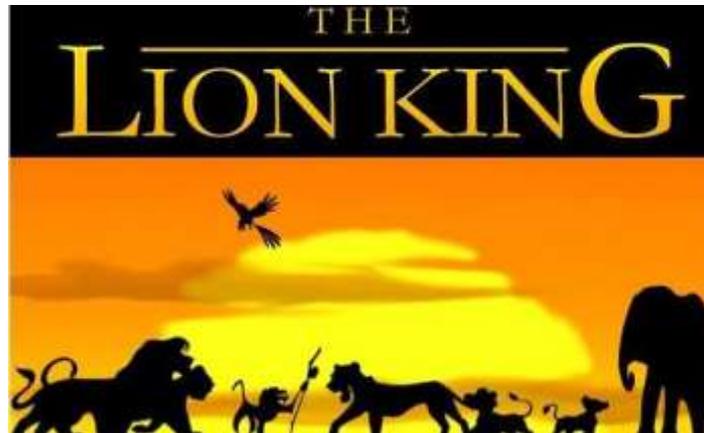


UHS MUSICAL 2014

LION KING IS A ROARING SUCCESS!!



Union High's production of the Lion King, under Avriille Pütter's able guidance does it again – a slick, boisterous and entertaining musical. There were all the much loved songs sung in beautiful harmony and an extremely talented cast that portrayed the delightful story with authenticity and great comic timing. A vibrant sense of enjoyment was had by a huge cast of 140, which included choirs from Union Preparatory School and Union's Junior School.

The well-known children's animated movie translates well into a "human" story of jealousy and lust for power that is conquered by courage and love. The Lions and Hyenas, and several lesser animal groups, were cleverly personified into social groups that were represented by different iconic outfits.

The audience felt the discomfort of the Hyena "gang", led by Rebecca Light as Shenzi, as they appeared in the dingy elephant graveyard scene. We squirmed whenever the ringleader Scar, played with outstanding menace by Dal'buzwe Siwisa, connived and cheated his way to the top of the kingdom. The young Simba, played by Benedict Speelman, and the young Nala (Rezayda Baartman) were a joy to watch, their acting was flawless and fun. The grownup Simba (Sima Jack) and Nala (Khanyisa Kekana) guided the story to its happy ending with the most beautifully harmonised voices. We were delighted by the fresh, sharp acting of Zazu, played by Lukhona Dibi as well as Rafiki played by Zowie Njikelana. Special mention must be made of the comic duo Pumbaa and Timon. As the clowns of the show, Mitchel Knott-Craig's comic timing was superb and he was well supported by his side kick, Annie Jankovich-Besan.

Possibly the highlight of the show was the stampede. Myriads of wild animals (enthusiastically played by the whole cast) stormed through the hall, the effect heightened by sound and lighting effects creating a believable panic and climax. The realistic fight scenes also added drama and tension. The final song "The circle of Life" swept everyone up to a stomping and clapping finale.

Bravo to the cast of Union High for a thoroughly enjoyable show.