

Presented with Recognition to

LOUIS PRIMA

For His Musical and Historical Contributions,
and For A Long and Distinguished Career In Music

50 years ago today, on November 11, 1967, Walt Disney's classic film

THE JUNGLE BOOK

had its premiere screening in Rhode Island, and was shown here at The Stadium Theatre on that very first opening weekend.

We are proud to honor music legend Louis Prima and this 50th Anniversary milestone in his career, with Louis having played such a huge part of 'The Jungle Book's' phenomenal international success.

'The Jungle Book' was the final animated feature produced under the supervision and personal touches of Walt Disney before his passing in 1966, and the film earned rave reviews and has grossed \$205.8 million since its release 50 years ago.

The posters for the film declared it a 'lively neo-swing musical,' that 'The Jungle is Jumping,' and 'Now for a new generation...a new swinging kind of Disney!'

Louis' show-stopper in the film, 'I Wan'na Be Like You,' as an orangutan who wants to be a human, and wants the human character Mowgli to teach him how to make fire, was written by songwriters Robert B. Sherman and Richard M. Sherman. Richard said, "When we first got an idea for 'I Wan'na Be Like You,' we said an ape swings from a tree, and he's the king of apes. We'll make him 'the king of the swingers.' That's the idea, we'll make him a jazz man."

Once Louis was invited to do the song, he mockingly responded to the Shermans with "You want to make a monkey out of me?" He paused and then said, "You got me!" The instrumentals were originally recorded by Louis - who also played the trumpet - and his band, Sam Butera & The Witnesses. The monkeys' dance in the film during Louis' 'I Wan'na Be Like You' was partially inspired by a performance Louis did with his band at Disney's soundstage to convince Walt Disney to cast him.

The first version of the soundtrack recording 'Walt Disney Presents the Story and Songs of The Jungle Book,' also known as the 'Storyteller' version, was issued on the Disneyland Records label. It featured a retelling of the story with narration, dialogue and sound effects from the film itself along with the songs. It was a huge commercial success, being certified Gold by the RIAA, and was nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Album for Children. It is continuously cited by children and pre-teens of the late 1960s era, who were fans of the film, as their all-time favorite recording album of their childhood years. The film's animation, characters and music are still receiving praise to this day.

Big Noise and The Stadium Theatre are honored that Louis Prima Jr. is performing in the same theatre on the exact same weekend 50 years later of this classic film's introduction to Rhode Island audiences, and continues his father's incredible musical legacy.

Commemoration Chairs:

Al Gomes, Big Noise

Susan Gomes Miller, The Walt Disney Company

Cathy Levesque, The Stadium Theatre

