



Disney **THE LION KING**

PRODUCTION NOTES

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| Venue: | The Lyceum Theatre, London (also playing at the Minskoff Theatre on Broadway in New York City, and many other venues around the world) |
| Director/Costume Designer/ Mask & Puppet Co-Designer: | Julie Taymor |
| Choreographer: | Garth Fagan |
| Scenic Designer: | Richard Hudson |
| Lighting Designer: | Donald Holder |
| Mask & Puppet Co-Designer: | Michael Curry |
| Hair & Make-up Designer: | Michael Ward |
| Sound Designer: | Steve Canyon Kennedy |
| Associate Director: | John Stefaniuk |
| Associate Choreographer: | Marey Griffith |

Your exclusive guide to the design considerations, costumes, and puppets as well as top tips for writing about the West End stage show. This resource will be of particular use to students studying drama, theatre and performance.

You may also find it useful to refer to the ten **Behind-the-Scenes** episodes and the **Getting Ready to Roar** film resources that reveals the action backstage at the Lyceum Theatre, freely available at lionkingeducation.co.uk



DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

What are the challenges of using masks and costumes in *The Lion King*?

- There are no real animals in this show: the performers need to communicate the essence of each animal, without trying to imitate them. The ensemble needs to be able to quickly switch between animal characters and other natural elements.
- Julie Taymor was inspired by African and Asian art and culture, this can be seen in the patterns on many of the costumes (see the Lionesses on opposite page).
- Masks have a static expression, so the character needs to be animated by the actor's face.
- In *The Lion King*, the actors speak and sing throughout the performance, which was a consideration of the utmost importance when designing the masks. Additionally, Taymor utilises what she calls the "double event" which allows the audience to encounter both the animal traits of the design and the human emotions of the actor simultaneously, creating a singular, whole character. By not obstructing the actors' faces with masks or puppets, Taymor achieves both of these goals.
- The designer of the mask has to decide which characteristics need to be communicated through the mask and how to make them clear to the audience, which may be some distance away.
- Lighting, costume design, choreography and direction also need to take into account the weight and shape of the mask. The masks are made of very lightweight material and they are used by performers in rehearsal to develop their characterisation, so that they become an extension of the performer's own body.
- **The Lion King** is a non-naturalistic musical. Therefore, the performance style of the production does not rely on a 'life-like' representation of everyday life.
- A high level of technical expertise is required by the company as there are so many different elements to the production, including large scale set pieces such as the Elephant Graveyard, and busy ensemble numbers involving numerous puppets and set pieces. All of this requires strict attention to health and safety guidelines.
- It can be difficult to create the sense of scale and the quantity of animals required to depict the natural environment of the show. Taymor often solves this by what she calls "corporate puppetry", where one performer wears or operates a number of puppets at the same time to multiply the number of those animals on stage.

Design fundamentals - what do you notice?

The dominant idea is the Circle of Life. Throughout the production design, there are circles present. This includes the design of Pride Rock which spirals up from the stage. Where else can you see circles in the show?



The sun in **The Lion King** is constructed from **43 aluminium ribs** attached to each other with silk strips. As the circle is lifted up by the wires, it gives the impression of the sun coming up over the horizon.

There are more than **232 puppets** in the show, including rod puppets, shadow puppets and full-sized puppets.

It took **37,000 hours** to build the puppets and masks.

The longest animal is the elephant: 4 metres long, 3.5 metres high and 2.75 metres wide.

SIMBA



The role of Simba is played by two actors and the character is also represented by various puppets throughout the show.

YOUNG SIMBA wears the same make-up around his neck and chest as adult Simba, which is based on ceremonial Maasai warrior make-up. Young Simba does not wear a mask or wrist cuffs as the adult Simba does. He needs to retain the childish features of a young lion and be able to roll, jump, leap and climb. When the adult wears the additional items, the costume suggests his increased maturity and strength.

ADULT SIMBA wears a beaded corset which is inspired by the clothing of Maasai warriors. The top of the corset sits just beneath the chest, which helps the shoulders seem even broader and stronger – this is where much of lions’ strength comes from when hunting.

Part of Simba’s transition to being an adult is the addition of a headpiece. It is different to that worn by Mufasa – the design is based on the idea of a Roman warrior helmet. Like this kind of helmet, there is no jaw line, which suggests that Simba is still only a young adult. His mane creates the brush that was worn on Roman helmets, and presents him as a brave fighter. This helps emphasise the idea of Simba fighting bravely for what is right following the death of his father.



