The Lion King

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This article is about Disney's 1994 film. For the theatrical musical, see The Lion King (musical). For the ferry, see MS Kongshavn.

The Lion King

Directed by
Roger Allers
Rob Minkoff

Produced by
Don Hahn
Irene Mecchi

Written by
Jonathan Roberts
Linda Woolverton
Matthew Broderick
Jeremy Irons
James Earl Jones
The Lion King is a 1994 American animated feature produced by Disney Feature Animation. Released to theaters on June 15, 1994 by Disney Pictures, it is the 32nd film in the Walt Disney Animated Classics series. The story, which was strongly influenced by the William Shakespeare play Hamlet, takes place in a kingdom of anthropomorphic animals in Africa. The film was the highest grossing animated film of all time until the release of Finding Nemo (a Disney/Pixar computer-animated film). The Lion King holds the record as the highest grossing traditionally animated film in history and belongs to an era known as the Disney Renaissance.

The Lion King is the highest grossing 2D animated film of all time in the United States, and received positive reviews from critics, who praised the film's music and story. During its release in 1994, the film grossed more than $783 million worldwide, becoming the most successful film released that year, and currently the twenty-fifth highest-grossing feature film.

A musical film, The Lion King garnered two Academy Awards for...
The Lion King takes place in the Pride Lands of the Serengeti, where a lion rules over the other animals as king. Rafiki (Robert Guillaume), a wise mandrill, anoints Simba (cub by Jonathan Taylor Thomas, adult by Mat Broderick), the newborn cub of King Mufasa (James Earl Jones) and Queen Sarabi (Madge Sinclair), and presents him to a gathering of animals at the Rock (“Circle of Life”).

Mufasa takes Simba on a tour of the Pride Lands, teaching him about the “Circle of Life”, the delicate balance affecting all living things. Simba’s uncle (Jeremy Irons) tells him about the elephant graveyard, a place where Mufasa has warned Simba not to go. Simba asks his mother if he can go to the whole with his best friend, Nala (cub by Niketa Calame, adult by Moira Kelly). Their parents agree but only if Mufasa’s majordomo, the hornbill Zazu (Rowan Atkinson), goes with them. Simba and Nala elude Zazu’s supervision and go to the graveyard instead. There, the cubs are met by Shenzi, Banzai and Ed (Cheech Marin and Jim Cummings), spotted by who try to kill them, but they are rescued by Mufasa. Mufasa later tells his son how very disappointed he is in him and how he put both Nala’s and his own life in danger.

Meanwhile, Scar gains the loyalty of the hyenas by claiming that if he becomes king, they’ll “never go hungry again”. Scar tells the hyenas that for this to happen, they must kill Mufasa and Simba, thus establishing his plan of regicide. Some time later, Scar lures Simba into a gorge for a “surprise from his father” while the hyenas create a wildebeest stampede. Alerted by Scar, Mufasa races to rescue Simba from the stampede. He saves his son but is left clinging to the edge of a steep cliff. Scar, instead of helping Mufasa, flings his brother into the stampede below. Simba sees his father fall and rushes down the cliff after only to find him dead. Scar convinces the young cub that he was responsible for his father’s death and recommends that he flee the Pride Lands. Scar again sends Shenzi, Banzai and Ed to kill Simba, but he escapes. Scar informs pride that both Mufasa and Simba were killed and that he is assuming the throne as the next in line, thus allowing the hyenas into the Pride Lands.

In a distant desert, Simba is found unconscious by Timon and Pumbaa (Nathan Lane and Ernie Sabella), a meerkat–warthog duo who adopt and raise cub. When Simba has grown into an adult he is discovered by Nala, who tells that Scar, through his irresponsibility, has turned the Pride Lands into a barren wasteland. She asks Simba to return and take his place as king but Simba refuses, still believing he caused his father’s death. Simba shows Nala around his and the two begin to fall in love. Rafiki arrives and persuades Simba to return to the Pride Lands, aided by Mufasa’s presence in the stars.
Once back at Pride Rock, Simba (with Timon, Pumbaa and Nala) is horrified to see the condition of the Pride Lands. After seeing his mother Sarabi struck by Scar for criticizing him, Simba announces his return. In response, Scar tells pride that Simba was responsible for Mufasa’s death and corners Simba at the edge of Pride Rock. As Simba dangles over the edge of Pride Rock, Scar pro- but quietly reveals to Simba that he killed Mufasa. Enraged, Simba leaps up and pins Scar to the ground, forcing him to admit the truth to the pride. A raging battle then ensues between the hyenas and the lionesses which results in Simba cornering Scar. Attempting to gain Simba’s mercy, Scar blames, but Simba orders Scar to go into exile. Scar Pretends to leave but turns to attack Simba, resulting in a final duel. Simba triumphs over his uncle by flipping him over a low cliff. Scar survives the fall but finds himself surrounded by the now-resentful hyenas, who attack and kill him. Simba and Nala become the new king and queen of the Pride Lands. The film concludes with the Pride Lands turning green with life again and Rafiki presenting Simba and Nala’s newborn cub as “The Circle of Life” continues.

