



The Lion King (musical)

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The Lion King is a musical based on the 1994 Disney animated film of the same name with music by Elton John and lyrics by Tim Rice along with the musical score created by Hans Zimmer with choral arrangements by Lebo M. Directed by Julie Taymor, the musical features actors in animal costumes as well as giant, hollow puppets. The show is produced by Disney Theatrical Productions.

The musical debuted July 8, 1997, in Minneapolis, Minnesota at the Orpheum Theatre, and was an instant success before premiering on Broadway at the New Amsterdam Theater on October 15, 1997, in previews with the official opening on November 13, 1997. On June 13, 2006, the Broadway production moved to the Minskoff Theatre to make way for the musical version of *Mary Poppins*, where it is still running after more than 6,700 performances.^[1] It is Broadway's third longest-running show in history and the highest grossing Broadway production of all time, having grossed more than \$1 billion.^{[2][3]}

The show debuted in the West End's Lyceum Theatre on October 19, 1999, and is still running. The cast of the West End production were invited to perform at the Royal Variety Performance in 1999 and 2008, in the presence of senior members of the British Royal Family.^[4]

In September 2014, *The Lion King* became the top-earning title in box-office history for both stage productions and films, surpassing the record previously held by *The Phantom of the Opera*.^[5]

Synopsis

Act I

As the sun rises, Rafiki the mandrill calls the animals to Pride Rock. She greets King Mufasa and Queen Sarabi before presenting their cub to the gathered animals ("Circle of Life"). Elsewhere, Mufasa's brother, Scar,

The Lion King



Broadway promotional poster

Music	Elton John
Lyrics	Tim Rice
Book	Roger Allers <div>Irene Mecchi</div>
Basis	<i>The Lion King</i> <div>by Walt Disney Animation Studios</div>
Productions	1997 Minneapolis <div>1997 Broadway<div>1998 Tokyo<div>1999 Japan National Tour<div>1999 West End<div>2000 Toronto<div>2000 Los Angeles<div>2001 Hamburg<div>2002 1st US National</div></div></div></div></div></div></div></div>

laments his lost chance at becoming King. Back at her baobab tree, Rafiki paints an image of the cub and asks the spirits to conjure the new prince's name: Simba.

Time passes and Simba grows into a lively young cub ("Grasslands Chant"). Mufasa shows Simba the Pride Lands from the top of Pride Rock and explains that everything exists in a delicate balance known as the Circle of Life. Mufasa warns Simba not to stray beyond the boundaries of the Pride Lands, pointing out a shadowy area in the distance. Zazu, a hornbill who acts as Mufasa's advisor, arrives and delivers his daily report on the state of affairs in the King's domain ("The Morning Report", now cut from the Broadway production).^[6]

Simba goes to see his Uncle Scar. The scheming lion piques the cub's curiosity by mentioning the elephant graveyard, where Simba is forbidden to go. Meanwhile, the lionesses go hunting ("The Lioness Hunt"). Simba arrives and asks his best friend, a female cub named Nala, to come with him to the elephant graveyard. He lies to the lionesses about where they are going, and Sarafina (Nala's mother) and Sarabi allow the cubs to go, escorted by Zazu. Simba and Nala formulate a plan and manage to lose Zazu, while Simba brags about his future position ("I Just Can't Wait to Be King").

The cubs go to the graveyard and begin to explore. Zazu catches up, but

File:JCWTBK-Broadway.jpg

Geoff Hoyle as Zazu

they are confronted by three hyenas: Shenzi, Banzai and Ed. The hyenas intend to eat the trespassers and gloat

about their find ("Chow Down"). Mufasa rescues the cubs and frightens off the hyenas.

Mufasa is disappointed and angry at Simba's reckless disobedience, and explains the difference between bravery and bravado. Mufasa tells Simba about the great kings of the past and how they watch over everything from the stars ("They Live in You"). Mufasa says that he will always be there for his son. Later he discusses Simba's behavior with Zazu, who reminds Mufasa that he had the same tendency to get into trouble at Simba's age.

Back at the elephant graveyard, Scar tells the hyenas of his plan to kill Mufasa and Simba so that he can become king. He raises an army of hyenas, promising that they will never go hungry again if they support him ("Be Prepared"). Scar takes Simba to a gorge and tells him to wait there. On Scar's signal, the hyenas start a wildebeest stampede into the gorge ("The Stampede"). Scar tells Mufasa that Simba is trapped in the gorge. Mufasa leaps into the stampede and manages to save his son, but as he tries to escape, Scar throws him off the cliff back into the stampede, killing him. Scar convinces Simba that his father's death was his fault and tells him to run away, but as he leaves, Scar orders the hyenas to kill him. Simba escapes but the hyenas tell Scar that he is dead. Rafiki and the lionesses mourn the deaths ("Rafiki Mourns"). Scar claims the throne and allows the hyenas into the Pride Lands ("Be Prepared (Reprise)"). Rafiki returns to her tree and smears the drawing of Simba, while Sarabi and Nala quietly grieve.