CONSIDER...

During *Hakuna Matata*, Simba appears to grow up within eight seconds – watch closely at the transition, use of space and staging to achieve the sense of time passing. How does the set also play a role in the transition?



NALA



NALA is played by a child and then an adult actor. Nala’s costume contains elements of both African and Asian culture to illustrate the many aspects of her character.

Both Young Nala and adult Nala wear the same style and design of corset throughout the performance. The white beads in the centre of the corset emulate the soft white underbelly that is typical of lions and lionesses. The harp-like shape at the back of the corset is based on the corsets worn by Dinka people from Sudan. Her collar and movements come from Bali which add grace and fluidity to her characteristics.

Nala’s make-up is inspired by the Wodaabe people – a tribe known for their beautiful and elaborate appearance. Young Nala’s make-up is less detailed and intricate than the adult Nala’s.

Similarly to the Simba character, Nala’s mask is only worn by the adult performer. Like Simba’s, the mask is jawless, does not move and sits on the head like a crown, emphasising youth rather than experience.



CONSIDER...

The role of Nala in the stage production; what are the moments that define her character and what words would you use to describe her key characteristics?

MUFASA



MUFASA's character represents wisdom, balance and strength: the design of his costume and mask reflect this.

His mask is circular and symmetrical with rays coming out of it like the sun, which implies that he is balanced and in harmony with nature. His mask is painted to look like rich oak wood to convey his qualities of strength and reliability. This circular shape also represents the Circle of Life, a central motif of the show.

Much of the character's costume is inspired by traditional Maasai dress, specifically his braided hair, red make-up, Maasai swords and corset. The red make-up also forms a connection between Mufasa and Simba, his son. His swords are occasionally used to represent his two front legs in moments of heightened tension, when the character's animal instincts become more pronounced.

The fabric that connects the nape of the actor's neck to the front of his waist is based on traditional Kuba cloth and helps his movement appear fluid. This feature echoes the costumes of the lionesses, indicating that Mufasa fits in well with the other members of his pride.

Mufasa's costume contains golden and orange tones that suggest sunlight, re-enforcing his regal position and depicting him as a force for good.



CONSIDER...

The characters of Mufasa and Scar are brothers. They are both adult lions, but their appearance is vital in communicating their very different characters. The make-up, mask and costume, combined with the actors' body language and stylised movement create the characters' personalities.



SCAR

SCAR is a manipulative and sinister character. Scar's headpiece does not include the same circular form as Mufasa's. Instead, it is distinctly asymmetrical, giving the impression that he is imbalanced and skewed. The mask has high cheekbones and a sharp, spikey mane that sits only on the very top of the mask, rather than surrounding it. The green eyes suggest malevolence in comparison to the wooden eyes of Mufasa's mask and his eyebrows are arched in such a way to make him appear cynical and cruel. Both Scar and Mufasa's



masks are attached via a head mount which enables them to be worn in front of the face, or as a headpiece.

Scar carries a single cane. When standing upright, he uses the cane to support himself (as opposed to Rafiki who uses her staff to give emphasis to actions). When Scar becomes more combative, he leans forward onto the cane, as if it's a lone front leg. This suggests that he may have lost his other leg in the same fight that scarred his face.

The silhouette of his costume is based on that of a traditional Japanese samurai. This reflects his nobility but also presents him as a ruthless warrior. The outer layer is made of bamboo which depicts bones and ridges and show Scar to be a frail and skeletal character. The layer of fabric underneath the bamboo has a Kuba cloth pattern which places the character in Africa and connects him to the other lions in the production.