Main article: List of The Lion King characters

- Simba (voiced by Jonathan Taylor Thomas as a cub and Matthew Broderick as an adult) is the protagonist of the movie and the son of Mufasa.
- Scar (voiced by Jeremy Irons), the film’s antagonist, is Mufasa’s jealous and scheming younger brother who desires the throne.
- Mufasa (voiced by James Earl Jones) is the King of the Pride Lands and Simba’s father.
- Nala (voiced by Niketa Calame as a cub and Moira Kelly as an adult) is Simba’s childhood friend and intended mate.
- Timon and Pumbaa (voiced by Nathan Lane and Ernie Sabella respectively) are the comical meerkat and warthog duo who live under the philosophy of "hakuna matata" (no worries). They become Simba’s provisional guardians during his exile.
- Rafiki (voiced by Robert Guillaume) is a wise mandrill who is responsible for presenting the newborn prince of the lions at Pride Rock for all to see.
- Zazu (voiced by Rowan Atkinson) is a loyal hornbill who serves Mufasa’s majordomo.
- Shenzi, Banzai and Ed (voiced by Whoopi Goldberg, Cheech Marin and Jim Cummings respectively) are a trio of spotted hyenas who assist Scar in his evil doings.
- Sarabi (voiced by Madge Sinclair) is Simba’s mother and the leader of the lionesses.
- Sarafina (voiced by Zoo Leader) is Nala’s mother. Her name is given in the end credits of the film.

Production

The production of The Lion King, originally titled King of the Jungle, took place at Walt Disney Animation Studios in Glendale, California and Disney-MGM Studios in Orlando, Florida. The original treatment, inspired by Hamlet written by Thomas M. Disch (author of The Brave Little Toaster), as “King of the Kalahari” in late 1988. Since his treatment was written as work-for-hire, Disch received no credit or royalties. Thirteen supervising animators, bc
California and Florida, were responsible for establishing the personalities and setting the tone for the film’s main characters. Nearly twenty minutes of the film were animated at the Disney-MGM Studios. Ultimately, more than 600 artists, animators and technicians contributed to the *The Lion King* over its lengthy production schedule. More than one million drawings were created for the film, including 1,197 hand-painted backgrounds and 119,058 individually colored frames of film.

In April 1992, when Rob Minkoff joined the directing team, a session was held to revamp the story. Kirk Wise and Gary Trousdale, the directors responsible for *Beauty and the Beast*, also attended. For two days, the producer, Don Hahn, presided over the discussion that finally produced a character makeove Simba and a radically revised second half of the film. Screenwriter Irene Mecchi joined the team that summer to help further develop the characters and define their personalities. Several months later, she was joined by Jonathan Roberts in the rewriting process. Working together in the animation department and in conjunction with the directors and story team, they tackled the unresolved emotional issues in the script and also added many comic situations, with Pumbaa and Timon and with the hyenas.

Animators studied real-life animals for reference, as was done for the earlier film, *Bambi*. Jim Fowler, renowned wildlife expert, visited the studio on several occasions with an assortment of lions and other jungle inhabitants to discuss behavior and help the animators give their drawings an authentic feel. Fowler also taught them how lions greet one another by gently butting heads, and how they show affection by placing one’s head under the other’s chin. Fowler also talked about how they protect themselves by lying on their backs and using their claws to ward off attackers, and how they fight rivals by rising on their hind legs.

Prepare the filmmakers, some of the lead production crew made a trip to Africa to better understand the environment for the film. The trip gave production designer Chris Sanders a new appreciation for the natural environments and inspired him to find ways to incorporate these elements into the design of the film.