Tour	
2003 2nd <u>US National Tour</u>	
2003 <u>Sydney</u>	
2004 <u>The Hague</u>	
2006 <u>Shanghai</u>	
2006 <u>Seoul</u>	
2007 <u>Johannesburg</u>	
2007 <u>Paris</u>	
2008 <u>Taipei</u>	
2009 <u>Las Vegas</u>	
2011 <u>Singapore</u>	
2011 <u>Madrid</u>	
2012 <u>UK National Tour</u>	
2013 <u>São Paulo</u>	
2013 <u>Sydney</u>	
2015 <u>Basel</u>	
2015 <u>Mexico City</u>	
2016 <u>Shanghai</u>	
2016 <u>The Hague</u>	
Awards	<u>Tony Award for Best Musical</u>

File:BuyiZama Rafiki Taiwan.jpg

Actress Buyi Zama as Rafiki in Taiwan.

Out in the desert, Simba collapses from heat exhaustion. Vultures begin to circle, but are scared away by Timon the meerkat and Pumbaa the warthog. Simba feels responsible for Mufasa's death, but the duo take the cub to their jungle home and show him their carefree way of life and bug diet ("Hakuna Matata"). Simba grows to adulthood in the jungle.

Act II

The chorus, dressed in colorful clothes with ornate bird puppets and kites, begin the Second Act ("One by One"). As the song ends, however, the beautiful birds are replaced by vultures and gazelle skeletons. Under Scar's rule, the Circle of Life is out of balance and a drought has hit the Pride Lands. Zazu, now a prisoner of Scar, listens to the king's woes. The hyenas are complaining about the lack of food, but Scar is only concerned with himself and why he is not loved. He is haunted by visions of Mufasa and rapidly switches between delusional confidence and paranoid despair ("The Madness of King Scar"). Nala arrives to confront Scar about the famine and Scar decides she will be his queen and give him cubs. Nala fiercely rebukes him and resolves to leave the Pride Lands to find help. Rafiki and the lionesses bless her for her journey ("Shadowland").

Back in the jungle, Timon and Pumbaa want to sleep, but the restless Simba is unable to settle. Annoyed, Simba leaves them, but Timon and Pumbaa lose their courage and follow him. Simba leaps across a fast-moving river and challenges Timon to do the same. Timon falls in and is swept downstream. He grabs a branch over a waterfall and calls for Simba's help, but Simba is paralyzed by a flashback of Mufasa's death. Timon falls from the branch and Simba snaps out of the flashback, rescuing his friend. Simba is ashamed that Timon nearly died because of his recklessness.

The three friends settle to sleep and discuss the stars. Simba recalls Mufasa's words, but his friends laugh at the notion of dead kings watching them. Simba leaves, expressing his loneliness and bitterly recalling Mufasa's promise to be there for him ("Endless Night"). Rafiki hears the song on the wind, joyfully realizes that Simba is alive, and draws a mane onto her painting of Simba.

In the jungle, Pumbaa is hunted and chased by a lioness. Simba confronts her and saves his friend, but recognizes the lioness as Nala. She is amazed to find Simba alive, knowing that he is the rightful king. Timon and Pumbaa are confused, but Simba asks them to leave him and Nala alone. Timon realizes what is happening and laments the end of Simba's Hakuna Matata lifestyle ("Can You Feel the Love Tonight"). Nala tells Simba about the devastated Pride Lands, but Simba still feels responsible for Mufasa's death and refuses to return home.

On his own, Simba meets Rafiki, who explains that his father lives on ("He Lives in You"). Mufasa's spirit appears in the sky and tells Simba he is the one true king and must take his place in the Circle of Life. Reawakened, Simba finds his courage and heads for home. Meanwhile, Nala wakes Timon and Pumbaa to ask where Simba is, and Rafiki appears to tell them all the news. The three of them catch up with him in the Pride Lands, where he witnesses the ruin of his home. Timon and Pumbaa distract some hyenas by doing the Charleston, allowing Simba and Nala to reach Pride Rock.

Scar calls for Sarabi and demands to know why the lionesses are not hunting. Sarabi stands up to him about the lack of anything to hunt, angrily comparing him to Mufasa, and Scar strikes his sister-in-law, saying he's ten times the king Mufasa was. Enraged, Simba reveals himself. Scar forces a confession of murder from Simba and corners him. Believing that he has won, Scar taunts Simba by admitting that he killed Mufasa. Furious, Simba recovers and forces Scar to reveal the truth to the lionesses ("Simba Confronts Scar"). Simba's friends fight the

hyenas while Simba battles Scar to the top of Pride Rock. Scar begs for his life, blaming the hyenas for everything. Simba lets him leave out of mercy, but Scar attacks again. Simba blocks the attack and Scar falls from the cliff. The hyenas, who heard Scar's betrayal and are still starving, tear him to shreds.

With the battle won, Simba's friends come forward and acknowledge Simba as the rightful king. Simba ascends Pride Rock and roars out across the kingdom ("King of Pride Rock"). The Pride Lands recover and the animals gather in celebration as Rafiki presents Simba and Nala's newborn cub, continuing the Circle of Life ("Circle of Life (Reprise)").