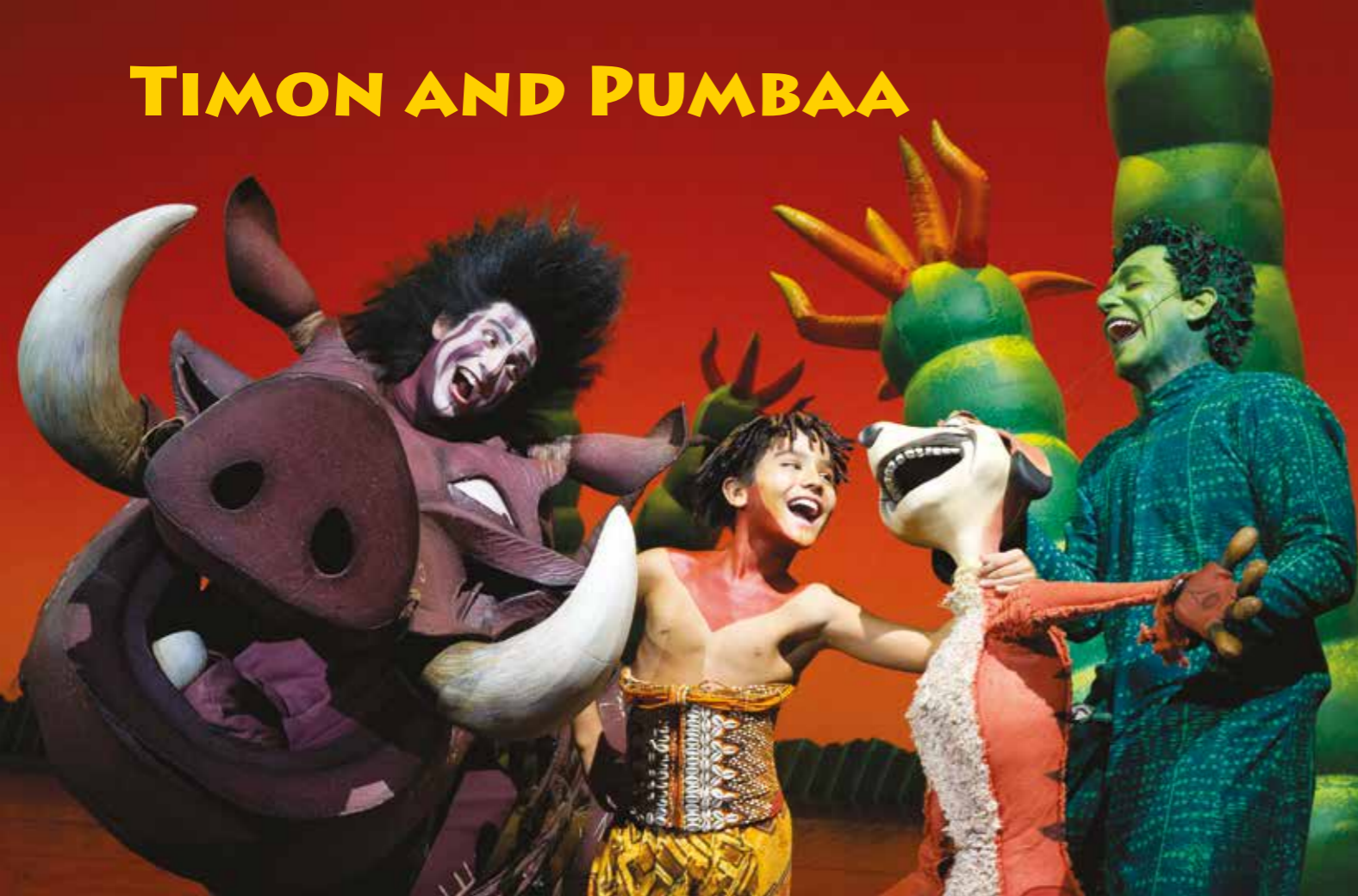
Scar wears wide 'chaps' which make his haunches look angular and bony. His movements are volatile and unpredictable in contrast to Mufasa's movements which are strong and fluid. He wears boots (dyed to match the colour of the full-length trousers) whereas Mufasa wears traditional brown leather sandals: his is a natural strength – Scar needs help to be strong.



RESEARCH TASK

Look into the clothing of traditional Japanese samurai warriors. What similarities do you notice between them and Scar's costume? How does the structure and silhouette of his costume suggest that although he is of noble birth, he is weak?

TIMON AND PUMBAA



The casting and costume help to create the comedy double act between Timon and Pumbaa. Think of many famous duos and you'll see that their size and shapes are often opposites of each other. Timon and Pumbaa are no exception.

TIMON is a meerkat. The actor's own costume (a green all-in-one suit, a green wig and green make-up on his entire face and neck) is designed to blend in to the jungle scenery of many of Timon's scenes. This is a bunraku-inspired puppet. The intention is that the audience will experience the "double event" so that the character is fully formed by both the puppet and the actor.

