



## Audition Notice

# The Last Five Years

by Jason Robert Brown

**Performances 20-23 October 2011**

at The Rag Factory

Director: Michael David Smith  
Musical Director: Ben Nicholls  
Assistant Director: Fran Rafferty  
Production Designer: Jo Donnelly  
Producer: Craig Topp  
Marketing Director: Lauren Mole

**To book an audition slot, please email: [last5years@sedos.co.uk](mailto:last5years@sedos.co.uk).**

## The Show

*The Last Five Years* ("L5Y") is a touching two-person show that follows a man and a woman through the arc of their failed five year relationship. Jamie, the man and a writer, moves forward in time from initial infatuation through love, supporting Cathy's nascent career, their marriage, his personal career success, temptation, infidelity, then his ending the relationship. Cathy, the woman and an actress, moves *backwards* in time through pain, suspicion and jealousy, feelings of inadequacy due to her failure to realize her career, happiness in a new-found marriage, desire to be her own person, and a very promising beginning of a relationship. Their time-lines only overlap (and immediately diverge) at the "I do" of their marriage.

The musical is through-written in a pop/broadway style, with full, gorgeous orchestration (piano, upright bass, 2 cellos, guitar, violin). It is a showcase piece for both the man and woman, demanding strong acting and powerful vocals. This show is well-loved in musical theatre because the songs are memorable, powerful, engaging, challenging and fun for the audience and the cast. The theme is universal and the scenes are dramatic without being overwrought. The show is great theatre.

L5Y runs about 90 minutes in addition to an interval.

## **Casting**

This show will be **double cast; we will cast two Jamies and two Cathys**. Everyone will perform three of the six shows, and will be paired with both other partners - that is, if cast as Jamie, you will perform opposite one Cathy in two performances, and opposite the other Cathy in one performance, and similarly for Cathys. (We will determine performance schedules later in the process.)

Also, contrary to standard settings of the show, we will often have both characters on stage at the same time, even when they are not singing. This means that actors will have to act silently for minutes at a stretch, reacting to the character with the solo. We will be looking for this during auditions. The actors must have stamina and presence.

We will not have choreography, but the actors must have poise on stage and be able to hit their marks.

### **Jamie**

Male, mid twenties to early thirties. Must play a range of ages over 5 years: from the first promising date to dazzling career and relationship success into someone who is blinded by their own success and ego. He suffers from a lack of understanding of what he needs in a relationship, leading to infidelity and (un?)intentionally sabotaging the marriage. But the portrayal must be human and lovable - Jamie is making mistakes and often fails to understand himself and the consequences of his choices, and is not being an intentionally bad person. The audience must disapprove of his actions, yet still love the flawed human character.

Vocal Range: strong tenor, A2 (a bit more than one octave below middle C) to Bb4 (above middle C).

### **Cathy**

Female, mid twenties to early thirties. Must play a range of ages over 5 years, from an ambitious, fresh-faced girl in a new relationship, to a woman stunned by a betrayal and a divorce that she is only beginning to understand. She acts like she is sure of what she wants, but she often second-guesses herself, and nothing makes her less happy than her own lack of confidence.

Cathy is a difficult acting role, with a character arc going backwards and one of the most heart-wrenching and exposed opening numbers in musical theatre. The actor must understand Cathy's role in her failed relationship as well as the naivete of her love, and portray this without the character herself realizing this.

Vocal Range: mezzo/belter, F3 (below middle C) to D#5 (a bit more than one octave above middle C).

## **The Vision of the Production**

*The Last 5 Years* can be a great “he said / she said” concert, but this is only the start of the piece, and it may be lovely, but it isn’t theatre. We are looking for strong actors who will be able to portray the journeys of the characters while delivering powerful vocal performances in a demanding part.

The actors’ open humanity must shine through - we are not looking for a glossy Broadway-esque performance, although we are looking for technical excellence and honest *human* acting. Because this will be in an intimate setting, we will look for more “film-like” acting rather than big brash acting, although we still want presence, confidence, lovability and strength to read to the back of the (intimate) house.

The set will reflect themes of fractured/imperfect memory, perspective (both personal and time), and sequence. We will likely use photography and projection to add depth and scene.

Costuming will be simple, mostly realistic and contemporary.

## **Location**

The workshops, auditions, recalls and rehearsals will take place at:  
Ocean House, 10 Little Trinity Ln, City of London, London, EC4V 2AR.  
Nearest tube is Mansion House or St. Paul’s.  
A map can be found at [www.sedos.co.uk](http://www.sedos.co.uk)

## **Workshop**

**Date:** 21 July, 6-9pm.

Come and meet the production team and understand the characters, the show and the production. Sing a few songs from the show and get an overview of what the team is looking for at auditions.

## **Auditions**

To book an audition slot, please email: [last5years@sedos.co.uk](mailto:last5years@sedos.co.uk) with your preference of audition time.