Songs

Song	Written by	Performed by	Sample
Act I			
"Circle of Life"	<u>Elton John</u> and <u>Tim Rice</u>	Rafiki and Ensemble	
"Grasslands Chant"	<u>Lebo M</u>	Ensemble	
"The Morning Report"*	Elton John and Tim Rice	Zazu, Young Simba, and Mufasa	
"The Lioness Hunt"	<u>Lebo M</u>	Ensemble	
"I Just Can't Wait to Be King"	Elton John and Tim Rice	Young Simba, Young Nala, Zazu, and Ensemble	
"Chow Down"		Shenzi, Banzai, and Ed	
"They Live in You"	<u>Mark Mancina</u> , <u>Jay Rifkin</u> , and <u>Lebo M</u>	Mufasa and Ensemble	
"Be Prepared"	Elton John and Tim Rice	Scar, Shenzi, Banzai, Ed, and Ensemble	
"The Stampede"	<u>Hans Zimmer</u> and <u>Lebo M</u>	Ensemble and Rafiki	
"Rafiki Mourns"		Ensemble	
"Hakuna Matata"	Elton John and Tim Rice	Timon, Pumbaa, Young Simba, Simba, and Ensemble	
Act II			
"One by One"	<u>Lebo M</u>	Ensemble	
"The Madness of King Scar"	Elton John and Tim Rice	Scar, Zazu, Banzai, Shenzi, Ed and Nala	
"Shadowland"	<u>Hans Zimmer</u> , <u>Lebo M</u> , and <u>Mark Mancina</u>	Nala, Rafiki, and Ensemble	Audio file "Tlkshadowlands.ogg" not found
"Endless Night"	<u>Julie Taymor</u> , <u>Lebo M</u> , <u>Hans Zimmer</u> , and <u>Jay Rifkin</u>	Simba and Ensemble	
"Can You Feel the Love Tonight"	Elton John and Tim Rice	Timon, Pumbaa, Simba, Nala, and Ensemble	
"He Lives in You (Reprise)"	<u>Mark Mancina</u> , <u>Jay Rifkin</u> , and <u>Lebo M</u>	Rafiki, Simba and Ensemble	Audio file "Tlkobhelivesinyou.ogg" not found
"Simba Confronts Scar"	<u>Mark Mancina</u> and <u>Robert Elhai</u>	Instrumental	

"King of Pride Rock/Circle of Life (Reprise)"	Hans Zimmer and Lebo M/Elton John and Tim Rice	Rafiki, Simba, Nala, Pumbaa, Timon, Zazu, and Ensemble	
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* Cut from the show as of June 27, 2010

Differences between the musical and film

The musical incorporates several changes and additions to the storyline as compared to the film. The mandrill Rafiki's gender was changed to a female role because Taymor believed that there was generally no leading female character in the film.^[7] Rafiki was portrayed by Tsidii Le Loka in the original Broadway musical, and by Josette Bushell-Mingo in the original London production.



The Lion King on Broadway showing originally at the New Amsterdam Theater (shown); it is now showing at the Minskoff.

Several new scenes are present, including a conversation between Mufasa and Zazu about Mufasa's parenting and a perilous scene in which Timon finds himself nearly drowning in a waterfall while Simba feels powerless to help him. A major narrative addition is the depiction of Nala's departure in the scene "The Madness of King Scar", where the mentally deteriorating villain tries to make Nala his mate. Nala refuses and later announces her intention to depart the Pride Lands and find help. She receives the blessings of the lionesses and Rafiki during the new song "Shadowland".

Like its predecessor, the *Beauty and the Beast* musical, the show adds more songs to its stage production, including "Morning Report", sung by Zazu the hornbill and later added to the film for the Platinum Edition DVD release. "Shadowland". originally featured on the CD *Rhythm of the Pride Lands* with Zulu lyrics as "Lea Halelela", was adapted for the musical with new English lyrics. It is sung by Nala, the lionesses, and Rafiki. "Endless Night", also from *Rhythm of the Pride Lands* with Swahili

lyrics as "Lala", is sung by Simba while reflecting on Mufasa's promise to always be there. "One by One", from the *Rhythm of the Pride Lands* CD, was adapted as the rousing African-styled entre act sung by the chorus at the opening of the second act.

Many of the animals portrayed in the production are actors in costume using extra tools to move their costumes. For example, the giraffes are portrayed by actors walking on stilts. For principal characters such as Mufasa and Scar, the costumes feature mechanical headpieces that can be raised and lowered to foster the illusion of a cat "lunging" at another. Other characters, such as the hyenas, Zazu, Timon, and Pumbaa, are portrayed by actors in life-sized puppets or costumes. The Timon character is described by Taymor as one of the hardest roles to master because the movement of the puppet's head and arms puts a strain on the actor's arms, back, and neck.^[8]



The Lion King in the West End

Composer Lebo M led the original Broadway chorus.^[8] The chorus members are usually visible in the production, rather than being hidden in the shadows as seen in some other musical shows.

A new section of the production, the Lioness Hunt, features a particularly complicated dance sequence for the actresses, and the dance is made even more difficult by the large headpieces worn during the scene.

During the show's run in China, Chinese elements were included in the musical. One of the songs was adapted to a well-known Chinese pop song, "Laoshu ai dami" or "Mice Love Rice". The cast even cracked jokes and attempted conversations with the audience in Chinese.^[9]

As of June 27, 2010, nine minutes of the Broadway version were cut, among them the entire "Morning Report" musical number.^[6] The song was also removed from subsequent productions and cast recordings, such as the Spanish one.

Production history

United States

There is currently one U.S. touring production. (At one time there were two US touring productions traveling simultaneously.) The tour version is very similar to the original Broadway production; however, certain scenic elements which rise out of the stage floor (such as Pride Rock, the stampede, and the grasslands) were converted to less costly configurations for the touring productions. The sun during the opening is reduced in size for the shorter-lasting tours. Stage sizes are also smaller, and the size of the pit orchestra is decreased.