Timon is attached to the actor in three ways: i) by transparent wires connecting Timon's head to the actor's own (the actor uses a hand to control the puppet's mouth), ii) the actor uses rods to control the puppet's arms, iii) Timon's feet are attached to the feet of the actor's costume, and so 'walk' in the same way that the actor does.

PUMBAA is a warthog, and is larger than Timon. His belly is very close the ground, and his character is welcoming, warm-hearted and comical. The body puppet is worn in front of and behind the actor who uses his own arms to operate the mouth of the puppet. He can also operate the large tongue with his arms. The ears of the puppet are attached to the actor's shoulders.

The actor wears a large, bristly wig, with vertical hair like a Mohawk, to create the hair of the warthog's back. His face and neck are covered in purple and white make-up which recalls the brown of the warthog's skin and the white of his tusks.

Behind the actor, the puppet is formed by a structure like a ribcage. The actor's legs form the front legs of the warthog and there is no attempt to hide the actor's body.



Sketch of Pumbaa body puppet with actor in situ.

Sketch of the Timon puppet.



CONSIDER...

How does the design of these two puppets differ from the rest of the production, what does this tell the audience about their role in the story?

RAFIKI



CONSIDER...

The design of Rafiki's baobab tree; what is its function in the story and what practical considerations have been made when designing this set piece? See pages 15 and 16 for a visual reference.

This character represents a Sangoma healer from southern Africa. Rafiki's role in the story is that of a narrator. At certain moments, she addresses the audience directly. She is the only one who breaks the fourth wall.

RAFIKI is unusual in that she does not wear a mask and does not operate any kind of puppet. Her animal persona is created through costume and make-up.

The creative team were inspired by the mandrill monkey when designing Rafiki.

For her make-up, blue, yellow and red are used to accentuate the facial features. Arched blocks of yellow surround each eye which create width. Blue make-up sweeps from cheekbone to jawline and draws our attention towards the mouth, with white make-up applied (using a fan brush) to reference a mandrill's facial features.

Rafiki's make-up also includes an earthy red colour which surrounds the mouth – this highlights the whiteness of the performer's teeth.

Hair: A wig gives the appearance of spiked hair to represent the mandrill's thick fur. The edge of her hat is made from Kuba cloth.

Hands: Bamboo tubes are worn on each finger – this makes her arms look longer. Her forearms have rope

rings around them, which connect the character's hands to her sleeves, further elongating her arms.

Feet: Her shoes are sculpted to look like a mandrill's feet standing on a rock.

Rafiki wears a collar piece which includes red, yellow, blue and white, mimicking her facial make-up. The collar is finished with black feathers which create an effect of thick fur.

The back of Rafiki's costume is padded to accentuate her behind: mandrills have large pads called ischial callosities that provide padding – Rafiki's costume not only presents anatomical accuracy but also creates comedy as parts of her costume sway slightly when she walks.

Rafiki's skirt matches the colour of her hat, and the light brown echoes the earthy and wooden materials that make up the rest of her costume.

Because Rafiki represents a healer, you will see a number of different 'medicinal' items on her costume including bottles and shells. She also walks using a staff – this suggests age and perhaps wisdom. The performer uses it to emphasise what she says and gesticulates. The timing of this often creates comedy.

ZAZU



Sketch of the actor's costume elements

ZAZU is represented by two elements – the human actor who plays the character, and the puppet that represents the character. Both elements are clearly visible to the audience. This is another example of the “double event”.

The design and pattern of this costume represent the fusion of the African setting with the Englishness of the character. The actor's costume is based on an English butler's uniform with tails which, along with his feathery cravat and bolwer hat, show that he is a butler and the king's majordomo. The costume is made of African Kente cloth, which ties into the African origins of the story; it is also blue from head to toe which represents the character's natural habitat – the sky.

The puppet is one of the most complex puppets in the production and is operated, for the most part, using both hands. One hand controls the neck and head of the puppet, the other controls the rest of its body including the wings. The beak moves for the dialogue and the actor can also make the eyelids blink, creating the sense of a mannerism when Zazu is particularly frustrated. The wings can also extend from the body and flap, creating a flying motion.