The use of computers helped the filmmakers present their vision in new ways. The most notable use of computer animation is in the “wildebeest stampede” sequence. Several distinct wildebeest characters were created in a 3D computer program, multiplied into hundreds, cel shaded to look like drawn animation, and given randomized paths down a mountainside to simulate the unpredictable movement of a herd. Similar multiplication occurs in the “Prepared” musical number with identical marching hyenas. Five specially trained animators and technicians spent more than two years creating the 2½ minute stampede sequence.

At one time, the Disney Feature Animation staff felt *The Lion King* was more important than *Pocahontas*. Both projects were in production at the same time, and most of the staff preferred to work on *Pocahontas*, believing it w
Additionally, a song which was not present in the original theatrical film later added to the IMAX\r theater and to the DVD\r Platinum Edition release

- “The Morning Report” was originally a scene planned for the theatrical but never made it past the storyboard stage. It was later cut and the lyrics were written to be used for the live musical version of The Lion instead.\r

Elton John\r and Tim Rice\r wrote five original songs for this film, with John performing “Can You Feel the Love Tonight” during the end credits. The film’s score was composed by Hans Zimmer\r and supplemented by traditional African music and choir elements arranged by Lebo M\r.\r

**Songs**

Here are the musical numbers in the original theatrical film, listed in the order of their occurrence:

- “**Circle of Life**” is sung by an off-screen character voiced by Carmen T\r, with African vocals by Lebo M\r and his African choir. This song is played during the ceremony where the newborn Simba is presented to the animals of the Pride Lands. The song is reprised at the end of the film, during the presentation of Simba and Nala’s newborn cub.
- “**I Just Can’t Wait to Be King**” is sung by young Simba\r (Jason Weaver\r) and Pumbaa\r (Ernie Sabella\r). Simba uses this song as a warm welcome to Simba as he arrives at their jungle home, and to explain their “no worries” lifestyle. The sequence also contains a montage sequence in which Simba grows into a young adult, indicating the passage of time in Simba’s life in the jungle.
- “**Hakuna Matata**” is sung by Timon\r (Nathan Lane\r), Pumbaa\r (Ernie Sabella\r) and Simba (Jason Weaver as a cub and Joseph Williams\r as an adult). Timon and Pumbaa use this song as a warm welcome to Simba as he arrives at their jungle home, and to explain their “no worries” lifestyle. This musical sequence shows Timon and Pumbaa’s frustration at Simba’s spoiltnature, his inability to share the burden of leadership, and their wish to be king as soon as possible.
- “**Be Prepared**” is sung by Scar\r (Jeremy Irons\r/Jim Cummings\r), She (Whoopi Goldberg\r), Banzai\r (Cheech Marin\r) and Ed\r (Jim Cummings\r). Timon reveals his plot to kill Mufasa and Simba to his hyena minions.
- “**Can You Feel the Love Tonight**” is a love song sung mainly by an off-screen character voiced by Kristle Edwards, along with Timon (Nathan Lane\r), adult Simba (Joseph Williams) and adult Nala (Laura Williams). This musical sequence shows Timon and Pumbaa’s frustration at Simba’s spoilt nature, his inability to share the burden of leadership, and their wish to be king as soon as possible.
- “**Hakuna Matata**” is sung by Timon\r (Nathan Lane\r) and supplemented with African music and choir elements arranged by Lebo M\r. This song was prepared in the early storyboarding stage of the film, with Elton John performing “Can You Feel the Love Tonight” during the end credits. The song won the Academy Awards for Best Original Song during the Academy Awards\r.

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However, the strongly enthusiastic audience reception an early film trailer\r which consisted solely of the opening sequence with the song “Circle of Life,” suggested that the film would be very successful. Turns out, while both films were commercial successes, The Lion King received more positive feedback and larger grosses than Pocahontas.\r

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It was later added, with an accompanying animated sequence, to the 2002 IMAX rerelease. Sung by Zazu\r (Jeff Bennett\r), Mufasa\r (James Earl\r, Joe Alaske\r) and Banzai\r (Cheech Marin\r), this song features the crocodile Shenzi\r (Twillie\r) as a main character. The sequence shows the animals of the Pride Lands reacting to the news of Mufasa’s death, as well as Simba’s determination to take over the kingdom.

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Jones and young Simba (Evan Saucedo), the song is an extension of the scene in the original film where Zazu delivers a morning report to Mufasa and later gets pounced on by Simba.

