

Chapter 1 : Aida (musical) - Wikipedia

Journalist and author Michael Lassell traces the show's history with interviews from those intimately involved, from writer and composer Elton John and Tim Rice to stars Adam Pascal and Heather Headley to costume designers and choreographers.

Chicago and Broadway stagings. Elton however did not want to do another animated feature and was looking for something more daring. Disney acquired the rights to the book, and Tim and Elton signed onto the project. At that time, a opening was aimed for. Auditions for children to be in workshops productions of Aida and The Lion King were held 1 June On 16 December , another workshop production for Aida took place. The casting call notices, which asked for modern dance and pop songs, stated a summer rehearsal start date, suggesting a Fall premiere. Another set of auditions were held 1 April for the Atlanta performance. The auditioning process continued in New York City during the first week of May The Disney executives had qualms about calling the show "Aida" and continued to search for a different title from almost the start of the project. By early , they finally settled on one -- Elaborate Lives. Alliance would continue to receive a cut from the show if it moved on to other venues -- this was similar to the agreement it had for The Last Night Of Ballyhoo which also began its life at the Alliance. Although informal presentations of Elaborate Lives began in early September, the official previews began 17 September with the run extending through 8 November. The opening night was 7 October He said Disney chose the Alliance because they wanted to be at a theater that was part of a community. The future of the project would depend on its Atlanta reception. He did, however, say that if everything went well, a Broadway opening in the Spring was a possibility. Another qualification for a Broadway move, however, would be finding a theatre that could provide a stage with the required depth of 37 feet. Thomas Schumacher, executive vice president of Disney Theatricals, like Oken, also said the approach to Elaborate Lives was different from that taken in the previous Disney stage shows i. Beauty and the Beast and The Lion King. He said the stress was placed on the story and music rather than on the spectacle of sets. The set was designed in part with computer imagery via Imagineering, which is responsible for the theme-park attractions and special effects in films. The sets consisted mainly of a 10 foot tall pyramid which unfolded into triangular pieces that could be reconfigured to create the different settings for the show, and several obelisks with hieroglyphics which could rise out of the stage. Throughout this time, the part of the third member of the love triangle, Radames, remained un-cast. In the middle of July, the search ended, and it was announced that Hank Stratton had been signed on. The Elaborate Lives design team included scenic designer Stanley A. The musical and vocal director was Paul Bogaev, with Steve C. Kennedy as the sound designer. What was billed as more like the first full staging of the show -- described as a post dress-rehearsal dress rehearsal -- took place on Sunday, 13 September The previous day, Saturday, had also seen an invited audience which included theater professionals and Disney Chairman Michael Eisner. This performance ran a little less smoothly than expected when, in the middle of Act One, the pyramid failed to do anything other than leak hydraulic fluid across the stage. The remainder of the show had to be performed in concert fashion. The pyramid only misbehaved for a few minutes during Act Two, and the show received another standing ovation. The assumption that they would stay with the show was finally confirmed in mid February when their inclusion on the Aida album made their continuing association with the work clear. After three weeks of rampant speculation among the press, Disney announced Robert Falls as the new director of Aida on 4 December Falls was serving as the artistic director of the Goodman Theare in Chicago, and had never directed a Broadway musical before. At the time of his appointment, Falls was involved in bringing his Chicago production of Death of a Salesman for which he would win the Tony in to Broadway for its 10 February opening previews began 10 January. Bob Crowley was brought on board to serve as designer. Wayne Cilento, who received a Tony in for his work on Tommy, was announced as choreographer. The album of songs from Aida entered the limelight 26 January in London when the entire recording was played to a star-studded audience with the familiar figure of Paul Gambaccini hosting. The album entered the Billboard chart at It debuted at number 37 on the Billboard Hot chart staying on for 10 weeks, and at 18 on the Hot Singles Sales

