



Disney  
PRESENTS

# THE LION KING

THE BROADWAY MUSICAL

## DISNEY'S *THE LION KING* NORTH AMERICAN TOUR FUN FACTS

### AWARDS

Winner of *more than 70* global theatrical awards including:

- 1998 Tony® - Best Musical
- 1998 Tony® - Best Direction of a Musical - Julie Taymor (making Taymor the *first* woman in theatrical history bestowed with the honor).
- 1998 Tony® - Best Scenic Design - Richard Hudson
- 1998 Tony® - Best Costume Design - Julie Taymor
- 1998 Tony® - Best Lighting Design - Donald Holder
- 1998 Tony® - Best Choreography - Garth Fagan
- 1998 NY Drama Critics Circle Award - Best Musical
- 1999 Grammy® - Best Musical Show Album
- 1999 Evening Standard Award - Theatrical Event of the Year
- 1999 Laurence Olivier Awards - Best Choreography *and* Best Costume Design

### MASKS & PUPPETS

- Tony® Award-winning director and designer Julie Taymor, along with designer Michael Curry, hand sculpted and painted every prototype mask that now appears in the iconic "Circle of Life" opening of the show. Their department of skilled mask makers, sculptors, puppeteers and artisans spent 17,000 hours to build the anthropomorphic animal characters for the original Broadway production.
- With the masks, Taymor created what she calls "the double event," which enables the audience to see the characters as animal and human at the same time.
- Mufasa's mask weighs 11 ounces, Scar's mask weighs seven ounces and Sarabi's mask is just four ounces. The masks, along with many others used in the show, are extremely lightweight (just under one pound) and are comprised of silicone rubber (to form the mask imprint) with carbon fiber overlay - the same durable material used to build airplanes. Over 750 pounds of silicone rubber were used to make the masks.
- Scar and Mufasa each wear two different masks: one moves and one is a stationary headdress.
- The tallest animals in the show are the four, 18-foot exotic giraffes from "I Just Can't Wait to Be King." The two giraffes in "Circle of Life" are 14 feet high. Two actors trained in stilt-walking, climb 6-foot ladders to fit inside the puppets, mount stilts and enter stage left to cross the stage.

- The largest and longest animal in the show is the Elephant (nicknamed “Bertha” by the back stage crew when the show premiered in 1997). At 13 feet long, 12 feet high and 9 feet wide, the puppet requires four actors to carefully walk her down the orchestra aisle. When not occupied by the actors, the puppet can collapse down flat for convenient backstage storage.
- The smallest animal is the trick mouse at the end of Scar’s cane at just five inches.
- Zazu is the last animal to make his entrance on stage in the “Circle of Life” opening number.
- The Timon meerkat puppet weighs 15 pounds.

### COSTUMES

- Worn like a back pack, the Pumbaa puppet is the heaviest costume, weighing in at 45 pounds.
- Scar uses three different walking sticks.
- The yearly upkeep and maintenance of the 20 Grasslands headdresses requires over 3,000 stalks of grass (roughly 60 pounds).
- Every ensemble member plays both a hyena and a Grassland head.
- The Bird Lady and Bird Man costumes represent a flock of birds.

### PRIDE ROCK, SETS & LIGHTING

- The most complicated set piece is Pride Rock, which appears five times during each performance. On tour, Pride Rock is a battery-powered set piece which expands out like an accordion to 18’ wide at its fullest position onstage and compresses to 8’ when it is offstage in the wings.
- Lighting Designer Donald Holder used nearly 700 lighting instruments to create the show’s lighting plot.

### BY THE NUMBERS

- Puppets including rod puppets, shadow puppets and full-sized puppets: **200**
- Number of cast members needed to bring those animals to life: **49**
- Ants on the Ant-Hill Lady costume: **40**
- Wigs: **45**
- Wildebeests: **22**
- Hyenas: **39**
- Types of animals, birds, fish and insects represented in the show: **25**
- Gazelles: **15**, five actors each wear a gazelle puppet on both arms and one affixed to their head.
- Gazelles on the gazelle wheel prop: **6**
- Lionesses: **14** (Nala, Young Nala and 12 ensemble in the ‘Lioness hunt’).
- Bird Kites: **12**, featured in “One By One,” the opening number of Act II.

- Bird Ladies: **5**
- Bird Man: **1**, he appears in “Circle of Life” opening number and in the “Circle of Life” reprise in the final scene.
- Simba representations: **6** (Baby Simba puppet, Young Simba-actor, Young Simba puppet, Simba Shadow puppet, Rafiki’s Simba painting-Act I & II, Adult Simba-actor).
- Zebras: **3**
- Crocodiles: **3**
- Elephants: **2** (they are “Bertha” and the Baby Elephant who is operated by the child actresses alternating the role of Young Nala).
- Antelope: **2**  
(In the opening number, the low and high antelope are the first animals Rafiki calls out to in Swahili – the ‘NGONYAMA’ call & response choral chant. The antelope are portrayed by two South African male ensemble singers.)
- Rhinoceros: **1**
- Cheetah: **1**
- Other animals represented include guinea fowl, buzzards, fireflies, mice, ants and unspecified birds and fish.

### **LANGUAGE**

There are five indigenous African languages spoken in the show:

1. Zulu
2. Xhosa
3. Sesotho
4. Setswana
5. Swahili

*The Lion King* has been translated into nine languages:

- English
- Japanese
- German
- Korean
- French
- Dutch
- Spanish
- Mandarin
- Portuguese

### **PRODUCTION STAFF**

- Worldwide, nearly 1100 people are directly employed by *The Lion King*, including 20 whose sole mission is artistic upkeep of the show.
- Since *The Lion King’s* Broadway premiere, nearly 250 South Africans have been employed in one or more of the global productions as lead actors, ensemble dancers/singers, musicians or members of the crew.

On tour, there are 134 people directly involved with the daily production of the show:

- 49 cast members –*six of whom are South African*
- 19 wardrobe staff

- 18 musicians
- 11 carpenters
- 10 electricians
- 5 hair/make-up artists
- 4 props people
- 4 stage managers
- 3 puppet craftspeople
- 3 sound people
- 2 creative associates
- 2 company managers
- 2 merchandise associates
- 1 child guardian
- 1 physical therapist

### **ON THE ROAD**

- The North American touring production (launched in April 2002) uses 18 trucks to transport puppets, set pieces and other materials from city to city. 14 of the trucks are 53' long semi-trailers.
- The tour requires three days of advance prep and four days of on-site technical preparation at the respective venue to set-up the physical production in each new city.