**Soundtrack and other albums**

Main article: The Lion King (soundtrack)

The film’s original motion picture soundtrack was released on July 13, 1994, was the fourth best-selling album of the year on the Billboard 200 and the selling soundtrack. On February 28, 1995, Disney released an album entitled *Rhythm of the Pride Lands*, which featured songs and performances inspired by, but not featured in, the film. Focusing on the African influences in the film’s original music, the tracks were by African composer Lebo M, sung either partially or entirely in various African languages. Several songs included on the album would be in other *The Lion King*-related projects, such as the stage musical and the direct-to-video sequels (*e.g.*, “He Lives In You” was used as the opening song for *Lion King II: Simba’s Pride*, and a reincarnation of “Warthog Rhapsody”, called “That’s All I Need”, in *The Lion King 1½*). *Rhythm of the Pride Lands* was initially issued in a very limited quantity, but there was a 2003 rerelease included in some international versions of *The Lion King*-special edition soundtrack, with additional track. Additionally, *The Lion King Expanded Score* contains never-before-released instrumental music from Hans Zimmer’s original score.

The compilation *Classic Disney: 60 Years of Musical Magic* includes “Circle of Life”, “I Just Can’t Wait to Be King”, “Hakuna Matata”, “Can You Feel the Love Tonight?”, and “Be Prepared”. The compilation *Disney’s Greatest Hits* includes “Circle of Life”, “Hakuna Matata”, and “Can You Feel the Love Tonight?”.

**Box office performance**

*The Lion King* became the highest grossing motion picture of 1994 worldwide and the second highest in the USA (behind *Forrest Gump*). The initially made US$312,855,561 domestically, including a short return to the in November 1994, and adding in its 2002 IMAX rerelease the domestic total is $328,541,776. *The Lion King* held the record for the most successful animated feature film until 2003 when it was surpassed by the computer animated *Finding Nemo*, but it remains the highest grossing hand-drawn animated feature film.

**The Lion King box office revenue**

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<th>Gross (USD)</th>
<th>% Total</th>
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Critical reviews

*The Lion King* garnered critical acclaim and at Rotten Tomatoes, based on 61 reviews collected, the film has an overall approval rating of 92%, with a weighted average score of 8/10. Among Rotten Tomatoes’s *Cream of the Crop*, which consists of popular and notable critics from the top newspapers, web television and radio programs, the film holds an overall approval rating of 100 percent. By comparison, Metacritic, which assigns a normalized 100 rating to reviews from mainstream critics, calculated an average score of 84 from the 13 reviews it collected.

Chicago Sun-Times film critic Roger Ebert called the film “a superbly drawn animated feature” and, in his print review wrote, “The saga of Simba, which deeply buried origins owes something to Greek tragedy and certainly to *Hamlet* is a learning experience as well as an entertainment.” However, on the television program *Siskel & Ebert* the film was praised but received a mixed reaction when compared to previous Disney films. Gene Siskel and Roger Ebert both gave the film a “Thumbs Up” but Siskel said that it was not as good as earlier films such as *Beauty and the Beast* and was “a good film, not a great one”. Hal Hinson of The Washington Post called it “an impressive, albeit daunting achievement” and felt that the film was “spectacular in a manner that has nearly become commonplace with Disney’s feature-length animations” was less enthusiastic toward the end of his review saying, “Shakespearean in tone, epic in scope, it seems more appropriate for grown-ups than for kids. If truth be told, even for adults it is downright strange.” Owen Gleiberman film critic for *Entertainment Weekly*, praised the film and wrote that it “has the resonance to stand not just as a terrific cartoon but as an emotionally pulpy movie”. *Rolling Stone* film critic Peter Travers praised the film and that it was “a hugely entertaining blend of music, fun and eye-popping thrills, though it doesn’t lack for heart”. The staff of *TV Guide* wrote that the film has some of Disney’s most spectacular animation yet—particularly the wildebeest stampede—and strong vocal performances, especially by skilled Broadway comedian Nathan Lane. However, it suffers from a curiously undeveloped storyline. James Berardinelli, film critic for *ReelViews* praised the film saying, “With each new animated release, Disney seems to be expanding its already-broad horizons a little more. The Lion King is the mature (in more than one sense) of these films, and there clearly has been a conscious effort to please adults as much as children. Happily, for those who generally stay far away from ‘cartoons’, they have succeeded.”