THE LIONESSES



Even though you may not be able to see it in detail from the auditorium, each of the corsets worn by the **LIONESSES** is unique and individual to each actor. Although the patterns on their costumes vary, the headpieces are the same overall shape, creating a strong sense of tribe (the pride). The headpieces are reminiscent of the urns carried on the heads of women in various African tribes. Some of their masks include strips of translucent organza which are revealed as tears when the pride are mourning the death of Mufasa.

Notice how long pieces of silk flow down the back of the lionesses, from the base of the headpiece to their knees, creating a smooth and elegant profile. The costume creates a sense of majesty and elegance as the lionesses leap and dance.



DID YOU KNOW?

There are 22 corsets worn in the show, each is individually hand-beaded and contains several thousand beads. There is no inclusion of glittery or sequined beads in the corsets. Instead, the beads are all a matt colour to depict the sun-baked heat of the savannah.

HYENAS (BANZAI, SHENZI AND ED)

Unlike most of the other animals, the key colour of the **HYENA**'s costume is grey/green. The actors' all-in-one boiler suit costumes also have black patches which appear to be tearing off. This is an effective way of signifying to the audience that the hyenas are scavengers and covered in scars.

This costume relies strongly on the physicality and movement of the actor wearing the costume. His/her head naturally creates the hyena's hump, by being higher than the face of the hyena, which is attached to the actor's chest by a bungee cord. The head of the hyena is also attached to the actor's head by transparent strings so that they can control its movements. A strip of black spiky 'hair' connects the hyena head to the hood of the actor's costume, mimicking the fur along a hyena's spine.

Throughout the production, watch the hyenas carefully. When moving, the actor uses short crutches on their arms to represent the front legs of the hyena. During moments of dialogue (and therefore when

they are fairly stationary), the actor can slip one arm from the crutches and operate the mouth of the hyena head instead.



CONSIDER...

Why do you think the hyenas wear military style boots?



CREATING THE ANIMALS

In the opening sequence of the performance the creative team fill the stage with huge numbers of animals of the Savannah.

Giraffe: Two actors enter stage left. Each actor is on 4 stilts and wearing a tall headpiece which forms the neck and head of the animal. This leaves the actors' faces clear to be able to sing.

Cheetah: This puppet is worn around the waist, the back legs sit parallel with that of the actor. The head, body and front legs of the cheetah sit ahead of the actor and the front legs are operated by poles held by the actor.

Zebra: The actor appears in the centre of the zebra, the puppet is worn via a harness that rests on the actor's shoulders. The actor's legs appear as the zebra's front legs, the zebra's back legs are operated by poles held by the actor.

Gazelles: A good example of "corporate puppetry", each actor wears a lightweight gazelle puppet on each arm and also one on their head, attached via a head crank. There is also a gazelle wheel. The dancer pushes this rig across the stage and the wheels turn, causing the gazelles to leap across the landscape.



SET DESIGN

What are the challenges of designing a set for *The Lion King*?

- **The Lion King** is the story of a young lion's journey from childhood to adulthood, set in the vast landscape of the African savannah. There are a variety of different locations, including Pride Rock, the grasslands, the Elephant Graveyard, the jungle, the gorge where the stampede occurs and the waterhole. In the film, animators could create multiple landscapes and environments, but in live theatre, speed of transitions is important, as is giving the performers enough space (including large ensemble and dance numbers) to perform well and safely.
- The use of levels is also very important, both to create visual interest but also to create the different landscapes. The use of machinery and automation is key to help create this in the show.
- The audience are able to 'fill in the gaps' so the creative team need to provide the audience with enough information to suggest location, atmosphere and time, without trying to do so naturalistically.





WRITING ABOUT SET?

All of the suggestions below allow you to discuss scale, shape, location, mood and atmosphere, providing performance space for the large ensemble/musical moments and non-naturalistic design approaches