A Las Vegas production opened at Mandalay Bay on May 15, 2009, with previews beginning May 5, 2009.^[10] The Las Vegas cast performed on the ninth season of the American dance competition *Dancing With the Stars* on September 23, 2009. Led by Buyi Zama, the cast performed *Circle of Life*.^[11] When this production closed, on December 30, 2011, it turned into the second longest run the show had in a same American city (only coming after Broadway), running longer than the 2000–2003 Los Angeles Production.

A Los Angeles production began performances at the Pantages Theatre on September 29, 2000, with an official opening on October 19, 2000. The show closed on January 12, 2003, after 952 performances. The cast of this production performed a set of the show's songs in The Tonight Show with Jay Leno on October 2, 2001. The cast was led by Fuschia Walker.

Canada



First Lady Michelle Obama joins the cast of the U.S. touring company onstage after their performance at the Kids' State Dinner in the East Room of the White House

A Canadian production of the show was staged in Toronto and ran for nearly four years at the Princess of Wales Theatre. The show ran from 1999 to 2004. Degrassi star Raymond Ablack starred as Young Simba in the 2001 production.^[12]

Mexico

The musical had a Mexican limited run (in English) between January 3 and January 27, 2008, in Mexico City, as part of the U.S. national tour.^[13]

In May 2014, it was confirmed a new production of the musical, this time in Spanish. The production opened on May 7, 2015, at the Teatro Telcel in Mexico City. Actor Carlos Rivera returned to the role of Simba, which he also took in Spain four years earlier. The lyrics of the songs of this production differ from the European Spanish one. South-African actress Shirley Hlahatse was chosen as Rafiki, marking the first time in years a completely new actress was elected for that role.^[14]

South America

A Brazilian production was confirmed to debut in São Paulo in March 28, 2013.^[15] Auditions take place in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Salvador. The cast contain mainly Brazilian actors and seven South African actors.^[16] The Portuguese lyrics were translated by Brazilian singer Gilberto Gil.

Actress Phindile Mkhize, who had previously performed in many of the show's productions, was selected as Rafiki for this production, leaving in October 2013 and being replaced by Ntsepa Ptjeng. The show closed its doors on December 14, 2014.^[17]

Europe

United Kingdom

After the success of the Broadway show, the show opened in the United Kingdom in on October 19, 1999. The cast included Cornell John as Mufasa, Luke Youngblood as Young Simba, Dominique Moore as Young Nala, Martyn Ellis as Pumbaa, Simon Gregor as Timon, Rob Edwards as Scar, Paul J. Medford as Banzai and Josette Bushell-Mingo as Rafiki.^{[18][19]} As of October 2015, it has been playing at the Lyceum Theatre in London for 16 years. Taymor directed the British production of the show, with Melissa De Melo as the producer. The show also toured the UK from 2012 until March 2015.^[20]

The West End cast of the show performed twice at the traditional Royal Variety Performance: in 1999 (led by Josette Bushell-Mingo) and 2008 (led by Brown Lindiwe Mkhize). In both performances, the song Circle of Life was performed.^[21] The company also performed at the show Strictly Come Dancing special Strictly African Dancing, broadcast in 2005, led once again by Mkhize and performed the same song.

Other countries

The German production has been playing in Hamburg at the Theater in Hafen since December 2001 and had its 5000th performance on January 14, 2014. Access to the theater is by ferry, where the boats are decorated in the colors of the musical and are named after characters in the musical (such as *Nala* and its sister ship *Rafiki*).

A Dutch production of the show was produced by Joop van den Ende Theaterproducties/Stage Entertainment and Disney Theatrical Group and played at the Circustheater in Scheveningen and ran from April 4, 2004, until August 27, 2006, replaced by another Disney musical, *Tarzan*. A revival of the show's Dutch production began performances in the same Circustheater in October 2016.^[22]

The show's French production debuted in Paris on September 22, 2007, in Stage Entertainment's Théâtre Mogador. This production won several Molière Awards and closed on July 25, 2010, after being watched by over a million people.^[23]

On October 20, 2011, the first Spanish production opened at Teatro Lope de Vega in Madrid, where it is still running after more than 2,400 performances.^{[24][25]}

In Basel, Switzerland, the musical was performed for the first time from March 12, 2015, until October 11, 2015.^[26]



Hamburg, Germany: Theater im Hafen (since 2001), accessible by boat

Africa

Beginning in June 2007, *The Lion King* debuted its first-ever performance on the African continent in Johannesburg, South Africa. Its tenth anniversary was celebrated in the new Teatro Theatre at Monte Casino in Fourways. *The Lion King* was the first production to take place in the new theatre. The opening night in Johannesburg was celebrated with key persons involving the creation of the musical and American talk show host Oprah Winfrey who had recently opened an educational academy for girls in Johannesburg^[27] The show closed on February 17, 2008.

