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The Lion King: Esteban Oliver debuts as Zazu

Photo by Brinkhoff Mogenburg



Esteban Oliver (Zazu)

Disney Theatrical's Broadway production of **The Lion King** welcomes new cast member **Esteban Oliver**, making his Broadway debut in the role of Zazu from 01 Apr 2014.

Esteban Oliver joins the Broadway cast straight from his performances in the same role in the Madrid production of **The Lion King**. This makes him the first ever Spanish musical theatre actor to play the same role in both a Spanish and Broadway musical production.

Oliver's other Spanish credits include 'Hello Dolly!' (Ambrose), 'Beauty and the Beast' (Cogsworth), 'The Producers', 'The Phantom of the Opera' (Lefevre) and 'Mamma Mia!' (Bill).

Ron Kollen, Senior Vice President for Disney Theatrical Productions International said: *"We are thrilled to have Esteban Oliver join the Broadway company of The Lion King, bringing his wonderful performance of Zazu to New York audiences. Spanish audiences wholly embraced his hilarious performance in Madrid, and it is a testament to the incredible talent in the Madrid production that one of its leading actors will now be a part of the flagship Broadway production."*

Disney have also promised that due to Mr. Oliver's bilinguism, Spanish-language surprises will be incorporated into the show for the first time in the history of the Broadway production.

The musical opened at the New Amsterdam Theatre on 13 Nov 1997, following previews from 15 Oct. On the 13 Jun 2006 the musical moved to the Minskoff Theatre. **The Lion King**, now in its 16th year, it is the 5th longest running show in Broadway history.

The musical tells the story of the epic adventures of a young lion cub named Simba as he struggles to accept the responsibilities of adulthood and his destined role as king.

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Directed by Julie Taymor and choreographed by Garth Fagan, **The Lion King** currently features **Gareth Saxe** (Scar), **Alton Fitzgerald White** (Mufasa), **Buyi Zama** (Rafiki), **Esteban Oliver** (Zazu), **Ben Jeffrey** (Pumbaa), **Fred Berman** (Timon), **Aaron Nelson** (Simba), **Chantel Riley** (Nala), **James Brown-Orleans** (Banzai), **Bonita J. Hamilton** (Shenzi), **Enrique Segura** (Ed), **Jaden Jordan** and **Caleb McLaughlin** alternate the role of 'Young Simba' and, **Bobbi Bordley** and **Teshi Thomas** alternate the role of 'Young Nala'.

Director Julie Taymor became the first woman in Broadway history to win the Tony Award for Best Director of a Musical.

The Lion King has book by Roger Allers and Irene Mecchi, music by Elton John, with additional music by Hans Zimmer, Lebo M, Mark Mancina, and Jay Rifkin, and lyrics by Tim Rice.

The creative team for **The Lion King** features Richard Hudson (sets), Michael Curry (costumes), Donald Holder (lighting) and Steve Canyon Kennedy (sound).


The Lion King won six Tony Awards, including Best Musical.

- by Tom Millward

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