

HENNEPIN THEATRE TRUST

ORPHEUM ★ STATE ★ PANTAGES ★ NEW CENTURY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Disney
PRESENTS

THE LION KING

THE BROADWAY MUSICAL

Disney's *The Lion King* Opens Tonight at the Orpheum Theatre in Minneapolis

MINNEAPOLIS—Disney's *The Lion King*, celebrating nearly 15 years since its 1997 world premiere in Minneapolis, **opens tonight, Friday, Jan. 13, at 8 p.m. at Hennepin Theatre Trust's Orpheum Theatre** for a limited engagement of five weeks through Sunday, Feb. 12, 2012. "Hennepin Theatre Trust is thrilled to welcome *The Lion King* back to Minneapolis," says Hennepin Theatre Trust President/CEO Tom Hoch. "Tickets for this show are in high demand, but there are still good seats available for the weeknight performances." It is presented by Hennepin Theatre Trust as part of its 2011/12 Broadway Across America-Minneapolis Season. For more information or to purchase tickets, please visit HennepinTheatreTrust.org or call 1.800.982.2787.

The Lion King began as a 1994 animated feature-length film developed and produced by the Walt Disney Company. The story, a coming of age parable set among animals indigenous to its setting, the African savanna, tells the tale of Simba, the lion cub who rises to be the King of the jungle. The 1997 world premiere at the Orpheum Theatre was followed by sold-out return engagements in 2005 and 2007. Minneapolis is the first city in North America to host this landmark production four times.

Two cast members have Minnesota connections. The sardonic and deviously cunning "Scar" will be played by **J. Anthony Crane**, who grew up in Minneapolis and whose family still lives in the Twin Cities. **Nick Cordileone**, who went to grade school in Minneapolis and Brooklyn Park, is the wisecracking meerkat "Timon."

Dionne Randolph is "Mufasa," the great warrior and ruler of the Pridelands. **Ntomb'Khona Dlamini** is the wise baboon shaman "Rafiki." **Mark David Kaplan** portrays the prim and proper hornbilled bird "Zazu." **Jonathan Weir** is the carefree warthog "Pumbaa." Mufasa's son, "Simba," the lion prince born to be king, is played by **Jelani Remy** and **Syndee Winters** is the loyal lioness "Nala." The three evil hyenas are played by **Omari Tau** ("Banzai"), **Monica L. Patton** ("Shenzi") and **Ben Roseberry** ("Ed"). The role of "Young Simba" is alternated between **Niles Fitch** and **Zavion J. Hill** and the role of "Young Nala" is alternated between **Sade Phillip-Demarcy** and **Kailah McFadden**.

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Hennepin Theatre Trust, non-profit owner of the historic Orpheum, State, Pantages and the newly developed New Century Theatres, is devoted to enriching the vibrant cultural atmosphere of the Twin Cities.

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Disney's *The Lion King* Opens Tonight at the Orpheum Theatre, p. 2

The North American touring production of *The Lion King* has been seen by over 13.5 million theatergoers and grossed over \$875 million to date. The current schedule is listed below. For more information worldwide, visit LionKing.com.

TICKET INFORMATION

Individual tickets for Disney's *The Lion King* are on sale now. Best availability is for weeknight performances. Ticket prices begin as low as \$30 and are subject to change. Tickets may be purchased in person at the State Theatre Box Office (805 Hennepin Avenue, Minneapolis, 55402, no service fees), online at HennepinTheatreTrust.org, by calling Ticketmaster at 1.800.982.2787 or at a Ticketmaster Ticket Center. Prices depend on performance time and seating preference and include applicable facility fees. Additional charges may apply. In addition, Premium Ticket Packages, which include a prime seating location, commemorative souvenir program and an exclusive merchandise item, are also available. Groups of 15 or more should call 612.373.5665 for information and reservations.

Performances dates for *The Lion King* are Wednesday, Jan. 11 through Sunday, Feb. 12, 2012 at Hennepin Theatre Trust's Orpheum Theatre (910 Hennepin Ave., Mpls., 55403).

Performance times are Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday at 7:30 p.m., Friday at 8 p.m., Saturday at 2 and 8 p.m. and Sunday at 1 and 6:30 p.m. There will be a 2 p.m. matinee on Thursday, Feb. 9. There is no 6:30 p.m. show on Sunday, Feb. 12.

