of Penzance* with CU Boulder's Eklund Opera program and is excited to be working with CU Boulder again. Outside of theatre, Whitney is a fan of Magic: The Gathering, Scooby-Doo and ska music.

#### ORCHESTRA

Musical Director/Piano 1 Victor Walters

Piano 2 Robert Hjelmstad

Trumpet Rebecca Ortiz

French horn Jaila Carr

Reed 1 Jason Olney

Reed 2 Jonah Sutinen

Violin Laura Perez Rangel

Cello

Andrew Joseph Brown

Guitar

Sophia Stout Mitch Segura

Bass guitar Trevor Preuss

**Drums/Percussion**Ian Spillman

Percussion Christian De La Torre

#### **PRODUCTION TEAM**

Assistant Technical Director and Projection Programmer Ben Smith

**Light Board Operator** Andrea Mackey Carpenters and Electricians

Pearl Ennsle Joshua Kirk Andrea Mackey Brandon Paine

Properties Manager Jenn Melcher

Scenic Artists Lelah Radostis Jenn Galvin

Wardrobe Heads Carolyn Miller Nia Quan

Costume Shop Assistants Hannah Bensen

Wardrobe Crew Zita Kinney

#### **SPECIAL THANKS**

Dean John Davis
Associate Dean Matt Roeder
CU Presents
College of Music Voice
Faculty
Rojana Savoye
Bennett Forsythe
Carrie Howard
Arianne Powell
Tamara Meneghini-Stalker
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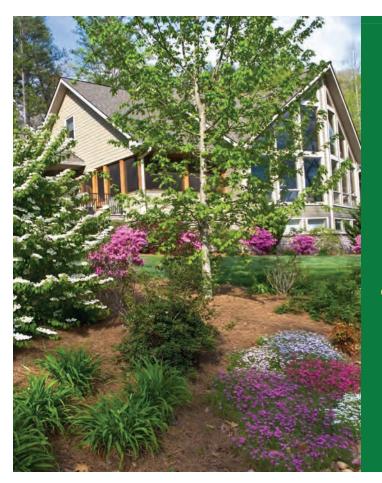


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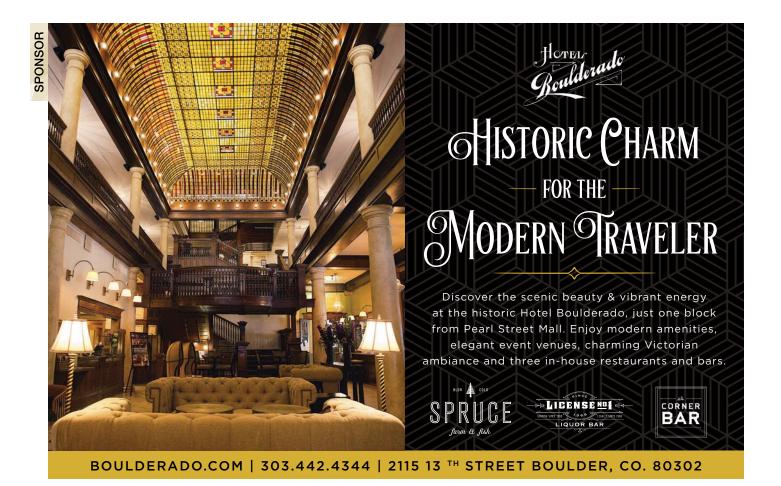
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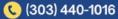




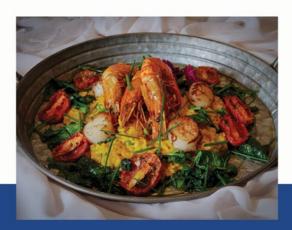












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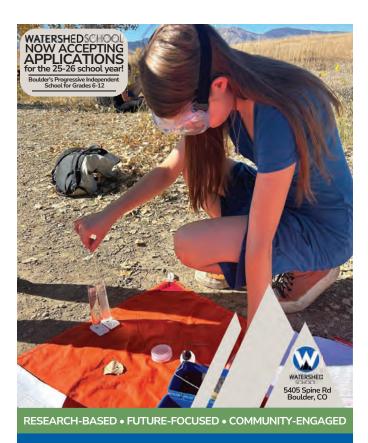
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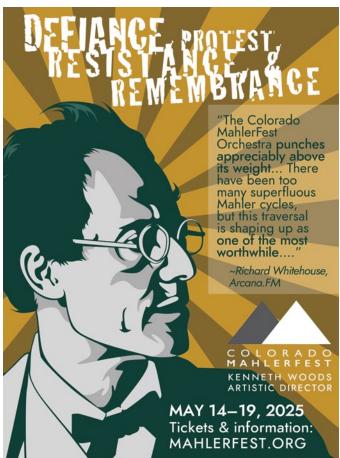


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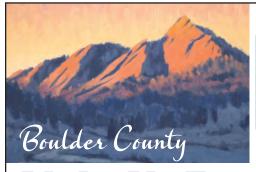
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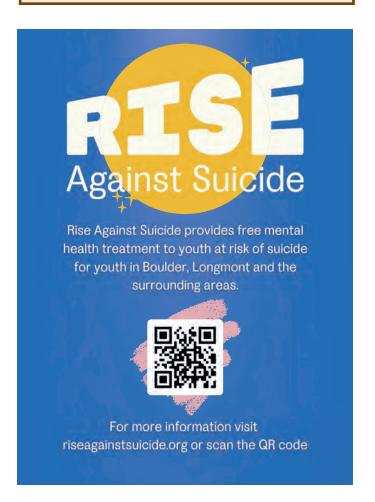
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## A Graphic Journey: **Prints by Pablo Picasso**

The Tim Collins Collection

## Feb. 1-May 4, 2025

Explore the genius of Pablo Picasso in an exhibition featuring more than 60 works from 1923 to 1972.

