

The Lion Roars

✖ So... the “Disneyfication” of Broadway continues. There have now been 5 Disney movies made into Broadway shows (*Beauty and the Beast*, *The Lion King*, *Tarzan*, *Mary Poppins*, and now *The Little Mermaid*). Many critics suggest that these will be the downfall of the musical itself because the shows are not original and are only tailored to little children. I feel that any chance to introduce a ten year old child to a theatrical experience is well worth the critics panning. After all, there are more than 5 theatres on and off-Broadway.

I was fortunate enough to have seen *Beauty* on stage during its final previews on Broadway. It was an excellent spectacle (which is something else which has been another favorite critical complaint). The set draws the audience into the world of a small French village and to the dark castle in which the Beast resides. All of the characters from the movie are there. The music is fun along with a few new numbers added to the show. “Be Our Guest” is a show stopper with the dancing plates, cutlery, and other enchanted household objects. “If I Can’t Love Her” is sung by the Beast at the end of the first act as he falls into even more despair. Actually a fun show which will delight everyone.

The touring cast of *The Lion King* is coming to the [Toledo Stranahan](#) theatre this weekend through March 30. I do not know of any other show that has been performed for that long at this theatre. Apparently, they are expecting sell outs the entire run.

From everything I have read and heard, this production is supposed to be magical. Realistic puppets for background characters while other actors perform behind masks and other costumes. Again, all of the songs from the movie are featured as well as new songs such as “Morning Report” and “Endless Night.”

Beauty and the Beast and *The Lion King* are just two of the 5 Disney movies turned into musical extravaganzas. I do think that there should be some point at which more original productions are created which introduce children to theatre as well as entertain adults. Beginning with the **END OF HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL** (but since that is already a stage show... UGH!!!!). But I do not think Broadway is in any danger of being overrun by Disney. What would be next... DisneyYork?