- Take a look at *Circle of Life*, from the moment the sun begins to rise. This is achieved by strips of saffron coloured silk held together with aluminium ribs. As it rises, the lights shine onto the silk, creating the mirage effect you might see in hot climates. This is the first use of the circle motif which we see throughout the show. Remember that the auditorium (including aisles and boxes) are used in the opening number, the procession to the stage draws the audience into the story and is an opportunity to showcase the costumes up close.
- If you are writing about interaction between set and performer, look at the way the grasslands are created: performers emerge from upstage wearing large trays of grassheads. These costumes have been designed not to portray the wildlife of the savannah but the landscape itself. They serve not only as costumes, but as architectural elements of a living, moving set. This moving landscape helps to portray a sense of journey which is essential to this scene.
- The stampede is a great example of how masks and set work together to create perspective. The performers stand downstage holding large wildebeest shields and wearing woollen, shaggy costumes to create wildebeest. This then combines with smaller wildebeest on rollers, and a backcloth with African-style paintings of wildebeest on it. This was one of the most challenging scenes to transfer from the animated film to the live stage.
- The scenes at the Elephant Graveyard allow you to discuss how space is used by performers, and the use of the skeleton to create levels and scale. It also provides a striking similarity to the circular environment created by Pride Rock.
- The drought and disappearance of the watering hole is a very simple technique, but allows the audience to see time passing and the devastating impact of the drought very quickly.
- The jungle at the end of Act 1 appears soon after the tragedy and horror of Mufasa's death. The lush, tropical location allows a change in colour palette and gives the audience the opportunity to experience a lighter mood.



A METAPHOR FOR LIFE

Just as the set contains a number of different circles, the movement and choreography are also influenced by metaphor. In rehearsal, the idea of tribes and community influence the style and execution of the movement, as well as helping the ensemble to work together to perform the choreography as it was intended.



CONSIDER...

How little traditional 'set' is used in the production. Can you give examples of where the ensemble is used to create the environment, context and atmosphere?



WRITING ABOUT COSTUME?

- Look closely at Scar and Mufasa: This allows you to make strong comparisons between the two characters. Consider the shape created by their costume and how it affects their movement. Whilst Mufasa has swords, Scar has a cane, showing that he is physically inferior to Mufasa, the king.
- *Circle of Life* demonstrates how puppetry and mechanics can be used to create a variety of different animals, from elephant to wildebeest to lion cub. Consider the gazelle, the additional arm pieces on the dancers create the illusion of multiple gazelles – a good example of "corporate puppetry".
- Timon, Pumbaa and Zazu are all different types of puppet, and examples of Taymor's "double event". The design of the costumes allows us to acknowledge the actor operating the costume/puppet but not get distracted by them.
- Rafiki's costume remains the same throughout the performance, but how the actor uses it to create comedy is particularly interesting. Consider how make-up allows her to use facial expression, the pads on the back of the costume create the shape of a monkey, and her shoes create the illusion of the monkey's short legs.
- Each time you look at a costume, think carefully about how it aids or hinders the way in which a performer moves. As the grasslands, the performers must work hard to create a uniform look, with their body held very upright whilst they also wear a headpiece with many blades of grass on it. The complex patterns of the choreography are challenging due to the shape and size of the costume that they are wearing, and require hours of rehearsal.



WRITING ABOUT PUPPETRY?

You could choose from...

- *Circle of Life* – the creation of all of the animals gathering to celebrate Simba's birth. Some of them enter from the wings, whilst others make their entrance via the auditorium.
- Bunraku-inspired puppetry of Timon and Zazu, and how the actor focuses the audience's attention on the puppet, rather than himself
- The hyenas, and how the performers operate the head and neck of the animal
- The shadow puppetry of Simba's journey
- The opening of Act 2, with the birds being flown from poles above the auditorium. By breaking the fourth wall, the use of puppets allows the audience to re-engage with the style of the production after the interval.



WRITING ABOUT PERFORMANCE SKILLS?

All of the roles in *The Lion King* make great demands on the actors' performances.

- Creating relationships: Simba and Mufasa (father and son); Zazu and Mufasa (servant and master); Scar and the hyenas (dictator/villain and followers); Simba and Nala (friends/partners).
- Vocal and physical skills: Simba - youthful climbing, dancing (*I Just Can't Wait to be King*) then fighting, communicating anger, sadness, grief and bravery; Mufasa - bravery, the warrior, the father, the noble king; Scar - villain, the murder of Mufasa, inspiring the hyenas (*Be Prepared*); the hyenas - creating a sense of evil, particularly with the young Simba and Nala; Rafiki – the shaman, communicating wisdom, advice and comedy.
- Creation of comedy: Rafiki's monologue; Zazu fussing over Mufasa; Timon and Pumbaa's jokes and rendition of *Hakuna Matata*.
- Non-naturalistic performance skills such as puppetry, dance and movement: *Circle of Life* and *Be Prepared*. How do the performers operate the puppets to suggest the animals' natural movements? Look particularly at the cheetah and zebras in the opening number.
- Movement to represent the different animals: Garth Fagan (choreographer) uses a mix of street dance, contemporary and ballet to help the performers create the sense of the animals without attempting to imitate them. Notice, for example, that the lions' choreography is often led by the shoulders, as Fagan was inspired by watching lions in Kenya. He noticed that the strength of movement came from the lions' shoulders.
- Rhythm is a vital part to the movement and timing of the performers. The production contains a number of different dance styles and musical rhythms, some of which work in opposition to each other. Performers who operate puppets also have a particularly demanding task in using rhythm to simultaneously create their animals, sing, dance and portray a character.