Asia and Australia

The show was translated into Japanese and staged by the Shiki Theatre Company. The Tokyo production began in 1998 and continues to the present day at the Shiki Theatre HARU.^[28] The production achieved its 10,000th performance on July 15, 2015.^[29]

The show played at the Capitol Theatre in Sydney, Australia, from October 16, 2003, until June 26, 2005. The production then ran at the Regent Theatre in Melbourne from July 28, 2005, until June 4, 2006. *The Lion King* returned to Sydney's Capitol Theatre on December 12, 2013.^[30]

The musical had a Korean production from October 28, 2006, to October 28, 2007, at the Charlotte Theater, southern Seoul.

In August 2008, a production opened in Taipei, Taiwan, closing on August 24, 2009.

The show had a limited run at Shanghai's Grand Theatre from July to September 2006. This production was led by Buyi Zama and was performed in English, though a couple of Chinese elements were added to the story.^[31] From June 14, 2016, until October 8, 2017, *The Lion King* returned to China, in a new production that was staged at the 1,200 capacity Walt Disney Grand Theatre, in the Shanghai Disney Resort. This production was performed in Mandarin and led by Ntsepa Ptjeng.^[32]

International tour

On March 7, 2016 Lebo M confirmed through his social media that the show would have an international tour starting in 2018 and with initial productions taking place up to 2020. First confirmed stops are Manila, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and South Africa. All these countries have had productions so far, except the Philippines, where the show will run for two months. The tour will be performed in English and auditions will take place in 2017.^[33]

Characters and original casts

The original principal casts of all major productions.

Character	Original Broadway Cast	Original West End Cast
Simba	<u>Jason Raize</u>	Roger Wright
Scar	<u>John Vickery</u>	<u>Rob Edwards</u>
Mufasa	<u>Samuel E. Wright</u>	<u>Cornell John</u>
Nala	<u>Heather Headley</u>	Paulette Ivory
Rafiki	<u>Tsidii Le Loka</u>	<u>Josette Bushell-Mingo</u>
Timon	<u>Max Casella</u>	Simon Gregor
Pumbaa	<u>Tom Alan Robbins</u>	Martyn Ellis
Zazu	<u>Geoff Hoyle</u>	Gregory Gudgeon
Shenzi	<u>Tracy Nicole Chapman</u>	Stephanie Charles
Banzai	<u>Stanley Wayne Mathis</u>	<u>Paul J. Medford</u>
Ed	<u>Kevin Cahoon</u>	Christopher Holt
Sarabi	<u>Gina Breedlove</u>	Dawn Michael
Young Simba	<u>Scott Irby-Ranniar</u>	<u>Luke Youngblood</u>
Young Nala	Kajuana Shuford	<u>Dominique Moore</u>

Cast distinctions

- Phindile Mkhize and Ntsepa Ptjeng are the only actresses who performed as leadings in three different languages the musical's been performed in. Phindile performed in English (American tour

and Las Vegas, 2002–2010), Spanish (from 2012 to 2013) and Portuguese (2013); while Ntsepa was leading in Brazil (2014, as a substitute to Phindile), Basel (2015) and Shanghai (2016).

- They are followed by Zama Magudulela, who performed as leading in two different languages the musical's been performed in: French (2007 to 2010) and Spanish (2011 to the present day). Zama is also the sole actress ever to perform in four different companies, as she was in the first Australian tour (2003–2006), German (2006), French (2007–2010) and Spanish (2011-present) productions.
- Portia Manyike is the only actress ever to perform in three different languages, though she was never promoted to leading cast member. She's been part of the ensemble in France, Brazil and Mexico.
- Nteliseng Nkhela (German and English), Nomvula Dlamini (English and Dutch), Ntsepa Ptjeng (English, Portuguese and Mandarin), Thabile Mtshali (English and Portuguese) and Mukelisiwe Goba (English and Spanish) are the only actresses who performed as leading Rafikis in productions in two different languages.
- John Vickery was the first actor to move from Broadway into a different production of the show, when he chose to leave Broadway in 1999 to move to the Los Angeles production in 2000.
- Sheila Gibbs was the first actress to move from a standby into a leading role. She was a Rafiki understudy for Tsidi Le Loka from 1997 to 1998 and was selected as leading from 2001 to 2002. This was followed by Gugwana Dlamini, who was a standby (1999–2002) and a leading (2002–2005) in the show's London production and Buyisile Zama, who was a standby for Gugwana in London (2002–2003) and leading actress for the show's first Australian tour (2003–2006).
- Nomvula Dlamini was the first, and so far the only, actress who moved from Broadway into a production performed in a different language, being the leading Rafiki on Broadway (2002–2004) and Holland (2004–2006).
- Spanish actors Esteban Oliver and Mukelisiwe Goba were the first actors who moved from Spain into Broadway, when they respectively took over the role of Zazu and Rafiki understudy in 2014 for a couple of months. Mukelisiwe then was transferred to the Gazelle Tour, taking over Tshidi Manye in September 2015.^[34]
- Having been in the show since its 1997 premiere, actress Lindiwe Dlamini is the actress who's been for more time in the show. She's followed by Joachim Benoit, who's been regularly performing as Zazu since the show premiered in Germany, in 2001.
- Melina M'Poy was the first actress to perform as the two leading lionesses. She was Sarabi (France, 2007–2010) and Nala (Basel, London, UK tour and Singapore, 2011–2015).
- The Londoner production is known to have been the first to have selected non-African actresses to perform as Rafiki, since actresses Josette Bushell-Mingo (1999–2001) and Sharon D. Clarke (2001–2003) are English, though their understudies were South African. The American tour companies followed this when Fredi Walker and Fuchsia Walker were chosen as Rafiki in 2001 as leadings for the first American tour and the Los Angeles one, respectively.^[35]
- The Japanese and Korean productions also stand out since never throughout them the productions had leading African actresses. Native Japanese and Korean actresses performed as Rafiki during the productions.
- Buyi Zama (2002–2016), Zama Magudulela (2002 up to the present day), Brown Lindiwe Mkhize (starting in 2005), Futhi Mhlongo (2000–2004; 2010 to the present day), Tshidi Manye (2000 up to the present day), Gugwana Dlamini (2002–2015), Thandazile A. Soni (2002–2010; 2012 up to the present day), and Mpume Sikakane (2002 up to the present day) are the actresses who've been performing as either leading or stand-bys to Rafiki for the longest time, having performed in several productions.
- Alton Fitzgerald White (2002–2015), Nathaniel Stampley (2006–2010), and David Comrie (leading in the Spanish production from 2011 to 2017) performed as Mufasa for longer than any other actor. Behind them comes Jean-Luc Guizonne, who performed in Paris, Singapore and German (from 2007 to 2014).

