



Madrid Cast Member Esteban Oliver to Join Broadway's *The Lion King*; Spanish-Language Moments to Be Added

BY ADAM HETRICK
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Madrid cast member Esteban Oliver will join the Broadway production of *The Lion King*, taking on the role of Zazu, beginning April 1 at the Minskoff Theatre.

Oliver also played the role of Zazu, the plumed hornbill, in the Madrid company of *The Lion King*. He is the first Spanish musical theatre actor to perform the same leading role in both a Spanish and Broadway musical production, according to Disney.

In addition, Disney states that Spanish-language surprises will be incorporated into the show as part of Oliver's engagement in the Broadway production.

"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."

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**, 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 book was 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). Directed by **Julie Taymor** – who became the first woman to ever receive a Tony Award for Best Director of a Musical – *The Lion King* has become an international hit with productions playing all around the globe. In fact, the Elton John-Tim Rice musical has won over 30 major awards. Those include six Tony Awards, including one for Best Musical; eight Drama Desk Awards; six Outer Critics Circle Awards; two Sir Laurence Oliviers; the Evening Standard Award for Best Theatrical Event; and three Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Awards.

Produced by **Disney Theatrical Productions**, *The Lion King* currently plays Broadway's Minskoff Theatre (200 West 45th Street). For tickets, show information and performance schedule, call Ticketmaster's Disney on Broadway hotline at (866) 870-2717 or visit LionKing.com.

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