

Big Fish (2003)

Written by

John August (screenplay) & Daniel Wallace (novel)

Directed by

Tim Burton

Cast

Ewan McGregor	<i>Ed Bloom (young)</i>
Albert Finney	<i>Ed Bloom (senior)</i>
Billy Crudup	<i>Will Bloom</i>
Jessica Lange	<i>Sandra Bloom (senior)</i>
Helena Bonham Carter	<i>Jenny / The Witch</i>
Alison Lohman	<i>Sandra Bloom (young)</i>
Robert Guillaume	<i>Dr. Bennett (senior)</i>
Marion Cotillard	<i>Josephine</i>
Matthew McGrory	<i>Karl the Giant</i>
David Denman	<i>Don Price - Age 18-22</i>
Missi Pyle	<i>Mildred</i>
Loudon Wainwright III	<i>Beamen</i>
Ada Tai	<i>Ping</i>
Arlene Tai	<i>Jing</i>
Steve Buscemi	<i>Norther Winslow</i>
Danny DeVito	<i>Amos Calloway</i>
Deep Roy	<i>Mr. Soggybottom</i>
R. Keith Harris	<i>Ed's Father</i>
Karla Droege	<i>Ed's Mother</i>
Miley Cyrus	<i>Ruthie - Age 8 (as Destiny Cyrus)</i>



Trivia

- The joke with the elephant defecating while Edward daydreams was unscripted. The filming crew found it hilarious, and quickly zoomed out to get the whole thing.
- The Witch's makeup took approximately five hours to apply.
- Ewan McGregor was cast as Young Ed Bloom when producers noticed the striking similarity between him and pictures of a young Albert Finney, who plays Senior Ed Bloom.

- Matthew McGrory (Karl the Giant) appreciated the shoes the costume department made for him out of luggage. He held the Guinness World Record for the largest feet: size US 29.5.
- Even though Young Edward lands in Korea, the ventriloquist and his puppet speak in Tagalog (language of the Philippines) while the Siamese twins and Edward speak in Cantonese. The soldiers who pull the ventriloquist off the stage speak Mandarin Chinese while the other soldiers speak in Korean.
- The scenes at Auburn were originally supposed to be shot on location on the campus of Auburn University, but the school officials asked for script approval and the production did not have time to wait, so they filmed at Huntingdon College in Montgomery, Alabama.
- Steven Spielberg was attached to this project and wanted Jack Nicholson to star, but dropped out due to his full schedule, soon after which Tim Burton signed on to direct.
- For scenes in the United States, Alabama was the only state where filming took place. One scene included France, where Will and Joséphine lived at the time.
- When Edward Bloom arrives in Spectre for the first time, Billy Redden, is playing the iconic song "Dueling Banjos" from the film Deliverance (1972), in which he played Lonnie.
- Though the circus Colossus (George McArthur) is shown being dwarfed by Karl the Giant (Matthew McGrory), in reality he's only three inches shorter. McArthur is 7' 3" and McGrory was 7' 6". Creative camera angles and platforms were used to exaggerate McGrory's height.
- While Spectre is a fictional town, the ZIP Code shown on the deed to Jenny's house is real. 36104 is one of the ZIP Codes for Montgomery, Alabama. You can however, Google "The Town of Spectre" and see the private island where the set is now abandoned.
- The circus fat man was played by famed sideshow attraction Howard Huges. This was his final appearance as a professional fat man. His weight peaked at 712 pounds during his career of more than 25 years. When he died in 2009, he weighed 'only' 609 pounds.
- Tim Burton kept the ventriloquist dummy from the war sequence and has it at his home. He named it Lang.
- Ada Tai and Arlene Tai (Ping and Jing) are twins, though not conjoined. They were attached at the hip and waist with a metal corset-like contraption to fit into the custom dress for their stage performance. When their legs needed to appear on camera, two were digitally removed.
- Joseph Campbell's book, "The Hero with a Thousand Faces," appears in this film. It is shown first on a sleeping Edward Bloom and then later still on the nightstand during a scene between Ed and Will. Daniel Wallace is an outspoken fan of Campbell's.
- At 1:17 the commercial on the TV is a real commercial for an actual car dealership in Alabama. Though the name is never clearly shown, Alabamans who saw the film reportedly recognized it immediately.
- The finished screenplay found its way to Tim Burton not long after his own father had died, striking an emotionally resonant note with him.
- The two portraits on the walls in the bank scene are actually of the founders of Bishop-Parker Furniture Co., Montgomery, Alabama. Several props were purchased there. The buyer noticed the portraits and thought they would pass as old bankers.
- Film debut of Miley Cyrus, then known as Destiny Cyrus (as Ruthie, 8-year-old version).
- Producers at Sony originally wanted Brian Cox for the role of Ed Bloom (senior), but when casting supervisor Denise Chamian was given photos of Cox, she mistook them for Albert Finney and offered him the part instead. By the time Sony realized the mistake, the film was too far into production to make any changes.