



20 December 2019

HONG KONG EMBRACES THE WORLD'S #1 MUSICAL THE LION KING PREMIERES HONG KONG SEASON WITH OPENING GALA TONIGHT

Michael Cassel Group in association with Disney Theatrical Productions is proud to announce that the international tour of Disney's THE LION KING will tonight make its Hong Kong premiere at AsiaWorld-Expo, promoted locally by iMe Global Limited.

Hong Kong audiences embrace the musical's arrival following two triumphant previews leading into a much-anticipated gala premiere tonight. With the Broadway production now in its 22nd year, the wait is finally over for Hong Kong audiences to experience the landmark musical in their home city.

The AsiaWorld-Expo Arena has been set up in a bespoke Theatre Mode for THE LION KING's Hong Kong season. The international production will play to Hong Kong audiences in English with Chinese surtitles for a total of 31 performances.

"THE LION KING is in its 22nd year and Tony Award winning director Julie Taymor and her creative team have brought together a truly global cast and crew for this tour. We're thrilled the show is resonating so strongly with Hong Kong audiences" said **Thomas Schumacher**, President & Producer, Disney Theatrical Productions.

"The scale and magnitude of this world-class production is incomparable. Hong Kong audiences will be treated to a truly authentic Broadway experience, delivered by our incredible international cast who continue to bring to life director Julie Taymor's vision with such passion and exuberance", commented Producer of the international tour, **Michael Cassel**.

This International Tour of THE LION KING premiered in Manila in March 2018 and has continued to break box office records as well as touring to new territories including Manila, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, and now Hong Kong.

For a strictly limited season, tickets to THE LION KING can be purchased at HKTicketing | 31 288 288

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ABOUT THE LION KING

After 21 landmark years on Broadway, **THE LION KING** continues ascendant as one of the most popular stage musicals in the world. Since its premiere on November 13, 1997, 25 global productions have been seen by more than 100 million people. Produced by Disney Theatrical Productions (under the direction of Thomas Schumacher), **THE LION KING** is the only show in history to generate six productions worldwide running 15 or more years. Performed in eight different languages (Japanese, German, Korean, French, Dutch, Spanish, Mandarin and Portuguese), productions of **THE LION KING** can currently be seen on Broadway; London's West End; Hamburg; Tokyo; Madrid; Scheveningen, Holland; South Korea and on tour across North America and Japan, for a total of nine productions running concurrently across the globe. Having played over 100 cities in 20 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 has in recent years supervised new productions of the show around the world.

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."

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: Michael Curry, who designed the masks and puppets with Taymor, Steve Canyon Kennedy (sound design), Michael Ward (hair and makeup design), John Stefaniuk (associate director), Marey Griffith (associate choreographer), Clement Ishmael (music supervisor) and Doc Zorthian (production supervisor). Anne Quart serves as co-producer.

For more information worldwide, visit LionKing.com

NOTES FOR EDITORS

MICHAEL CASSEL GROUP: The Michael Cassel Group is a leading live entertainment company formed to produce and present the world's greatest musical and theatrical productions, live entertainment experiences, marquee events and concert attractions. Led by CEO/Producer Michael Cassel, named a "visionary" and "a producer with global cred changing the face of the stage" (The Weekend Australian), the entrepreneurial company based in Sydney, Australia has enjoyed a "meteoric rise" (Australian Financial Review). Michael Cassel Group productions include the first international tour of the world's #1 musical *The Lion King*, the Australian premiere of the award-winning production *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, the landmark multi-award-winning musical *Hamilton*, the world-renowned *Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo*, the Australian and New Zealand tour of comedian, actor and social media superstar *Celeste Barber: Challenge Accepted*, Tony® and Olivier Award-winning Broadway star and Disney legend *Lea Salonga in Concert*, International award-winning performer *Tina Arena in Concert* at Sydney Coliseum and the opening celebration of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2020. Previous Australian productions include *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*, *Les Misérables*, *Kinky Boots*, *Singin' In The Rain*, *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*, *Lea Salonga in Concert* and *Darren Criss: Intimate and Live*. In addition to the group's

expanding theatrical interests, the company represents former Australian Prime Minister, the Hon. Julia Gillard AC, former Olympian and global sporting administrator Lord Sebastian Coe CH, KBE and media personality Sami Lukis.

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