chart staying on for 14 weeks. Elton John appeared on numerous US television shows promoting his tour and Aida: Broadway Plans Continue The casting of the principals for the love triangle was announced in late April Both Heather Headley and Sherie Scott would be reprising their roles, while Adam Pascal who made his theatrical debut in the original Broadway company of Rent as Roger would be portraying Radames. Before opening on Broadway, as had been the original intention after Atlanta, it was decided the revised Aida would first play in Chicago and then move to New York. Aida sported a 25 member cast. Rehearsals originally scheduled to start 14 September began 20 September in New York and ran for about five weeks before the company transferred to Chicago 23 October. Tickets to the Chicago production went on sale 4 June The original tentative dates had been a Chicago run of 5 November - 2 January, in hopes of a Broadway opening in February. Three doctors present in the audience offered their services. Headley and Pascal were taken to Northwestern Hospital to be treated and examined. A press release was issued the next day, saying that they had suffered only minor injuries and were discharged after a few hours. It said the show would resume on Wednesday, 17 November. Those holding tickets for the canceled shows, many of whom did not learn of the accident until they arrived at the theatre and found a notice saying the performances had been suspended, were allowed to exchange them. The scene was redesigned so that the tomb would remain stationary. Aida played in Chicago until 9 January Aida then underwent further rewrites in preparation for its Broadway run. It was announced near the end of April that Aida would be the first show to open the theatre after the restoration. With work having started over the summer, the expectation was that the theatre would be finished in mid-October , with the stage completed in early September. Among the many changes to the theatre were the removal of the chandelier from the 85 foot high domed ceiling because it was feared it would cast shadows on the stage, and the creation of dressing rooms beneath the stage so more room could be freed in the wings. The proscenium opening is 58 by 28 feet, and the stage has a depth of 45 feet and a width of feet. The Palace now seats roughly 2, The name of the theatre has been changed to the Cadillac Palace. The rumours were finally officially confirmed the third week of July, Beauty And The Beast had played almost 2, performances at the Palace. Disney announced at the end of April that it would scale down the Beauty And The Beast production before it played at the Lunt Fontanne. Steve Kennedy as sound designer, Steve Margoshes as musical director, Guy Babylon as musical arranger, Paul Bognev as co-orchestrator and co-arranger. On Tuesday afternoon, 12 October , the first group-sales presentation was held of the revamped Aida for 3, invited guests in New York at the New Amsterdam. In mid-November Disney changed its mind about another feature of Aida -- the logo. After the Atlanta run, a new pyramid-based logo in black and gold had been designed to accompany the all-star album. Although the pyramid was kept in Chicago, the website logo was changed just after Chicago previews began. Both the marketing for Broadway and the Disney website displayed the new logo of two faces against a deep blue background. In early February , Disney announced that it had formed a new company, Hyperion, which would be in charge of Aida and other more adult-oriented shows. Clips from Aida were also shown on Good Morning America on 17 March to cap off the week during which they had been airing interview segments with Elton John. The Broadway opening of Aida was 23 March , after a month of previews which began 25 February originally scheduled to start 27 February. It was attended by not only those involved in the Broadway production, but those who had been with Aida along the way -- including executives from Atlanta and singers from the all-star album. After the opening, the outside of the theatre was decorated with pictures from the production and a larger-than-life colour reprint with more production photos of an article from Time magazine, including a sidebar on Tim and Elton John. Although not receiving a nomination for Best Musical at the 54th Annual Tony Awards held on 4 June , Aida had a triumphant evening, garnering 5 nominations. Crowley did, however, receive recognition by winning the Tony for Best Scenic Design. Heather Headley won for Best Actress in a Musical, and vowed that she would work for Disney for the rest of her life. Tim and Elton John won the Tony for Best Original Score of a Musical -- both had prior commitments and were unable to attend the ceremony. The Broadway cast album was released 13 June Those who had placed orders at the Palace Theatre received a special "picture disc" version where the CD itself was emblazoned with a picture of the three principals. Barnes and Noble turned into an Aida venue over the summer of Heather Headley participated in a live online chat hosted by Barnes and Noble, on Monday, 12

June , at 9 p. On 23 June, at 5. Aida was featured in a Bryant Park concert 10 August as part of a concert series hosted by New York radio station The show received further press a few days later when it was featured on the popular The Today Show on Saturday, 19 August The Love Songs to sing "Elaborate Lives". In mid October , Disney announced that it hoped to bring Aida to Germany and the Netherlands through a deal with Stage Holdings for Simone, who appeared in the Broadway production as the Aida Standby and who had been in the Disney workshops for both Aida and The Lion King, was cast in the title role. Kelli Fournier, who understudied the role of Amneris on Broadway, was cast as Amneris. Rehearsals began in February The tour began previews 27 March at the Orpheum Theatre in Minneapolis with an opening on 6 April originally scheduled for 27 April. It played until 22 April The Aida national tour was first scheduled to stop at forty cities in total, giving the company a run until September After Minneapolis, further runs were planned for: This itinerary was revised to continue on until August