Free for Museum members • \$8 Adults \$5 Students/Seniors

## More Upcoming Events:

March 14-16 **Boulder International Film** 

Festival

March 20, 7 pm **Longmont Symphony Orchestra** 

Igor Stravinsky's "L'Histoire du Soldat" ("The Soldier's Tale")

March 22, Colorado Symphony presents

10 am & 11:30 am "The Three Little Pigs"

March 27, 7 pm NCAR Explorer Series-Sun's

Magnetism

March 28, 7 pm Mont Alto Motion Picture

Orchestra-"The Kid"

March 29, 7pm Mont Alto Motion Picture

Orchestra-Silent Comedy Shorts

April 3, 7 pm Erik Satie & All That Jazz:

A Musical Exploration

April 10, 7 pm "Moment in Time"

**Puppetry Performance** 

April 11, 2:30 pm Come Away with Me-

A Norah Jones Tribute

April 17, 7 pm "Midnight in Paris"

(2011, PG-13)

April 18, 2:30 pm Talk with the Curator—Historic

Architecture Lost & Saved

April 24, 7 pm Avant Gardens: Cutting-edge Trends in Garden Design



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Gems of the AMRC collections:
Dan Fong

The American Music Research Center collections, housed in the CU Boulder Libraries Archives in Norlin Library, comprise the region's largest repository of archival music materials. In this spotlight, discover Colorado's involvement in the rock and folk eras through the Dan Fong Collection.

#### By Kathryn Bistodeau

Among the American Music Research Center (AMRC) collections, hidden gems exist around every corner: Colorado history, music legends, big band ephemera, silent film scores, letters from CU Boulder founders and more. In our new series—Gems of the AMRC collections—we aim to spotlight their content and the stories of the people behind them.

Our first deep dive explores the Dan Fong Collection comprising folders of photos captured by the legendary Colorado rock 'n' roll and folk music photographer.

Fong's start in photography wasn't music at all, but a chance to capture the president at the time: Dwight D. Eisenhower. "Since I was such a little kid, all the photographers let me stand in the front. To me, those photos are amazing because at 14, I could tell that I already had the eye and the way to compose the pictures-plus they were really sharp and in focus."

From there, Fong (Mktg. '70) continued to take photos and started his own photography business after graduating from CU Boulder. "I did everything from bar mitzvah photographs to portraits to weddings," he recalls. "The biggest break came when KFML-the underground radio station-ended up three blocks from my studio. I went down there and made a deal with them: 'I'll take photographs of the artists and give them to you for your advertising and you do radio commercials for me.' That was a big deal because that's when I met all of the record guys."

Fong's photography is highly varied—from family portraits to posed album covers to current events photojournalism. But what he's best known for is his 1970s concert photography. In his career, Fong photographed the Doobie Brothers, the Grateful Dead, Zephyr, The Who, Firefall, Fleetwood Mac and many others.

Stars of the collection include concert photos captured on the CU Boulder campus. There are shots of Otis Taylor performing with Zephyr on the steps of Norlin Library. There's also a series of photos taken in Folsom Field featuring Firefall (left) and a very familiar horizon.

"I climbed up in the scaffolding to take all of those pictures of the people in the background and that teaches you not to be embarrassed-because, you know, 50,000 people are looking at you!"

A few years ago, Fong began thinking about how to ensure his collection outlived him and welcomed the opportunity to house his collection at CU Boulder. "I've known a lot of photographers who didn't think about archiving their work—and then something would happen, people would throw their work away or it wouldn't go to the same place," he says.

"My collection is huge and I'd been thinking about what to do with it, so I asked Megan [Lead Archivist Megan Friedel] whether she was interested in archiving my entire collection. Had Megan and the university not said yes, so many of these images...you'd never see them."

Even the Eisenhower photographs were nearly lost to time. "I lost that film in a moving box in my parents' basement for 50 years—but when my mom died, I found the box. The university has a bunch of those photographs now."

Through the years, Fong has changed cameras, gone from film to digital photography and evolved editing strategies but he says the main change to his photography is how comfortable he has gotten behind the lens.

"Being a photographer is like being a basketball player," he shares. "It's like Caitlin Clark—you practice it and it's muscle memory. That's what happens after years of being a photographer."

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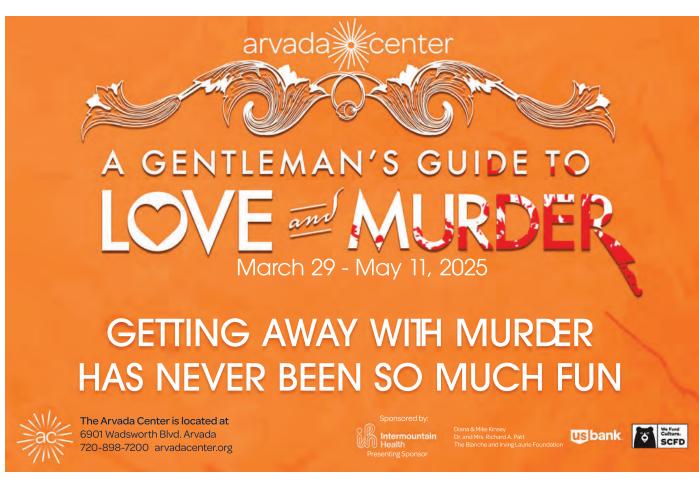
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