In June 2008, the American Film Institute revealed its “10 Top 10—the best ten films in ten “classic” American film genres—after polling over 1,500 people from the creative community. *The Lion King* was acknowledged as the fourth best film in the animation genre. However, Rowan Atkinson has stated that apart from *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, he is not proud of any of his films, which includes *The Lion King*. 
Awards and nominations

*The Lion King* received many award nominations, including the Academy Award for Best Original Score (by Hans Zimmer) and the Golden Globe award for Best Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy, both of which it won. Most notably, the song “Can You Feel the Love Tonight” by Elton John and Tim Rice won the Academy Award for Best Original Song, the Golden Globe for Best Original Song, the BMI Film Music Award, and the Grammy Award for Best Vocal Performance Male.

The awards were as follows:

- **Academy Awards**
  - Best Original Score (Won)
  - Best Original Song for “Can You Feel the Love Tonight” (Won)
  - Best Original Song for “Circle of Life” (Nominated)
  - Best Original Song for “Hakuna Matata” (Nominated)

- **Golden Globe Awards**
  - Best Motion Picture – Musical or Comedy (Won)
  - Best Original Score (Won)
  - Best Original Song for “Can You Feel the Love Tonight” (Won)
  - Best Original Song for “Circle of Life” (Nominated)

- **Annie Awards**
  - Best Animated Feature (Won)
  - Best Achievement for Voice Acting to Jeremy Irons for voicing Scar (Won)
  - Best Individual Achievement for Story Contribution in the Field of Animation (Won)
  - Best Individual Achievement for Artistic Excellence in the Field of Animation (Nominated, lost to *The Nightmare Before Christmas*).

- **Saturn Awards**
  - Best Fantasy Film (Nominated, lost to *Forrest Gump*).
  - Best Performance by a Younger Actor to Jonathan Taylor Thomas voicing young Simba (Nominated, lost to Kirsten Dunst for *Interview with the Vampire: The Vampire Chronicles*).
  - Best DVD Classic Film Release in 2004 (Nominated, lost to *The Adventures of Robin Hood*).

- **British Academy Film Awards**
  - Award for Best Sound (Nominated, lost to *Speed*).
  - Anthony Asquith Award for Film Music (Nominated, lost to *Backbeat*).

- **BMI Film & TV Awards**
  - BMI Film Music Award for “Can You Feel the Love Tonight” (Won)
  - Most Performed Song from a Film “Can You Feel the Love Tonight” (Won)

- **Grammy Award**
  - Best Vocal Performance Male to Elton John for “Can You Feel the Love Tonight” (Won)
  - Song of the Year for “Can You Feel the Love Tonight” (Nominated, lost to “Streets of Philadelphia” from *Philadelphia*).
  - Best Song Written for a Motion Picture, Television or Other Visual Media for “Can You Feel the Love Tonight” (Nominated, lost to “Streets of Philadelphia” from *Philadelphia*).
  - Best Song Written for a Motion Picture, Television or Other Visual Media for “Circle of Life” (Nominated, lost to “Streets of Philadelphia” from *Philadelphia*).
  - Best Instrumental Composition Written for a Motion Picture or Television (Nominated, lost to *Schindler’s List*).

- **MTV Movie Awards**
  - Best Villain for Jeremy Irons (Nominated, lost to Dennis Hopper).
The Lion King was first released on VHS and laserdisc in the United States on March 3, 1995, under Disney's “Masterpiece Collection” video series. In addition, Deluxe Editions of both formats were released. The VHS Deluxe Edition included the film, an exclusive lithograph of Rafiki and Simba (in some editions), a commemorative “Circle of Life” epigraph, six concept art lithographs, another tape with the half-hour TV show The Making of The Lion King, and a certificate of authenticity. The CAV laserdisc Deluxe Edition also contained the film, six concept art lithographs and The Making of The Lion King and added storyboards, character design artwork, concept art, rough animation, and a directors’ commentary that the VHS edition did not have, on a total of four double sided disks. The VHS tape quickly became one of the best-selling videotapes of all time: 4.5 million tapes were sold on the first day ultimately sales totaled more than 30 million before these home video versions went into moratorium in 1997.