- On several occasions, members from different productions agreed to change places. That happened twice: when Patrick Brown (American tour) and Gareth Saxe (Broadway) changed places as leading Scar in 2014–2015; Buyi Zama (American tour) changed places with Tshidi Manye (Broadway) as Rafiki in 2013–2014 and when Brown Lindiwe Mkhize (London) changed places with Nteliseng Nkhela (American tour) again as Rafiki in 2013. More recently, Tryphena Wade and Chondra Profit agreed to change places from the North American tour to Broadway.^[36]
- When actress Shirley Hlahatse was chosen as the leading Rafiki in the Mexican production of the show, it marked the first time in years an actress who had never been in the show before was given the role. In most occasions, understudies or standbys were promoted to leading.
- South African dancer Keswa was 18 years old when she arrived on Broadway in 1999. She was the youngest performer ever to be given a role in the show's ensemble group.
- Balungile Gumede and Marvette Williams are the actresses who have played Sarabi for the longest timespan in the show. Balungile started in the German production of the show in 2010, taking over Marvette, who had played the character in various productions of the show since 2000 and kept playing it in subsequent productions. They are followed by Tryphena Wade, who's also performing as the lioness since 2010.
- Enrique Segura is the actor who played Ed for the longest timespan in the show, being on it for more than a decade.
- Segura is followed by Bonita J. Hamilton and James Brown-Orleans, who have been performing as hyenas Shenzi and Banzai for more than 5 years.
- Nokubonga Khuzwayo has been performing as Nala for the longest timespan in the show. She's performed in South Africa (2007–2008), Taiwan (2008), Las Vegas (2010–2011), American tour (2011) and Germany (from 2012 up to the present time).
- Lebo M, Tsidii LeLoka, Willi Welp and Gustavo Vaz were the only actors who were performers and directors of the show. Lebo M was the composer of various of the show's songs and performed on Broadway (1997–2000), Willi Welp performed as Scar from 2005 to 2015 and then left to be the resident director of the show's German production and Gustavo was the resident director of the show's Brazilian production at the same time he was a Scar and Pumbaa standby. Original Broadway Rafiki Tsidii LeLoka was also part of the show's creative team, as she's the one responsible for adding Rafiki's chants to the story and writing her mourning song.
- When Carlos Rivera played his 1000th performance on January 27, 2016, he turned into the actor who's been performing as a leading Simba for the longest time in the show. He played the role in Spain for 700 times and for more than 300 times in Mexico.^[37] He finally left the show in May 2016.
- Rivera is also the sole leading cast member whose voice can be heard in two different recordings. He takes part in the Spanish (2011) and Mexican (2015) cast recordings.
- While it's a rule for all the productions of the show to have at least 6 South African performers in their casts, the South African one had a cast fully made of native actors.
- Nosipho Nkonga is the cast member who's been in more productions than any other. She was in the Holland (2004–2006), South African (2007–2008), Taiwan (2008), Singapore (2011), United Kingdom tour (2012–2015), Basel (2015) and London (2016) productions. She is followed by Mduduzi Madela, who served in the ensemble group in Holland (2004–2006), Paris (2007–2010), Las Vegas (2010–2012), United Kingdom tour (2012–2013) and Broadway (2013-present).
- Andile Gumbi is the actor who performed as Simba for the longest time in the show. He was in the original Australian tour (2003–2006), Shanghai (2006), Johannesburg (2007–2008), London (2009–2012) and Broadway (2012–2013).^[38] He is followed by Jonathan Andrew Hume, who performed as a standby (2001–2011) and as a full-time cast member (2011–2016) for the role.
- Vusi Sondyazi is one of the actors who've been on the show for the longest time. He's been serving as an ensemble singer and Mufasa understudy since 2003 and stays in the Gazelle Tour cast at the present, after having performed on Broadway, Taipei and Las Vegas as well.

- Ntomb'Khona Dlamini is the actress who served as an understudy or ensemble member for the longest time. She was in the original Broadway company as an understudy to Tsidi LeLoka. After leaving for a brief time between 2000 and 2001, she went on to perform in the American tours. Summing up all this time, she's been in the show for more than 15 years, finally leaving the company in 2013.
- Gaia Aikman will be the first actress ever to perform as both Young and Adult Nala. She was one of the children assigned for that role in the original Dutch production (2004–2006) and was selected as the leading for the adult version of the same character in the Dutch revival production (2016–2017).

