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Hakuna Matata! @DisneyTheLionKing makes its triumphant return to Philadelphia, presented by @KimmelICC (Twitter)/@KimmelCulturalCampus (Facebook/Instagram) 8/16 – 9/10. Visit www.kimmelculturalcampus.org for info.

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**DISNEY'S *THE LION KING* MAKES ITS LONG-AWAITED
RETURN TO PHILADELPHIA**

**AUGUST 16 – SEPTEMBER 10 AT THE ACADEMY OF MUSIC
ON THE KIMMEL CULTURAL CAMPUS**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (June 5, 2023) – Disney Theatrical Productions, along with the Kimmel Cultural Campus and The Shubert Organization, celebrates the eagerly-awaited return engagement of **Disney's *The Lion King*** for a 4-week summer engagement at the Academy of Music on the Kimmel Cultural Campus. Tickets on sale now at www.kimmelculturalcampus.org and in-person at the box office. Full ticketing details below.

“There is nothing quite like this production, which mesmerizes audiences with astounding puppetry, inventive costuming, and an award-winning score,” said Matías Tarnopolsky, president and CEO of The Philadelphia Orchestra and Kimmel Center, Inc. “We look forward to presenting this landmark musical in Philadelphia for the first time in almost a decade.”

For more than 20 years, the North American touring productions of ***The Lion King*** have been seen by over 21 million theatergoers. Having already played more than 9,000 performances in over 90 cities across North America, ***The Lion King*** now proudly returns to Philadelphia.

Additionally, Philadelphians can look forward to seeing two local cast members appearing on Pride Rock: Nick LaMedica, who plays the role of 'Zazu,' is a native of Newark, Delaware. Ensemble member Eric Bean, Jr. is a graduate of Philadelphia's University of the Arts.

The production features Peter Hargrave as "Scar," Gerald Ramsey as "Mufasa," Gugwana Dlamini as "Rafiki," Nick Cordileone as "Timon," Nick LaMedica as "Zazu," John E. Brady as "Pumbaa," Darian Sanders as "Simba," Forest VanDyke as "Banzai," Martina Sykes as "Shenzi" and Robbie Swift as "Ed."

Khalifa White will play "Nala" from August 16 – 20 and Syndee Winters will play the role from August 22 – September 10, 2023.

The role of "Young Simba" is alternated between Jackson Hayes and Mason Lawson and the role of "Young Nala" is alternated between Jaxyn Damasco and Aniya Simone.

Rounding out the cast are Derek Adams, Kayla Rose Aimable, William John Austin, Iman Ayana, Isaiah Bailey, Samantha Lauren Barriento, Eric Bean, Jr., Layla Brent, Vernon Brooks III, Christin Byrdsong, Sasha Caicedo, Thembelihle Cele, Daniela Cobb, Lyric Danae, Camille Eanga-Selenge, Marquis Floyd, Tony Freeman, Mukelisiwe Goba, Samaree Lawson, Gabisile Manana, Christopher L. McKenzie, Jr., Justin Mensah, Nhlanhla Ndlovu, Aaron Nelson, Jeremy Noel, Sicelo Ntshangase, Sayiga Eugene Peabody, Yael Pineda-Hall, Christopher Sams, Maia Schechter, Allison Danielle Semmes, Jennifer Theriot, Courtney Thomas, Brinie Wallace and Jordan Nicole Willis.

ABOUT THE LION KING

After 25 landmark years on Broadway, ***The Lion King*** continues its ascent as one of the most popular stage musicals in the world. Since its premiere on November 13, 1997, 27 global productions have been seen by over 112 million people. Produced by Disney Theatrical Productions (under the direction of **Thomas Schumacher**), ***The Lion King*** has made theatrical history with six productions worldwide running 15 or more years, with four of those running 20 or more years.

Performed over its lifetime in nine different languages (English, Japanese, German, Korean, French, Dutch, Spanish, Mandarin, and Portuguese), productions of ***The Lion King*** can currently be seen on Broadway; London's West End; Paris; Hamburg; Tokyo; Madrid; and on tour across North America and the U.K. & Ireland, for a total of eight productions running concurrently across the globe. Having played over 100 cities in 24 countries on every continent except Antarctica, ***The Lion King's*** worldwide gross exceeds that of any film, Broadway show, or other entertainment title in box office history.

The Lion King won six 1998 Tony Awards®: Best Musical, Best Scenic Design (**Richard Hudson**), Best Costume Design (**Julie Taymor**), Best Lighting Design (**Donald Holder**), Best Choreography (**Garth Fagan**), and Best Direction of a Musical. ***The Lion King*** has also earned more than 70 major arts awards, including the 1998 NY Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Musical, the 1999 Grammy® for Best Musical Show Album, the 1999 Evening Standard Award for Theatrical Event of the Year, and the 1999 Laurence Olivier Awards for Best Choreography and Best Costume Design.

The show's director, costume designer, and mask co-designer **Julie Taymor** continues to play an integral part in the show's ongoing success. The first woman to win a Tony Award for Direction of a Musical, Taymor supervises new productions of the show around the world.