2003 Platinum Edition

On October 7, 2003, the film was rereleased on VHS and released on DVD for the first time, titled The Lion King: Platinum Edition, as part of Disney’s Platinum Edition line of animated classic DVDs. The DVD release featured two versions of the film on the first disc, a remastered version created for the 2002 IMAX release and an edited version of the IMAX release purporting to be the original 1994 theatrical version. A second disc, with bonus features, was included in the DVD release. The film’s soundtrack was provided both in its original Dolby 5.1 track and in a new Disney Enhanced Home Theater Mix, making this one of the first Disney DVDs so equipped. By means of scene branching, the film could be viewed either with or without a newly-created scene — a short conversation in the film replaced with a complete song (“The Morning Report”). A Special Collector’s Gift Set was also released, containing DVD set, five exclusive lithographed character portraits (new sketches created and signed by the original character animators), and an introductory entitled The Journey.

The Platinum Edition of The Lion King was criticized by fans for its advertising: producer Don Hahn had earlier stated that the film would be original 1994 theatrical version, but it was confirmed after release that it was “digitally enhanced” IMAX version instead, which is slightly different from original theatrical cut. One of the most noticeable differences is the redrawn crocodiles in the “I Just Can’t Wait to Be King” sequence. Despite criticism, more than two million copies of the Platinum Edition DVD and units were sold on the first day of release. A DVD boxed set of the three
*Lion King* films (in two-disc Special Edition formats) was released on December 6, 2004. In January 2005, the film, along with the sequels, went back on moratorium, but new and used copies still sell very well.

**Future re-release**

Disney has yet to announce a date for the Blu-ray Disc release, although studio showed clips of the film on Blu-ray at the Consumer Electronics Show 2008.

**Controversy**

**Story origin**

Comparison of *Kimba the White Lion* (left) and *The Lion King* on pride rock (right)

Main article: Kimba the White Lion#The Lion King controversy

*The Lion King* was the first Disney animated feature to be an original story, rather than being based on an already-existing story. The filmmakers have said that the story of *The Lion King* was inspired by the Joseph and Moses stories from the Bible and William Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*. Certain elements of the film, however, bear a resemblance to a famous 1960s Japanese anime television show, *Kimba the White Lion*. One similarity is the protagonists’ names: Kimba and Simba, although the word “simba” means “lion” in Swahili. Many characters in *Kimba* have an analogue in *The Lion King* and that various individual scenes are nearly identical in composition and camera angle. Early production artwork on the film’s Platinum Edition DVD even includes a white lion. Disney’s official stance is that the similarities are coincidental.

Yoshihiro Shimizu, of Tezuka Productions, which created *Kimba the White Lion* has refuted rumours that the studio was paid hush money by Disney but exp that they rejected urges from within the industry to sue because, ‘we’re a small, weak company. It wouldn’t be worth it anyway… Disney’s lawyers are among the top twenty in the world!’

Christopher Vogler, in his book *The Writer’s Journey: Mythic Structure for Writers*, described Disney’s request that he suggest how to improve the pl
The Lion King by incorporating ideas from Hamlet. It has also been r
that the plot bears some resemblance to the West African Epic of Sundi

Alleged subliminal messaging

The supposed “SEX” frame

In one scene of the film’s original VHS and LaserDisc releases, it appears as if the word “SEX” might have been embedded into the dust flying in the sky when Simba flops down, which conservative activist Donald Wildmon asserted was a subliminal message intended to promote sexual promiscuity. The film’s animators, however, have stated that the letters spell “SFX” (a common abbreviation of “special effects”), and was intended as an innocent “signature” created by the effects animation team. Due to the controversy it caused, the scene was edited for the film’s 2003 DVD and VHS releases, and the dust no longer formed any letters.

“The Lion Sleeps Tonight”

The use of the song “The Lion Sleeps Tonight” in a scene with Timon and Pumbaa has led to disputes between Disney and the family of South African Solomon Linda, who composed the song (originally titled “Mbube”) in 1939. In July 2004, the family filed suit, seeking $1.6 million in royalties from Disney. In February 2006, Linda’s heirs reached a legal settlement with Abilene Music, who held the worldwide rights and had licensed the song to Disney for an undisclosed amount of money.