Please note: The only way to guarantee the authenticity of your *Lion King* ticket is to purchase from an authorized ticket seller, and the **ONLY** authorized ticket sellers are the State Theatre Box Office, Ticketmaster and HennepinTheatreTrust.org.

ABOUT THE LION KING

In its 15th year, *The Lion King* remains ascendant, continuing to reign as a cultural phenomenon and one of the most popular stage musicals in the world. Since its Broadway premiere on November 13, 1997, 19 productions around the globe have been seen by more than 63 million people, grossed over \$4.7 billion and have, cumulatively, run a staggering 89 years. Produced by Disney Theatrical Productions (under the direction of Thomas Schumacher), *The Lion King* is the seventh longest-running musical in Broadway history and one of only six productions in theatre history to play for ten years or more both on Broadway and in the West End. Translated into seven different languages (Japanese, German, Korean, French, Dutch, Mandarin, Spanish), the show has been performed in 14 different countries on five continents. *The Lion King* can currently be seen on Broadway, on stages across North America, and in Tokyo, London's West End, Hamburg and Madrid.

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, making Taymor the first woman in theatrical history bestowed with the honor. *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.

On stage, Taymor's creative vision blends elements of African art and Broadway artisanship to depict anthropomorphic animal characters. Taymor, along with designer Michael Curry, has created hundreds of masks and puppets for *The Lion King*. The book has been adapted by Roger Allers, who co-directed *The Lion King* animated feature, and Irene Mecchi, who co-wrote the film's screenplay. Other members of the creative team include: Steve Canyon Kennedy (sound design), Michael Ward (hair and makeup design), John Stefaniuk (associate director), Marey Griffith (associate choreographer), Clement Ishmael (music supervisor). Anne Quart serves as associate producer.

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The Broadway score features Elton John and Tim Rice's music 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 the haunting ballad "Shadowland."

For more information worldwide, visit LionKing.com.

NORTH AMERICAN TOUR SCHEDULE THROUGH SEPTEMBER 2012:

**Minneapolis – Hennepin Theatre Trust's Orpheum Theatre
January 11 – February 12, 2012**

Richmond – Landmark Theater
February 15 – March 11, 2012

New Orleans – Mahalia Jackson Theatre
March 14 – April 15, 2012

Orlando – Bob Carr Performing Arts Center
April 17 – May 13, 2012

Miami – Adrienne Arsht Center
May 17 – June 10, 2012

Greenville – Peace Center for Performing Arts
June 12 – July 8, 2012

Houston – Hobby Center for the Performing Arts
July 10 – August 12, 2012

St. Louis – Fox Theatre
August 15 – September 2, 2012

HENNEPIN THEATRE TRUST, non-profit owner of the historic Orpheum, State, Pantages and the newly developed New Century Theatres, is dedicated to enriching the vibrant cultural atmosphere of the Twin Cities. We present a rich array of live performances, create inspiring arts education experiences and advance a thriving cultural destination in downtown Minneapolis. Our programs include Broadway touring productions, the *Broadway Confidential* series, our *SpotLight Musical Theatre Program* for high schools, the *Critical View* student reviewer program, our free ticket *Access Program* and Kids' Night and leading the planning for the cultural corridor that will extend from the Walker Art Center to the Mississippi Riverfront.

BROADWAY ACROSS AMERICA (Producer), part of the Key Brand Entertainment family of companies which includes *Broadway.com*, is owned and operated by British theatre producer John Gore (CEO) and entertainment industry veteran Thomas B. McGrath (Chairman). Broadway Across America presents first-class touring musicals and plays across 40 North American cities. *Broadway.com* is the premier theater website for news, exclusive content and ticket sales. Under the supervision of Beth Williams (CEO-Theatrical), Broadway Across America is also dedicated to the development and production of new and diverse theatre. Current Broadway productions include *How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* starring Daniel Radcliffe and John Larroquette, *Million Dollar Quartet*, *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, *Jerusalem*, *Memphis* and the West End production of *Million Dollar Quartet*. For more information, please visit BroadwayAcrossAmerica.com and Broadway.com.



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