

Disney Aladdin Musical Review at the Broward Center

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Disney Aladdin is an all-time favourite show for fans aged six years and above. It is a live magical show full of excitement about the new live-action movie including a story of the film. Though it is an old story, the modern lens brings these animated characters into real characters. The main characters of the show *Aladdin* include the hero, his three best friends, a princess and an evil villain. Here, we will describe some main characters of *Aladdin* cast on Broadway Cast from 8th January till 19th January in Broward County Fort Lauderdale. It was a two-week run in Fort Lauderdale full of fun, music, magic, lightning and comedic songs. This story is about an ancient carpet that *Aladdin* found in the Cave of Wonders. The character of Aladin was entirely expressed through movements and pantomime without a voice. The real story of *Aladdin* is a very old Arabic story of the golden age of Muslims. However, many scholars claim that Aladdin was Chinese. The story is all time famous around the world. It is among the best stories within the book *The Thousand and One Nights*, also known as *The Arabian Nights* (Fisher, 2024; Sulcas, 2024).

The Broward Center Of Performing Arts

The Broward Center is one of the premier performing arts venues ranked in the top ten performing arts centres in the country. It is a large multi-venue arts centre theatre and a complex located in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. It was opened in 1991, having a capacity of about 5000 audiences. It is used for cultural and arts events, educational programs, workshops, and theatre shows. Some of the notable performances held in the Au-Rene Theater of Broward Center are *The Lion King*, *Renee Fleming*, *k.d. lang*, and *The Phantom of the Opera*.

Main Characters

There are five main characters in this show: Aladdin, his three friends Kassim, Omar, and Babkak, a villain, the thief of Bagdad named Jafar, and Princess Jasmine. Jonah Ho'okano was cast as Aladdin, and Kaena Kekoa was cast as Jasmine. Jonathan Weir, Zach Bencal, and Ben Chavez were cast as Jafar, Babkak, and Omar, respectively, while Colt Prattes played the role of Kassim. In Fort Lauderdale, *Aladdin* was played from Tuesdays through Fridays (Rosenfield, 2023).

Aladdin (Jonah Ho'okano)

Jonah Ho'okano grew up as a singer and artist who joined Disney in 2012 and has been playing the

role of Aladdin for the past seven years; he was discovered at an audition in Hawaii. His first play was *Fiddler on the Roof* with Kaena (Jasmine in *Aladdin*) when he was 13 and Kaena was 10 years old. Since childhood he was interested in painting and drawing, however, one day his mother Tina took him to church theater camp with Hawaii education arts to start his incredible art journey. He said that he was not willing to go to an audition, however, after his first show he never stopped. His father was a sportsman and he wanted to put him in sports, however, he rejected it and finally his mother figured out what he loved and his passion. He is Native Hawaiian; before him, *Aladdin* cast non-Native artists. He has been playing the role of Aladin for the last seven years. The costumes, the design, and the sets are amazing in this show, and the flying carpet is a unique experience (Lagunoff, 2023).

Kaena Kekoa (Jasmine)

Like Jonah, Kaena was also discovered by Disney in Hawaii, as she went for an audition on Broadway in January 2019 for the role of Jasmine. She was so excited when she learned about her selection. She graduated from Sacred Hearts Academy, was raised singing in church and was associated with theatre programs in the school. She got a teacher education degree from Point Loma Nazarene University in 2018 and joined Judd Nazarene School in Honolulu as a visual and performing arts teacher. After graduation, she moved to Hawaii, where she started her career as an artist. Her parents and siblings are associated with music, and she grew up singing Hawaiian music.

Jonathan Weir (Jafar)

Jonathan played the role of Jafar in *Aladdin*, who was the villain of this story. He played many hated characters in Disney. He has vast experience as an artist and played more than 700 performances. He also played the role of Scar in *The Lion King* on Broadway. He was graduated from Temple University in Acting in the mid-80s.

Zach Bencal (Babkak)

Zach Bencal was discovered by Disney in an audition for *Aladdin*. Zach is a professional artist having more than 1000 performances of *Aladdin*. He didn't originally audition for Babkak's role; he auditioned for another show on Broadway, where he made it to the final round and from there, he was selected for this role.

Ben Chavez (Omar)

Ben Chavez was cast as Omar in *Aladdin*. He is an actor and singer, a short Latin guy with a typical look. In 2019, Ben expressed his views about his role in *Aladdin*, that he is giving children a glimpse into what theater might be for the first time. Ben Chavez marked New York City as his ideal place to

come out because of its extremely welcoming and LGBTQ-affirming.

Colt Prattes (Kassim)

Colt Prattes played the role of Kassim in *Aladdin*. He is an actor, dancer, writer, and a stuntman. He was born in 1986 in Georgia. He is a multi-talented person who began his career as a dancer after completing his graduation from Cincinnati, Ohio. He became famous after being selected for Johnny Castle's remake of *Dirty Dancing*, where he got the role previously performed by Patrick Swayze (Rosenfield, 2023).

The reason behind the success of Disney's *Aladdin* show is the competence of the team performing their role professionally. All the artists are highly talented and are selected after fair auditions. All the characters are highly professional and have strong educational and professional backgrounds. *Aladdin* is one of the hot favourite shows for kids and adults (Lagunoff, 2023; Sulcas, 2024).

References

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