Chapter 2 : Elton John and Tim Rice's Aida - Wikipedia

Elton John & Tim Rice's Aida: The Making of a Broadway Musical by Michael Lassell, *Tim Rice Enthusiastically anticipated as the latest Disney stage production, following the astounding success of Julie Taymor's breakthrough production of The Lion King, Aida is certain to be a hit.*

Father of Amneris and King of Egypt. Amonasro Father of Aida and King of Nubia. He is taken into slavery by Egyptians after Aida and Radames have fallen in love, and commands Aida to break all ties she has to the Egyptians. Production history[edit] Pre-Broadway: Origins, Atlanta and Chicago[edit] Aida was originally conceived for production as an animated musical film by Disney executives, who wanted to do another project with the collaborative team of Sir Elton John and Sir Tim Rice following the success enjoyed by the animated film *The Lion King*. John also recorded multiple demos of the original songs, which were never released but were widely bootlegged. One of the many issues was what to call the musical. The production featured several songs which were cut from the final production. The original Atlanta staging conceived of the play with a nearly empty set, displaying only a six-ton gold pyramid-shaped set piece in the center. Nothing of the original Atlanta set design remained in the new production. A new, revised production opened on November 12, , at the Cadillac Palace in Chicago , and ran through January 9, . Adam Pascal joined the cast as Radames starting with the Chicago run. Also part of the new Chicago team was choreographer Wayne Cilento. The Chicago production featured one number "Our Nation Holds Sway", originally performed near the beginning of both act 1 and act 2, that was cut from the final Broadway production. During the Chicago run at the Cadillac Theatre, on November 13, , a set mishap during the final moments of the performance injured stars Headley and Pascal. According to an eyewitness report, while the two actors were being conveyed in a suspended boxlike "tomb" at the climax of the show, the set-piece fell from its support, eight feet above the stage. Both were released from the hospital a few hours later. The run puts it at the 39th longest run in Broadway history. Headley also received broad critical acclaim for her performance. The National tour also featured Kelli Fournier Amneris. This production had a revised script by David Henry Hwang authorized by Disney. The show ran from October 10, , to August 3, , and was performed in Dutch. The original Japanese production has re-opened and is currently playing in Osaka, Japan. It has been translated into 15 languages: It was first produced in , receiving praise from the Peruvian media. It was staged for a second time in

Chapter 3 : Michael Lassell (Author of Elton John & Tim Rice's Aida)

Elton John and Tim Rice's Aida: The Making of a Broadway Musical by Michael Lassell (, Hardcover).

Tap here to turn on desktop notifications to get the news sent straight to you. There was only one tiny problem: Disney And that goes for the animated version of The Lion King as well. Rafiki was a cheetah, and Scar was the leader of the baboons. And nobody had much interest in it. The A-list animators all chose to work on Pocohantas. Anything can be a musical. Disney Paul McCartney did eventually wind up working for Disney. Make some changes to the standard deal memo that the Studio offered when it came to recruiting talent. As it turns out, the third time was the charm. I loved the story and I loved that it was an original story, and it came at a time in my career where I wanted to do something different. Which would have sent Simba off on a decidedly different coming-of-age journey. In addition, there was a character named Natasha Leopard, who drove a Jaguar. Papa Croc, the new father figure Simba found after Mufasa died, is also a fight promoter and wants Simba to become a boxer. Nala, meanwhile, arrives in this selfsame city and goes underground as a dancer at the Pussycat Lounge. But I learned a lot from the exercise. And speaking of learning a lot: Twenty Years on Broadway and Around the World. So we could do it at Radio City Musical Hall. Or we could do it at Chelsea Pier, or buy a pier and mount it on the water – pretty much anything an avant-garde theater director might want to fantasize. Or we could do it as a Broadway show; you tell me. Who – as I mentioned at the very top of this article -- pulled the plug on this proposed stage production at least once. Not according to Lassell. So just to be clear here: Contributors control their own work and posted freely to our site. If you need to flag this entry as abusive, send us an email.

Chapter 4 : Michael Lassell | Open Library

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Chapter 5 : Elton John & Tim Rice's Aida: The Making of a Broadway Musical by Michael Lassell

Michael Lassell has written extensively in the fields of design, travel, the arts and GLBT studies. His poetry, stories, essays, and reviews have appeared in newspapers, magazines, books, journals and anthologies in the U.S. and abroad, as well as numerous college and university textbooks.

Chapter 6 : Sir Tim Rice -- Aida

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Chapter 7 : Michael Lassell - Wikipedia

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