Recordings

Most of the show's international productions had cast recordings which are available on CD, including:^[39]

- 1997 Broadway Cast
 - The original Broadway cast recording is the only cast recording of the musical that comes with the song "The Lion Sleeps Tonight". It's also the only cast recording that does not come with the full reprise of "Circle of Life", the last four verses of that song being added to the CD.
- 1999 Japanese Cast
 - The Japanese cast recording was re-released in 2011 with four extra karaoke tracks and new renditions of the songs using the instrumental tracks of the 1999 CD. (Walt Disney Records, ASIN: B0058X1C3S)^[40]
- 2002 German Cast
 - At sometime after the show's German debut, alternate versions of the songs "Der ewige kreis", "Endlose nächt", "Er lebt in dir" and "Kann es wirklich liebe sein" (German versions of "Circle of Life", "Endless Night", "He Lives in You" and "Can You Feel The Love Tonight?") were released.
- 2004 Dutch Cast
 - The 2016 Dutch revival production had a newly live recorded cast album with different instrumental tracks for the songs.
- 2007 French Cast
 - Some time during the promotion of the French promotion, a CD-single containing a medley of the songs "Ils Vivent en Toi" and "Il Vit en Toi" (French versions of "They Live in You" and "He Lives in You") was released, with a music video being recorded with actors Zama Magudulela (Rafiki), Jeremy Fontanet (Adult Simba) and Jean-Luc Guizonne (Mufasa) performing and singing the song with natives chanting in the background. This new version of the songs were also included in a special, double edition of the French cast recording that also came with a bonus DVD.^[41]
- 2007 South African Cast (live performance audio CD)
 - The song "Rafiki Mourns" was cut from this CD, while every other song was included in their complete form. The CD also comes with a remix of the song "One by One" performed by the cast.^[42]
- 2011 Spanish Cast
 - The Spanish CD already comes with the cuts made to the Broadway production in 2010. The song "The Morning Report" was totally cut, with some minutes of "Can You Feel The Love Tonight" and "The Madness of King Scar". Also, it is the only non-English CD where "One by

One" was renamed due to the language (in Spanish, it became "Somos mil"), though the song is performed with its original lyrics.

■ 2015 Mexican Cast

- In this release, the Mexican Spanish versions of *Simba Confronts Scar* and *Circle of Life (Reprise)* were comprised into a single song, this version being named *Confrontación/Finale*. It also includes the song which Timon sings to fool the hyenas, which was recorded in the studio and added to the cast album.
- With the release of the Mexican cast recording, Spanish was the first language in which the musical was performed that spawned two different cast recordings. Mexican Spanish lyrics were translated by Aleks Syntek and Armando Manzanero.^[43]
- Note: A recording entitled *The Lion King*, by the London Theatre Orchestra and Singers, was released on November 14, 2000 (D-3 Entertainment, ASIN: B00004ZDR6). This is not the London original cast recording.^[44]

Of all the show's productions (counting the English ones), only the Brazilian and the Korean ones didn't have cast recordings released.

The Lion King: Original Broadway Cast Recording

The Lion King: Original Broadway Cast Recording is a cast recording released on 1997 by The Walt Disney Company, a recording of the songs as heard in the stage musical. Most of the tracks were composed by African composer Lebo M. and focused primarily on the African influences of the film's original music, with most songs being sung either partially or entirely in various African languages.

File:Lionking BroadwayCast.jpg

The Lion King: Original Broadway Cast Recording album cover art

Rafiki's chants in "Rafiki Mourns" were written by Tsidii Le Loka, who originated the role on Broadway.

1. "Circle of Life" – Faca Kulu, Lebo M, *The Lion King* Ensemble and Tsidii Le Loka
2. "Grasslands Chant" – *The Lion King* Ensemble
3. "The Morning Report" – Geoff Hoyle, Samuel E. Wright and Scott Irby-Ranniar
4. "The Lioness Hunt" – Lebo M and *The Lion King* Ensemble
5. "I Just Can't Wait to Be King" – Geoff Hoyle, Kajuana Shuford, Scott Irby-Ranniar and *The Lion King* Ensemble
6. "Chow Down" – Kevin Cahoon, Stanley Wayne Mathis and Tracy Nicole Chapman
7. "They Live in You" – Samuel E. Wright and *The Lion King* Ensemble
8. "Be Prepared" – John Vickery, Kevin Cahoon, Stanley Wayne Mathis, *The Lion King* Ensemble and Tracy Nicole Chapman
9. "The Stampede" – *The Lion King* Ensemble
10. "Rafiki Mourns" – *The Lion King* Ensemble and Tsidii Le Loka
11. "Hakuna Matata" – Jason Raize, Max Casella, Scott Irby-Ranniar, *The Lion King* Ensemble and Tom Alan Robbins
12. "One by One" – Lebo M and *The Lion King* Ensemble
13. "The Madness of King Scar" – Geoff Hoyle, Heather Headley, John Vickery, Kevin Cahoon, Stanley Wayne Mathis and Tracy Nicole Chapman
14. "Shadowland" – Heather Headley, *The Lion King* Ensemble and Tsidii Le Loka
15. "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" – Lebo M