Hamas’ propaganda

In August 2007, the Hamas organization produced an animated propaganda film that resembled the style of The Lion King. The program was aired via television station, Al-Aqsa TV. Hamas was portrayed as a lion that chased and killed rats that bore the likenesses of members of the secular Fatah organization in Gaza. The program was briefly aired but was pulled off the air for revision.
Because of its popularity, *The Lion King* has been referenced in a variety of media. For instance, the animated TV series *The Simpsons* spoofed the film in the episode “Round Springfield”. Toward the end of the episode, the ghost of Mufasa appears in the clouds with Bleeding Gums Murphy (who had earlier that episode) and Darth Vader, and James Earl Jones (who voiced Mufasa and Darth Vader) says, “This is CNN. You must avenge my death, Kimba... dah, I mean Simba,” a reference to the Lion King/Kimba the White Lion controversy. Simba and Nala's escapade to the elephant graveyard was mentioned in a Season 2 episode of House.

Disney also frequently referenced *The Lion King* in its own films and shows, for example, in the Disney-released, Pixar-produced 1995 computer animated film *Toy Story*, the song “Hakuna Matata” can be heard playing in Andy's during the film’s climax. Pumbaa made a cameo in *Aladdin and the King of Thieves* (1996), and *Hercules* (1997) paid homage to both *The Lion King* and the Nemean lion: Scar’s skin is worn by Hercules while he is posing painting on a Greek vase.

**Sequels and spin-offs**

The success of the film led to several spin-offs, the first being a 70 mm released in 1995 titled *Circle of Life: An Environmental Fable*. It promoted environmental friendliness and was shown in the The Land Pavilion's Harvest Theater at Epcot in Walt Disney World. A spin-off television series called *The Lion King's Timon and Pumbaa*, which focused on the titular meerkat and warthog duo in a more modern, human world than that of the film, also debuted in 1995.

In addition, a direct-to-video sequel called *The Lion King II: Simba’s Pride* was released in 1998, focusing on Simba and his daughter Kiara as she in love with Kovu, a former member of Scar’s pride. Finally, a direct-to-video prequel-parallel, *The Lion King 1½* (also known as *The Lion King 3: Hakuna Matata*), was released in 2004, providing some background on Timon Pumbaa and giving the timeline of *The Lion King* from their perspective.

Many characters from *The Lion King*, including Timon, Pumbaa, Simba, Rafiki, Zazu, Shenzi, Banzai, Ed, Scar and Mufasa, appear in the Disney Channel series *House of Mouse*. Some of them also appear in the series’ spin-off movies *Mickey’s Magical Christmas: Snowed in at the House of Mouse* and *Mickey’s House of Villains*.

**Musical**

Main article: The Lion King (musical)

*The Lion King* was adapted into a successful Broadway stage musical in 1997. The musical is based on *The Lion King* film and is directed by Julie Taymor using actors in animal costumes as well as giant, hollow puppets. The musical won six Tony Awards including Best Musical and is produced...
Video games

Two video games based on the film have been released. The first, titled *The Lion King*, was published in 1994 by Virgin and was released for the NES (in Europe), SNES, Game Boy, Sega Master System, Sega Genesis, Game Boy Color, and Amiga.[79] The second game, called *The Lion King: Simba's Mighty Adventure*, was published in 2000 by Activision and was released for PlayStation and Game Boy Color.[80] It was based on the first film and storyline continued into the sequel.

In 1996, Disney Interactive and 7th Level released *Timon & Pumbaa's Jungle Games* for the PC. It was later seen on the SNES. The games include: o which Pumbaa uses his gas to destroy fruits and bugs (and even a kitchen that fall out of trees, a variation of pinball, a game where you use a peashoot hit enemy creatures in the jungle, a game where Timon has to jump onto hippos in order to cross a river to deliver bugs to Pumbaa, and a variation of *Puyo Puyo* called *Bug Drop.*[81]

A game called *The Lion King 1½* was published in 2003 for the Game Advance, based on the direct-to-video film and featuring Timon and Pumbaa as the playable characters.[82] In the Disney and Square Enix video game *Kingdom Hearts*, Simba appears as an ally that Sora can summon during battles.[83] He also appears again as a summon character in *Kingdom Hearts II: Chain of Memories*. In *Kingdom Hearts II*, the Pride Lands are a playable world and a number of characters from the film appear, including Simba, Nala, Mufasa, Rafiki, Scar, Shenzi, Banzai, and Ed.[84]

References


55. ^a As shown in a search for either term at Online Swahili – English Dictionary.
External links

- Official website
- The Lion King at Allmovie
- The Lion King at Box Office Mojo
- The Lion King at the Internet Movie Database
- The Lion King at the Big Cartoon DataBase
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