WRITING ABOUT LIGHTING?

- *He Lives In You* is a key moment, as individual pieces come together to form Mufasa's face in amongst the stars. The stage is filled with a wash of tiny dots of light, the source of which is the front of the balcony in the auditorium. Dancers (dressed in black) carry abstract shapes on long poles onto the stage and assemble a complete Mufasa mask. To reveal this, the light changes to a cross light. When the shape begins to separate again, a black gauze is flown in to conceal the dancers, and the gauze is then back lit (using a snap) to reveal dancers in colourful costumes on the cue in the music, *He Lives In You* (the gauze is then flown out at this point). The combination of this and the crescendo in the music makes the transition dramatic and emotional.
- Lighting is used to create atmosphere in the scene where a conversation takes place between Timon, Pumbaa and Simba as they sit under a starry sky. Look closely at the transition into this scene from the dramatic moment at the waterfall that takes place immediately beforehand. Consider how a dancer, carrying a lighting prop that represents fireflies, is used to make this transition seem smooth to the audience.
- The lighting rig contains both static and moving lights and because of the amount of dance and movement in the show, the direction in which performers are lit is extremely important. The colour scrollers used on many of the static lights allow the lighting designers to choose from up to 30 different colours for each light. Whilst watching the show, look for examples of how light is used

to create mood and atmosphere.

- Automated lights also use a number of different gobos to project patterns – where do you see examples of this? (Note, you won't necessarily see the evidence on the stage floor...)
- The intensity of light is varied in the show to help create mood and atmosphere. Track this technique, particularly taking note of how this can help suggest the time of day, the weather or the location in which a scene takes place.
- Nearly 700 lighting instruments were used to create the lighting plot.



WRITING ABOUT SOUND?

Remember that sound design aims to assist the telling of a story. Good sound design is often subtle and impacts the audience without them even knowing. Not only do we need to make sure that the spoken word is audible, good sound also highlights key moments and musical motifs.

- In *They Live In You*, a reverberation effect ('wet' sound) is used on the ensemble audio to create a sense of distance. This ethereal effect is further enhanced by routing the ensemble audio to the surround speakers, to make the audience feel like Mufasa and Simba's ancestors are all around them. This is in contrast to audio without any reverberation added ('dry' sound) which is more natural.
- Notice how differently sound is used during *Rafiki Mourns*. After the drama and tension of *The Stampede*, the sound for *Rafiki Mourns* helps to create a much smaller, emotional and intimate effect, before the uplifting and positive *Hakuna Matata*.
- Listen out for sound effects. Note how different sounds and instruments are used to create mood and atmosphere and depict sounds of the environment in a non-literal way. Can you hear any sound effects in the auditorium before the show begins?
- Listen out for motifs - repeated musical patterns, and choice of particular instruments - which occur in connection with certain themes or characters. For example, the flute is often associated with Zazu, whilst Scar often appears accompanied by the ominous sound of a concert bass drum.
- When you enter the theatre, look for the sources of sound. Where are the speakers? (Remember to look behind you). The theatre uses a surround sound system to enhance the audience's experience.
- In the Elephant Graveyard scene, use of instrumentation and sound design is very important to create a sinister and dangerous environment in which Simba and Nala play. Note the use of the electric drum kit, electric guitar and bass drum. The use of electric instruments makes the environment much less natural and welcoming and so creates a sense of danger for the young lion cubs.
- Electric instruments also sound much harsher than more traditional orchestral sounds, which creates a strong contrast with Simba's usual safe environment with his father.



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