

LION KING Jr

SHOW SYNOPSIS

RAFIKI gathers the ANIMALS of the Pridelands to welcome the newborn cub of King MUFASA and Queen SARABI ("Circle of Life with Nants' Ingonyama"). The king's jealous brother, SCAR, no longer heir to the throne, skips the ceremony, upsetting Mufasa. Time passes ("Grasslands Chant") and YOUNG SIMBA grows into a curious young lion. Mufasa explains the circle of life and that Young Simba will one day be king of the Pridelands. Young Simba shares this news with Scar, who encourages his nephew to visit the forbidden Elephant Graveyard. Young Simba finds his best friend, YOUNG NALA, hunting with SARAFINA and the LIONESSES ("The Lioness Hunt") and invites her on his adventure. Once they ditch their overbearing babysitter, ZAZU ("I Just Can't Wait to Be King"), the cubs encounter the ravenous SHENZI, BANZAI and ED in the graveyard. Mufasa arrives and pummels the hyenas then takes the cubs home. Scar emerges from the darkness to recruit the HYENAS in his murderous plan to become king ("Be Prepared"). Back in the Pridelands, Mufasa reprimands Young Simba then shares the guidance of their ancestors, up among the stars ("They Live in You").

Enacting his plan, Scar leaves Young Simba alone in the gorge and signals the hyenas to scare a herd of wildebeest ("The Stampede"). Scar alerts Mufasa, who leaps into the stampede to save his son. Mufasa rescues Young Simba, but Scar pushes his brother back into the gorge, where he is trampled. Scar blames Young Simba for the king's death and tells him to run away and never return. As Sarabi, Young Nala, Rafiki and the lionesses mourn the loss of Mufasa and Young Simba ("The Mourning"), Scar assumes the throne, uniting lions and hyenas under his dark reign. Lost in the desert, Young Simba meets TIMON and PUMBAA, who take him to their "worry-free" jungle home ("Hakuna Matata").

Under Scar's reign, the Pridelands are nearly destroyed. Now grown, NALA decides to leave and seek help ("Shadowland"). To her delight, she finds SIMBA alive in the jungle ("Can You Feel the Love Tonight"). Nala urges him to take his rightful place as king but, still ashamed, Simba refuses. Rafiki appears and helps Simba remember his father ("He Lives in You"). With newfound courage, Simba agrees to return to the Pridelands. Timon and Pumbaa distract the hyenas ("Luau Hawaiian Treat") while Nala rallies the lionesses. Simba confronts his uncle, the truth of Mufasa's murder is revealed and Scar runs away, pursued by angry hyenas. With peace restored in the Pridelands, Simba takes his place as king and the circle of life continues ("Finale").

LION KING Jr

Song list

Circle of Life with Nants' Ingonyama
Grasslands Chant
The Lioness Hunt
I Just Can't Wait to Be King
Be Prepared
They Live in You
The Stampede
The Mourning
Hakuna Matata (Part 1)
Hakuna Matata (Part 2)
Shadowland
Can You Feel the Love Tonight
He Lives in You
Luau Hawaiian Treat
Finale
Bows

Character Breakdown

Rafiki

A wise mandrill who acts as healer of the Pridelands and guides Simba on his journey home. She is an omniscient character, evincing an air of mystery. Rafiki has significant solos in "Circle of Life" and "He Lives in You," and leads the African chants throughout the show, so cast a confident performer with a strong singing voice.

Gender: Female

Ensemble

The ensemble plays various inhabitants of the Pridelands, such as giraffes, elephants, antelopes, wildebeest, and other creatures you choose to include. This group can have as few or as many performers as your production permits. Be sure to cast many strong singers. There are also several moments to showcase individual dancers in "The Lioness Hunt" and "I Just Can't Wait to Be King."

Mufasa

The strong, honorable, and wise lion who leads the Pridelands. Mufasa should command respect onstage and also show tenderness with his son, Simba. Cast a mature actor who can convincingly portray the king.

