

# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## The Lion King at DPAC: A Night with the Pride

Amy Hruby, Editor

Locally-renowned Durham Performing Arts Center (DPAC) opened their 2011 schedule with a globally famous show from their Broadway Series. Based on the classic Disney film, *The Lion King* originally opened on Broadway in 1997. With music and lyrics by Elton John and Tim Rice (and Hans Zimmer notably credited on four songs), the musical is renowned for its adaptation and expansion of the movie's original score. The audience at Wednesday, January 19th's DPAC performance shared in enjoying this music as they sang along and danced happily in their seats to memorable songs including "Circle of Life," "Hakuna Matata" and "Can You Feel the Love Tonight."

The highlight of any version of *The Lion King* musical is often the costuming, and DPAC's performance was no exception. With original costume design by Julie Taymore (who has most recently worked on Broadway's highly-publicized adaptation of *Spider-Man*) and mask and puppet design adding the talents of Michael Curry, talented actors are transformed into lions, hyenas, baboons, and quite-excitingly giraffes, elephants and warthogs. In last Wednesday night's show, especially notable performances were given by Nick Cordileone and Ben Lipitz in the respective roles of Timon and Pumbaa. Working a human-sized attached puppet, Cordileone (whose credits include a role in *Step Up 2*) was a convincing meerkat, even dressed in a green jumpsuit. Lipitz (whose credits include roles on "The Sopranos" and "Law & Order") wore a heavy-looking costume,



image via lunch.com

caked-on makeup, and crazy-spiked hair with a light, laughable air that transformed him into the loveable, smelly warthog that audience-members shared laughs with throughout the night. Other highlights included Brenda Mhlongo's convincing adaptation of the role of the crazy, advice-giving baboon Rafiki and the young performers roles of youthful Simba and Nala. Additionally, the famous opening Pride Rock scene is fitted well to DPAC's performance space and audience members seated on all tiers are able to interact with the animals.

Playing through January 30th, ticket prices are as low as \$22 for rush tickets two hours before the start of each show. Other exciting DPAC offerings this spring include a stand-up show by Jerry Seinfeld on February 12th, *Madagascar Live!* February 18th through 20th, a visit from Blue Man Group March 15th through 20th, and Broadway traveling performances of *Shrek the Musical*, *Avenue Q*, *Hair*, and *Monty Python's SPAMALOT*. See additional events and purchase advance tickets on their website: [dpacnc.com](http://dpacnc.com).

## A New Version of Huckleberry Finn

Emily Gamiel, Staff Writer

NewSouth Inc., a publishing company based out of Montgomery, Alabama, plans to launch a combined edition of "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" and "Tom Sawyer," two Mark Twain classics, in November 2011. However, this is not an ordinary revision to the book that has been banned from elementary and junior high schools for over a half of a century. The revising editor, Alan Gribben, is attempting to keep from offending any reader with Twain's cultural language by removing the N-word, which is said to appear four times in "Tom Sawyer," and 219 times in "Huck Finn." This soon to be released version has triggered controversy around the country.

The Raleigh News and Observer published an article by Phillip Rawls, writer for the Associated Press, on January 5, 2011, on the subject of the edited "Huck Finn" and "Tom Sawyer." He describes Gribben as a "Twain scholar," and also says in his article that he is a, "69-year old English professor at Auburn University," and added that he "said he would have opposed the change for much of his career, but he began using "slave" during public readings and found audiences more accepting." Although Dr. Alisa Johnson, Meredith College English professor, is, "not a fan at all of the editing of the novel," she does mention that there is a positive trait to the new edit, which is the accessibility of the novel to young people. Rawls wrote in his article that Gribben said, "I want to provide an option for teachers and other people not comfortable with 219 instances of that word,"

making the point that the new edition of the novel is more available to young readers and listeners.

Rawls continues on to point out a statement made by Twain in a letter wrote in 1888 saying that the choice between a right word and an almost right word was "the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning." This statement made by Twain indicates that he chose his words carefully when writing.

Meredith English Professor Dr. Rebecca Duncan said, "I am thoroughly against this kind of change, although I certainly do cringe a little when I assign readings that include the N word." Many literary scholars, like Duncan, disagree with the change in the original text. Duncan believes in discussing how the term is used and added, "I really do think that the repetition of negative language -- whether about race, gender, or any other such classification -- can have the effect of reinforcing stereotypes and lowering the self-esteem of those being described." Despite mixed feelings about the new edition, the book will appear on shelves next month.



image via standford.edu

## Ask Gigi

Dear Gigi,  
I've always been excited to study abroad, and I finally committed to a progra next semester. However, my long-time boyfriend has been making me feel guilty about leaving for any extended amount of time. I'm having a hard time reconciling my commitment to him and my commitment to my own educational and personal goals. Is there a way to have my cake and eat it too in this situation?

Sincerely,  
Torn

Dear Torn,  
It's tough to maintain a serious relationship while working to achieve personal goals that interfere, but this will NOT be the last time you have to confront this issue. The first problem I notice is that your boyfriend is making you feel guilty for choosing to pursue a dream—and that's not what good boyfriends do. The right one will wholeheartedly encourage you in all of your pursuits, even if the thought of your absence makes him sad. He should work to compromise with you on a mutual direction for your relationship instead of asking you to mindlessly comply with his imagined ideal. Ultimately, your decision to study abroad is yours alone. Instead of feeling torn for having to answer to other people, feel empowered by that great responsibility. Now is the time to explain to your boyfriend exactly why you want to study abroad and how you hope to grow from the experience as an individual. Perhaps you could convince him that studying abroad might even make you a better girlfriend because you'll return with more confidence, maturity, and a renewed sense of self. If he still gives you a hard time, don't give up your goal and risk regretting it later. Consider letting him go—Your heart is bound to heal once you meet a few handsome foreigners anyway.

Yours truly,  
Gigi