**First Round: Thu 28, Fri 29, and Sat 30 July.** Audition slots are available 6pm-9pm on Thu and Friday and Saturday 9am-noon. Audition slots will be 10 minutes, and will be booked on a first-come, first served basis.

You will be required to sing any song of your choice to a piano accompaniment. Please bring your own sheet music. You will need to choose a song which demonstrates your vocal range and performance skills, specifically the vocal range and style of the show. Please demonstrate your acting skills during the audition song as well, not just straight singing. You will also be

asked to read a short monologue, which will be provided at the time of your allocation of an audition slot. Memorization of the monologue is not required, but you should be at ease with the material to allow for your acting to show through. We strongly prefer memorization of your song.

Please also note that due to time constraints you may be stopped part of the way through the piece or asked to start in the middle, so please do not be put off by this as it is not necessarily a reflection on your audition (we may be cutting you off because we really liked what we heard).

You must also fill out and bring an audition form, which will be supplied in response to your audition email.

In summary, please bring:

- Your sheet music for the accompanist (you should have this memorized).
- Your completed audition form.
- Your £5 audition fee if you are not a Sedos member (see “Audition, Participation, and Membership fees” below).

And please prepare the monologue that will be provided at allocation of your audition slot.

**Recalls: Sun 31 July, 10am-5pm.** (There will be a break for lunch.)

If you are recalled, please be sure to be available for this entire time.

The recalls will be held in a workshop format. If you are recalled, we will ask you to perform specific songs and scenes and you will then workshop these with the other auditionees.

If recalled for the part of Cathy, you should become familiar with a section of “Climbing Uphill”, and a section of “The Next Ten Minutes”. Memorization is not required, but you should be at ease with the material to allow for your acting to show through. You will receive this material for recalls when applying for an audition slot.

If recalled for the part of Jamie, you should learn a small section of “If I Didn’t Believe In You”, a section of “The Next Ten Minutes”, and a small section of “Moving Too Fast” (the high part!). Memorization is not required, but you should be at ease with the material to allow for your acting to show through. You will receive this material for recalls when applying for an audition slot.

If you’d like the album to study for the auditions, it is available on iTunes, Amazon and Spotify.

## **Audition, participation and membership fees**

Sedos is one of London's pre-eminent amateur theatre societies, producing quality shows to the highest standards. Please note that performers are not paid - not even expenses. To perform in *The Last Five Years* you must be a member of Sedos (membership is currently £30 per year) and pay a participation fee of £40. There is a £5 audition fee for non-Sedos members. If you are cast in the show, your audition fee will be deducted from your participation fee.

For more information, please see [sedos.co.uk](http://sedos.co.uk).

## **Notifications**

We will inform you as soon as possible whether you will be recalled and/or cast. We will call all those who are recalled and cast. We hope to call all auditionees, however, due to time constraints, we may notify you via email. If you are unsuccessful, we are happy to provide constructive feedback on your audition.

## **Rehearsals**

We will begin rehearsals in early September, so you must be available for rehearsals from then through the performances. We may begin a “soft start” to rehearsals in mid August. Be sure to state any potential conflicts on your audition form - please be honest! Conflicts from Oct 8-23 will unfortunately not allow you to be in the show. We will rehearse Monday evenings and Wednesday evenings (typically 7-10), and either Saturday or Sunday afternoons (typically 12-5).

## **History and Reviews**

The show was first performed in Illinois in 2001, and ran off-Broadway in 2002. This off-Broadway production won the 2002 Drama Desk Award for outstanding music and lyrics, as well as receiving Drama Desk nominations for Outstanding Musical, Outstanding Actor, Outstanding Actress, Outstanding Orchestrations, and Outstanding Set Design. It also received the Lucille Lortel Award nomination for Outstanding Musical and Outstanding Actor, and the Outer Critics Circle Award nomination for Outstanding Off-Broadway Musical.

In 2006, *The Last 5 Years* saw its London debut in the Menier Chocolate Factory, and has had several prior performances in London amateur theatre. The show holds a near cult following for its fantastic music and heart-wrenching situations.

More information available on [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Last\\_Five\\_Years](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Last_Five_Years) and <http://www.jasonrobertbrown.com/>.

## **The Venue**

The Rag Factory is a perfect venue for our production vision. The space is a gallery space, not a traditional performance space and it looks a lot like a loft-style apartment (especially once we get done with it). It seats 80-100 people per night.

We will have a set that invites people into the lives of Jamie and Cathy, making them feel like their good friends who are looking back on their relationship with love and caring, seeing both the good and the bad, but mainly sympathizing with the characters on their journey.

The location is also appropriate for this intimate yet edgy production, just off Brick Lane, at 16 Heneage Street, London E1 5LJ.

**All correspondence regarding the production and the auditions should be directed to the producer Craig Topp at [last5years@sedos.co.uk](mailto:last5years@sedos.co.uk).**