

Director's Notes

SUMMARY

This is a story that celebrates diversity and teaches the importance of accepting those who are different from us. 'Tuishi Pamoja' – pronounced 'too-eesh-ee pah-mwoh-jah' – is Swahili for 'we want to live together'.

An intrepid young zebra and giraffe cast aside the prejudices and conventions of their respective herds and become friends, despite the fact that one is striped and the other spotted. Three meerkats provide comic relief, with attacks by lions adding drama.

We would encourage you to use the CD backing tracks in order to generate a specifically 'African' atmosphere. The piano part has been kept simple - to be used as a rehearsal aid only - and no sheet music is provided for 'Lion Music'.

Duration approx 40 mins.

CAST

Speaking Parts

Narrator	Optional - only speaks at the very beginning.
Raffi	Young giraffe. Scripted as a boy, but could be a girl. Solo singer.
Raffi's Mother	Moderate number of lines at the beginning and end.
Giraffe 1, 2, 3, 4	Smaller speaking part, with solo singing for one of them.
Zea	Young zebra. Scripted as a girl, but could be a boy. Solo singer.
Zea's Father	Moderate number of lines at the beginning and end.
Zebra 1, 2, 3, 4	Smaller speaking part, with solo singing for one of them.
Moja, Mbili & Tatu	Meerkats, central speaking parts, to provide comic relief. Their names mean 'one', 'two' and 'three' respectively (Swahili). Moja pron. like 'Roger', Tatu pron. 'Tah-too', Mbili pron. 'Um- <u>bil</u> -lee'.

Non-Speaking Parts

Giraffe chorus	
Zebra chorus	
3+ Lions	Non speaking parts
Dream spirits	Any number of wafy creatures - played by members of the chorus.
Other Animals	(e.g. mouse, cheetah, elephant, snake, etc.) members of the chorus.
Dancers	There are plenty of dance opportunities for chorus members during songs.

STAGING TIPS

The musical is set in the African savannah. The stage design does not have to be very extravagant; different colours could be used for day and night. Costuming can also be simple, with appropriate coloured clothing for each species, and masks. It is important that zebras and giraffes wear recognisable stripes or spots to identify them clearly. They also need to be characterised clearly as different groups by their manner.

Movement: the songs lend themselves to choreography, singers always coming downstage and arranged in formation as appropriate. Simple arm and stepping movements will add life to the performance. **Giraffes** - rather 'bad boy' image, being a close-knit group like a street gang. Movement should be casual. **Zebras** - elegant by contrast, with graceful, aesthetic movements - but vain with it, showing off at every opportunity. **Meerkats** - always move rapidly, with exaggeratedly jerky manner, stopping and starting, heads often flicking watchfully from side to side, etc.

Director's Overview

Scene 1 – The Story Begins

The show opens welcoming the audience to the African Savannah. A herd of zebras is grouped on one side of the stage, a herd of giraffes on the other.

SONG HEY THERE! WELCOME ALONG! ◉ **Track 1 / 11**

The Giraffes' prejudice towards the Zebras is established, Raffi's Mother preventing him from showing an interest in them. The other Giraffes tease Raffi and mock the Zebras, displaying their superior attitude.

SONG GIRAFFE SONG ◉ **Track 2 / 12**

Raffi persists in looking over towards the Zebras, and catches Zea looking back at him. Zea's father pulls her back from showing an interest in Giraffes. The Zebras display their vanity and self-absorption.

SONG ZEBRA SONG ◉ **Track 3 / 13**

Lions attack and all the animals flee. Raffi becomes separated from his herd.

INCID. LION MUSIC (a) ◉ **Track 4 / 14**

Scene 2 – Night Falls

Raffi is frightened at the prospect of spending the night on his own.

SONG I WISH YOU WERE HERE ◉ **Track 5 / 15**

The Meerkats – Moja, Mbili and Tatu – have been disturbed by the singing. Arguing among themselves, they debate whether they should challenge Raffi, but unable to reach agreement, they end up leaving without confrontation. Spirits come in the night to surround Raffi and protect him, as if in his dreams.

SONG DREAM SPIRITS ◉ **Track 6 / 16**

Zea arrives, having also been separated from her herd. She finds night-time beautiful and inspiring, and doesn't understand why it's more dangerous than daytime. Raffi wakes up without seeing her, and is immediately frightened. As they move around in the dark, they are startled when they bump into each other and behave with the hostility that's become normal for their herds.

SONG TAKE A LOOK AT YOU ◉ **Track 7 / 17**

The Meerkats return, still complaining about the noise – but are struck by how odd it is that Zea and Raffi are ignoring each other, when they should be sticking together for safety. Mbili and Tatu drag Moja (self-styled leader of the three) to confront them with their silliness. Raffi and Zea persist in arguing until they are united in fear when Lions attack for a second time.

INCID. LION MUSIC (b) ◉ **Track 8 / 18**

Scene 3 – The Next Morning

Zea's Father and Raffi's Mother are anxious about their children's safety. The Meerkats arrive with the news they've been waiting for, but mutual hostility between the giraffes and zebras gets in the way of news being delivered! The Meerkats manage to shame them all into uniting over their concern for Raffi and Zea. They begin to overcome their prejudices in favour of friendship.

SONG TUIISHI PAMOJA ◉ **Track 9 / 19**

Raffi and Zea return, delighted to discover what's happened. Everyone celebrates the fact that all differences have been put aside, and that they can all be friends from now on.

SONG FRIENDS AT LAST ◉ **Track 10/20**