The Broadway score features **Elton John** and **Tim Rice**'s songs from *The Lion King* animated film, along with three new songs by John and Rice; additional musical material by South African **Lebo M**, **Mark Mancina**, **Jay Rifkin**, **Julie Taymor**, and **Hans Zimmer**; and music from *Rhythm of the Pride Lands*, an album inspired by the original music in the film, written by Lebo M, Mark Mancina and Hans Zimmer. The resulting sound of *The Lion King* is a fusion of Western popular music and the distinctive sounds and rhythms of Africa, ranging from the Academy Award®-winning song "Can You Feel the Love Tonight" to Lebo M's rich choral numbers.

Elton John, Lebo M, and Hans Zimmer all collaborated on the 2019 version of the film, executive produced by Julie Taymor and Thomas Schumacher, which has gone on to extraordinary worldwide success.

The book has been adapted by **Roger Allers**, who co-directed the animated *The Lion King* feature, and **Irene Mecchi**, who co-wrote the film's screenplay. Other members of the creative team include: **Michael Curry**, who designed the masks and puppets with Taymor; **Steve Canyon Kennedy** (sound design); **Michael Ward** (hair and makeup design); **Anthony Lyn** (associate director); **Marey Griffith** (associate choreographer); **Clement Ishmael** (music supervisor); **Lisa Dawn Cave** (production supervisor); and **Binder Casting/Mark Brandon, CSA** (casting). **Anne Quart** serves as co-producer.

For more information worldwide, visit LionKing.com, or find more info on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/lionking) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/lionking).

Tickets

Tickets can be purchased by calling 215-893-1999 or online at www.kimmelculturalcampus.org. In-person ticket sales can be conducted daily from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. at the Academy of Music Box Office, located at 240 S. Broad Street. See www.kimmelculturalcampus.org for more information.

Premium Ticket Packages, which include a prime seat location, a souvenir program, and a cinch bag, are also available.

Ticket buyers are reminded that Ticket Philadelphia and the Kimmel Cultural Campus box office are the only official retail ticket outlets for all performances taking place at the Academy of Music. Ticket buyers who purchase tickets from a ticket broker or any third party should be aware that the Kimmel Cultural Campus is unable to reprint or replace lost or stolen tickets and is unable to contact patrons with information regarding time changes or other pertinent updates regarding the performance.

Disney's THE LION KING

Academy of Music on the Kimmel Cultural Campus

August 16 – September 10, 2023

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THE SHUBERT ORGANIZATION

The Shubert Organization is America's oldest professional theatre company and the largest theatre owner on Broadway. For over 120 years, Shubert has operated hundreds of theatres and produced hundreds of plays and musicals in New York City and throughout the United States. Under the leadership of Robert E. Wankel, Chairman and CEO, Shubert currently owns and operates 17 Broadway theatres, six off-Broadway venues, and the Forrest Theatre in Philadelphia. Notable productions and co-productions include *Cats*, *Sunday in the Park with George*, *Dreamgirls*, *The Heidi Chronicles*, *Jerome Robbins' Broadway*, *Amadeus*, *Children of a Lesser God*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *Spamalot*, *The Elephant Man*, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, *The Band's Visit*, *Come from Away*, *Dear Evan Hansen*, *Company*, and the new musical *Some Like It Hot*. In addition, Shubert's innovative ticketing solutions offer unparalleled distribution and marketing to the theatre industry and beyond. Its consumer-facing brands—Telecharge for retail ticket sales and Broadway Inbound for group sales and the travel industry—sell millions of tickets each year. The Shubert Foundation, sole shareholder of The Shubert Organization, Inc., is dedicated to sustaining and advancing live performing arts in the United States. The Foundation provides general operating support to not-for-profit theatres and dance companies. Foundation grants in 2021 total \$32.1 million. For more information, visit www.shubert.nyc.

KIMMEL CULTURAL CAMPUS

Located in the heart of Center City, Philadelphia, our mission is to engage the region's diverse communities with art through performance and education. Our Cultural Campus serves more than 1-million guests per year and includes Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts (Verizon Hall, Perelman Theater, and SEI Innovation Studio), the Academy of Music, and the Miller Theater (formerly the Merriam Theater) – representing more than 160 years of rich history for the performing arts along Philadelphia's Avenue of the Arts. We are home to The Philadelphia Orchestra and six esteemed Resident Companies: Opera Philadelphia, Philadelphia Ballet, PHILADANCO, The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, The Philadelphia Chamber Music Society, and Curtis Institute of Music. With nearly 9,000 seats per night, we are the region's most impactful performing arts center, and the second largest in the country. Our Cultural Campus serves as a preeminent and inclusive place to enjoy exceptional experiences that reflect the spirit of our region by cultivating a creative and socially responsible environment where our community shares experiences that are delivered with pride, integrity, and respect. As a 501 c 3 nonprofit organization, we collaborate on, present, and produce a broad range of relevant and meaningful events, we serve as an active gathering space for social and community events, we educate the region's young people through access to quality arts experiences, and we provide support to artists in the creation of new work. Read Kimmel Cultural Campus' vision statement, world view, and mission statement [here](#). Learn more about our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion and how it encompasses our mission, coworkers, and programs [here](#).

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For photography, please visit <https://kcccpress.smugmug.com>