



L to R: Kyle McClellan, Erik Hernandez, Zakiya Young & Ximone Rose in Music Theatre Wichita's Elton John & Tim Rice's AIDA | Photo: Christopher Clark Photography

ABOUT

Following the success of *THE LION KING*, Disney approached Sir Elton John and Sir Tim Rice about the prospect of collaborating on an animated film based on Giuseppe Verdi's opera, *AIDA*. It was Sir Elton John who suggested that the story may best be told on stage instead. Thus, in 1996, work began on the new musical initially titled, *Elaborate Lives: The Legend of Aida*.

After several years of out-of-town runs, *AIDA* found its way to Broadway and opened at the Palace Theatre on March 23, 2000. The show ran for 1,852 performances and won five Tony Awards®, including, Best Original Score.

CHARACTERS

AIDA – A Nubian princess captured by the Egyptians and tested in loyalty as she falls in love with the captain of the Egyptian army.

RADAMES – The captain of the Egyptian army who is apprehensive to take over the throne after the seemingly imminent death of the Pharaoh.

AMNERIS – The daughter of the pharaoh, whose identity as a fashion icon among her people is revealed to be merely a guise for her personal apprehensions.

ZOSER – Radame's father who is obsessed with his son's ascension to the throne.

MEREB – A Nubian servant working for Radames and the only person to realize Aida's true identity.

PHARAOH – The father of Amneris and King of Egypt suffering from a mysterious illness.

AMONASRO – The father of Aida and Nubian king.

CONTENT

Recommended for ages 6 years and over.



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SYNOPSIS **ACT ONE:**

A man and a woman meet at an exhibit in a history museum. A statue of a female pharaoh, Amneris, comes to life and transports them to Ancient Egypt. Here, the captain of the Egyptian army, Radames, is returning from war with the Nubians, prisoners in tow. Among the captured is Aida, a woman who immediately gains his fascination as she attempts to free herself via a duel with one of his soldiers. Radames mercifully prevents Aida and her cohorts from being sent to the copper mines, and instead assures them positions on the palace grounds.

Radames father, Zoser, informs him that the Pharaoh is dying and that Radames must prepare to take up the throne after him. Meanwhile, Radame's Nubian servant, Mereb, recognizes Aida as the daughter of the Nubian king. She demands he keep her identity a secret. Aida becomes the personal servant to Radame's fiancé, Amneris, who immediately takes a liking to her.

At a banquet, Zoser announces that Radames and Amneris are to be married by the end of the week. This news distresses Radames who adores the freedom he has. He and Aida lament together over their plights. Later in the evening, Amneris is glad to talk to Aida about her concerns over her ailing father.

Mereb leads Aida to the Nubian slave camp where her people beg her to lead them against the Egyptians. She in turn asks Radames for help who offers some of his own possessions to them and confesses his love for Aida. The two embrace, but their bliss is fleeting as news comes of her father's capture. Aida, distraught and brooding, declares to her people that Nubia will never die.

ACT TWO:

Aida and Mereb force their way into her father Amonasro's cell. Mereb suggests that they could escape during Radames' upcoming wedding ceremony. Aida is conflicted as she wants to save her father, but does not want to betray the man she loves. Elsewhere, Zoser confronts his son after he discovers the truth of his and Aida's relationship. Radames argues with his father, declaring he is no longer interested in taking the throne. Zoser thus takes matters into his own hands and orders that Aida be killed.

Egyptian soldiers arrive to take Aida, but another Nubian, Nehebka, sacrifices herself instead. Radames tells Aida that he is going to call off his wedding, but she implores him not to because it is the only way that her father can escape. Heartbroken, Radames agrees to his lover's plea. Unbeknownst to them, Amneris has overheard the entire conversation and has trouble dealing with her own grief over going into a counterfeit marriage.

The wedding is brought to a halt at the news of Amonasro's escape. When Radames arrives at the dock, he is shocked to discover Aida's true identity and upset that she kept such an important fact from him. Fighting ensues in which Mereb is attacked by Zoser. Radames cuts the boat free of the dock, allowing Amonasro to escape, but Aida stays behind to be with Radames and the dying Mereb as Zoser flees.

How will the story of these star-crossed lovers unfold? Join us for Pittsburgh CLO's production of *Tim Rice & Elton John's AIDA*, July 26-31 at the Benedum Center!