Gender: Male

Sarabi

A featured lioness, Mufasa's mate, and Simba's mother. Sarabi has a few key speaking lines for an actor who can deliver the care and command of a queen.

Gender: Female

LION KING Jr

Zazu

The anxious yet loyal assistant to Mufasa who is always busy trying to do his duty. Zazu's lyrics are spoken rather than sung, and the role can be played by a boy or girl.

Gender: Both

Scar

The antagonist of the show, overcome with jealousy of his brother, Mufasa, and nephew, Simba. Coldhearted and wickedly intelligent, he will stop at nothing to become king of the Pridelands. Cast a mature performer who can bring out this villain's dark side while handling Scar's sarcastic sense of humor. As his solos can be spoken, opt for an actor over a singer.

Gender: Male

Young Simba

The protagonist of the story, is an adventurous and endearing cub who can't wait to be king of the Pridelands. Simba is playful, energetic, and naive, but after his father Mufasa's death, Simba struggles with shame and his destiny. Cast a strong singer and dynamic performer in this role.

Gender: Male

Simba

Grows from a cub to lion in "Hakuna Matata." Older Simba has more complex moments as he reunites with Nala, mourns his father, and returns to confront Scar, so cast a more mature actor. Be sure that the change in actors is clear: Try having Young Simba hand-off a costume piece, such as a medallion, to older Simba. Also be sure that Simba and Young Simba share a movement vocabulary.

Gender: Male

Lionesses

The fierce hunters of the Pridelands and featured in "The Lioness Hunt," "The Mourning," and "Shadowland." These actors should be strong singers, as the material can be challenging. Depending on the complexity of your choreography, particularly for "The Lioness Hunt," strong dancers may be desirable as well.

Gender: Female

Young Nala

A courageous lion and Young Simba's best friend. She is not afraid to speak her mind. While Young Nala does sing a little, look for a strong female performer who can portray this confident cub.

Gender: Female

Nala

Grows from a cub to a lioness before she confronts Scar, so cast a more mature actress to play the character beginning in Scene 10. As with older Simba and Young Simba, ensure that this switch in actors performing a single role is clear. Direct the actors to share a mask or costume piece that distinctly represents Nala, as well as a movement vocabulary.

Gender: Female

LION KING Jr

Sarafina

A featured lioness and Nala's mother. She has one short, spoken line, so consider giving this part to an actor who is putting in a lot of effort and hard work in rehearsal as a lioness.

Gender: Female

Shenzi

One of Scar's hyenas who plot to take over the Pridelands. She is the sassy one of the trio and is always looking out for herself. With Banzai and Ed, she should be able to laugh loudly and long, as well as be menacing to Young Simba and Young Nala.

Gender: Female

Banzai

A slick yet childish hyena who works for Scar. He would be the leader of the group if hyenas weren't so lazy. Look for an outgoing and confident actor who can portray nastiness and gruffness. Banzai is always featured with Shenzi and Ed.

Gender: Male

Ed

The third member of Scar's trio of lackeys. He has a loud, cackling laugh that is his only form of communication. Ed should be played by an actor who can laugh unabashedly and communicate through physicality and facial expressions rather than words. This role can be played by a boy or girl.

Gender: Both

Hyenas

Scar's army, helping carry out his evil plot to take over the Pridelands. Hyenas are mangy, mindless creatures who sing in "Be Prepared." Cast actors who are able to sing the background parts of that song while playing the loud and raucous characters. Your hyenas can double as animals of the Pridelands or lionesses.

Gender: Both

Timon

An outcast meerkat who lives in the jungle with Pumbaa. He is afraid of his own shadow, but pretends to be the confident, relaxed leader of the duo. Timon is one of the funniest characters in the show and should be played by a charismatic actor who understands comic timing. This part can be played by a boy or a girl.

Gender: Both

Pumbaa

A kindhearted, sensitive warthog who enjoys his simple life of grubs and relaxation. Cast a boy or girl who can portray this loveable and loyal friend to Timon and Simba with deadpan humor.

Gender: Both