16. "Endless Night" – Jason Raize and *The Lion King* Ensemble
 17. "Can You Feel the Love Tonight" – Heather Headley, Jason Raize, Max Casella, *The Lion King* Ensemble and Tom Alan Robbins
 18. "He Lives in You (Reprise)" – Jason Raize, *The Lion King* Ensemble and Tsidii Le Loka
 19. "Simba Confronts Scar" – Mark Mancina and Robert Elhai
 20. "King of Pride Rock/Circle of Life (Reprise)" – Geoff Hoyle, Heather Headley, Jason Raize, Lebo M, Max Casella, *The Lion King* Ensemble, Tom Alan Robbins and Tsidii Le Loka
- Note: The songs "Grasslands Chant", "The Lioness Hunt", "Chow Down", "They Live in You", "Rafiki Mourns", "One by One", "The Madness of King Scar", "Shadowland", "Endless Night" and "Simba Confronts Scar" are new songs written for the musical.

Instrumentation

The original Broadway show included:^[45]

- 1 wood flute soloist/flute/piccolo
- 1 concertmistress
- 2 violins
- 1 violin/viola
- 2 cellos
- 1 flute/clarinet/bass clarinet
- 3 French horns
- 1 trombone
- 1 bass trombone/tuba
- 1 upright & electric basses
- 1 drums
- 1 guitar
- 2 mallets/percussion
- 2 percussion

- 3 keyboard synthesizers

Awards and nominations

Original Broadway production

Year	Award Ceremony	Category	Nominee	Result
1998	<u>Drama Desk Awards</u>	<u>Outstanding Musical</u>		Nominated
		<u>Outstanding Featured Actor in a Musical</u>	<u>Max Casella</u>	Nominated
			<u>Geoff Hoyle</u>	Nominated
		<u>Outstanding Featured Actress in a Musical</u>	<u>Tsidii Le Loka</u>	Won
		<u>Outstanding Director</u>	<u>Julie Taymor</u>	Won
		<u>Outstanding Choreography</u>	<u>Garth Fagan</u>	Won
		<u>Outstanding Orchestrations</u>	<u>Robert Elhai, David Metzger, and Bruce Fowler</u>	Nominated
		<u>Outstanding Set Design</u>	<u>Richard Hudson</u>	Won
		<u>Outstanding Costume Design</u>	<u>Julie Taymor</u>	Won
		<u>Outstanding Lighting Design</u>	<u>Donald Holder</u>	Won
		<u>Outstanding Sound Design</u>	<u>Tony Meola</u>	Won
		<u>Outstanding Puppet Design</u>	<u>Julie Taymor and Michael Curry</u>	Won
	<u>Theatre World Awards</u>		<u>Max Casella</u>	Won
	<u>Tony Awards</u>	<u>Best Musical</u>		Won
		<u>Best Book of a Musical</u>	<u>Roger Allers and Irene Mecchi</u>	Nominated
		<u>Best Original Score</u>	<u>Elton John, Tim Rice, Hans Zimmer, Lebo M, Mark Mancina, Jay Rifkin and Julie Taymor</u>	Nominated
		<u>Best Performance by a Featured Actor in a Musical</u>	<u>Samuel E. Wright</u>	Nominated
		<u>Best Performance by a Featured Actress in a Musical</u>	<u>Tsidii Le Loka</u>	Nominated
		<u>Best Direction of a Musical</u>	<u>Julie Taymor</u>	Won
		<u>Best Choreography</u>	<u>Garth Fagan</u>	Won
		<u>Best Orchestrations</u>	<u>Robert Elhai, David Metzger and Bruce Fowler</u>	Nominated
		<u>Best Scenic Design for a Musical</u>	<u>Richard Hudson</u>	Won
		<u>Best Costume Design for a Musical</u>	<u>Julie Taymor and Michael Curry</u>	Won

		<u>Best Lighting Design of a Musical</u>	<u>Donald Holder</u>	Won
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Original London production

Year	Award Ceremony	Category	Nominee	Result
1999	<u>Laurence Olivier Awards</u>	<u>Best New Musical</u>		Nominated
		<u>Best Actor in a Musical</u>	<u>Rob Edwards</u>	Nominated
		<u>Best Actress in a Musical</u>	<u>Josette Bushell-Mingo</u>	Nominated
		<u>Best Director</u>	<u>Julie Taymor</u>	Nominated
		<u>Best Theatre Choreographer</u>	<u>Garth Fagan</u>	Won
		<u>Best Set Design</u>	<u>Richard Hudson</u>	Nominated
		<u>Best Costume Design</u>	<u>Julie Taymor</u>	Won
		<u>Best Lighting Design</u>	<u>Donald Holder</u>	Nominated

Original France production

Year	Award Ceremony	Category	Nominee	Result
2008	<u>Molière Awards</u>	<u>Best Musical</u>		Won
		<u>Best Costume Design</u>	<u>Julie Taymor</u>	Won
		<u>Best Lighting Design</u>	<u>Donald Holder</u>	Won


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External links

- Official website (<https://www.lionking.com/>) 
 - *The Lion King* (<https://www.ibdb.com/broadway-show/5421>) at the Internet Broadway Database
 - *The Lion King* Musical Lyrics (<http://www.musicalsandlyrics.com/the-lion-king.html>)
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