For Immediate Release

CASTING ANNOUNCED FOR DISNEY’S THE LION KING

Performances Begin on February 5, 2020 And Play for Four Weeks at the Marcus Performing Arts Center through March 1, 2020

MILWAUKEE (January 10, 2020) – Casting for Disney’s The Lion King has been announced for the long-awaited return engagement in Milwaukee. The Lion King will leap onto the Marcus Center stage on February 5 for a four-week engagement through March 1 as part of the Johnson Financial Group Broadway at the Marcus Center and Broadway Across America-Milwaukee series.

The production features Spencer Plachy as “Scar,” Gerald Ramsey as “Mufasa,” Buyi Zama as “Rafiki,” Nick Cordileone as “Timon,” Jürgen Hooper as “Zazu,” Ben Lipitz as “Pumbaa,” Brandon A. McCall as “Simba,” Kayla Cyphers as “Nala,” Keith Bennett as “Banzai,” Martina Sykes as “Shenzi” and Robbie Swift as “Ed.”

The role of “Young Simba” is alternated between Charlie Kahler and Chance Smith. The role of “Young Nala” is alternated between Isabel Medina and Kalandra Rhodes.

Rounding out the cast are Derek Adams, Kayla Rose Aimable, Leanne Antonio, Andrew Arrington, William John Austin, Eric Bean, Jr, TyNia Brandon, Sasha Caicedo, Chante Carmel, Sean Aaron Carmon, Thembelihle Cele, Adrianne Chu, Daniela Cobb, Lyric Danae, Erynn Marie Dickerson, Paige Fraser, Tony Freeman, Mukelisiwe Goba, William James Jr., Kolin Jerron, Jane King, Amber Mayberry, Christopher L. Mc Kenzie, Jr., Marq Moss, Sihle Ngema, Phylicia Pearl Mpasi, Nhlanhla Ndlovu, Aaron Nelson, Sicelo Ntshangase, Sayiga Eugene Peabody, Nathan Andrew Riley, Christopher Sams, Robb Sapp, Mpume Sikakane, Kevin Tate, Jennifer Theriot and Courtney Thomas.

Tickets are available via lionking.com, MarcusCenter.org or Ticketmaster.com, by phone at 414-273-7206, and the Marcus Center Box Office at 929 North Water Street, Downtown Milwaukee. VIP Ticket Packages, which include a prime seat location, a commemorative souvenir program and an exclusive merchandise item, are also available. Groups of 10 or more may reserve seating by calling 414-273-7121 x210 or x213.

Ticket buyers are reminded that the outlets listed above are the only official retail ticket outlets for all performances. Ticket buyers who purchase tickets from a ticket broker or any third party should be aware that the Marcus Performing Arts Center is not responsible for the sale of tickets by these brokers and third parties.
Arts Center is unable to reprint or replace lost or stolen tickets and is unable to contact patrons with information regarding time changes or other pertinent updates regarding the performance.

The North American touring productions of *The Lion King* have been seen by more than 20 million theatergoers. Having already played more than 80 cities across North America, *The Lion King* now proudly makes its return to Milwaukee.

### ABOUT THE LION KING

After 22 landmark years on Broadway, *The Lion King* continues ascendant as one of the most popular stage musicals in the world. Since its premiere on November 13, 1997, 25 global productions have been seen by more than 100 million people. Produced by Disney Theatrical Productions (under the direction of Thomas Schumacher), *The Lion King* has made theatrical history with three productions worldwide running 15 or more years and three others running 20 or more years.

Performed over its lifetime in nine different languages (English, Japanese, German, Korean, French, Dutch, Spanish, Mandarin and Portuguese), productions of *The Lion King* can currently be seen on Broadway; London’s West End; Hamburg; Tokyo; Madrid; on tour across North America, Japan and The U.K. & Ireland, with a separate production touring internationally, for a total of nine productions running concurrently across the globe. Having played over 100 cities in 20 countries on every continent except Antarctica, *The Lion King*’s worldwide gross exceeds that of any film, Broadway show or other entertainment title in box office history.

*The Lion King* won six 1998 Tony Awards®: Best Musical, Best Scenic Design (Richard Hudson), Best Costume Design (Julie Taymor), Best Lighting Design (Donald Holder), Best Choreography (Garth Fagan) and Best Direction of a Musical. *The Lion King* has also earned more than 70 major arts awards including the 1998 NY Drama Critics Circle Award for Best Musical, the 1999 Grammy® for Best Musical Show Album, the 1999 Evening Standard Award for Theatrical Event of the Year and the 1999 Laurence Olivier Awards for Best Choreography and Best Costume Design.

The show’s director, costume designer and mask co-designer Julie Taymor continues to play an integral part in the show’s ongoing success. The first woman to win a Tony Award for Direction of a Musical, Taymor continues to supervise new productions of the show around the world.

The Broadway score features Elton John and Tim Rice’s songs 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, Julie 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 resulting sound of *The Lion King* is a fusion of Western popular music and the distinctive sounds and rhythms of Africa, ranging from the Academy Award®-winning song “Can You Feel the Love Tonight” to Lebo M’s rich choral numbers.

Elton John, Lebo M, and Hans Zimmer all collaborated on the 2019 version of the film, executive produced by Julie Taymor and Thomas Schumacher, which has gone onto extraordinary worldwide success.

The book has been adapted by Roger Allers, who co-directed the animated *The Lion King* feature, and Irene Mecchi, who co-wrote the film’s screenplay. Other members of the creative team include: Michael Curry, who designed the masks and puppets with Taymor, Steve Canyon Kennedy (sound design), Michael Ward (hair and makeup design), John Stefaniuk (associate director), Marey Griffith (associate choreographer), Clement Ishmael (music supervisor) and Doc Zorthian (production supervisor). Anne Quart serves as co-producer.

For more information worldwide, visit LionKing.com.
About Marcus Performing Arts Center
Established in 1969, the Marcus Performing Arts Center is the premier performing arts community gathering space in Southeastern Wisconsin. As the Marcus Center celebrates its 50th anniversary, it continues to build bridges between diverse members of our community through high-quality arts entertainment in the region and the state. The touring Broadway series, sponsored by Johnson Financial Group, is recognized as bringing the best of Broadway entertainment to Milwaukee for the past 20 years and provides opportunities to educate, entertain and engage audiences. The Marcus Center is also the home to the Milwaukee Symphony, Milwaukee Ballet, Florentine Opera, First Stage plus a variety of other important community and family events throughout the year. For more information about events visit the Marcus Center website at www.MarcusCenter.org. The Marcus Center is a private non-profit 501(c) 3 corporation and is a dedicated veterans memorial in Milwaukee.

Johnson Financial Group, with offices in Wisconsin, Arizona and Minnesota, is a privately owned financial services company offering banking, wealth and insurance solutions through its subsidiaries, Johnson Bank, Johnson Wealth, and Johnson Insurance Services. For more information visit www.johnsonbank.com.

Broadway Across America (BAA) is part of the John Gore Organization family of companies, which includes Broadway.com, The Broadway Channel, BroadwayBox.com and Group Sales Box Office. Led by 14-time Tony-winning theater producer John Gore (Owner & CEO), BAA is the foremost presenter of first-class touring productions in North America, operating in 45 markets with over 400,000 subscribers. Presentations include Disney’s The Lion King, Wicked, The Book of Mormon, The Phantom of the Opera and Hamilton. Current and past productions include Ain’t Too Proud, Beautiful, Cats, Chicago, Dear Evan Hansen, Mean Girls, Moulin Rouge! and To Kill A Mockingbird.