

Disney  
**NEWSIES**  
**THE BROADWAY MUSICAL**

*NEWSIES the Broadway Musical* is a musical based on the 1992 film *NEWSIES*, which in turn was inspired by the real-life Newsboys Strike of 1899 in New York City. The show has music by Alan Menken, lyrics by Jack Feldman, and a book by Harvey Fierstein. The musical premiered at the Paper Mill Playhouse in 2011 and made its Broadway debut in 2012.

After having played 1,005 performances, *NEWSIES* toured to over 25 cities in the United States (including two sold-out runs in Salt Lake City). Following the end of the tour, a limited theatrical release was announced for February 2017. This three-day release grossed \$3.47 million. Disney then announced the filmed musical production would be available digitally.

Adapted from *Wikipedia*

### Short Synopsis

Jack Kelly and his ragtag team of newsboys make a meager living selling newspapers on the city streets of New York City. But when the prices of “papes” are hiked and the newsies are hung out to dry, there is nothing left to do but “open the gates and seize the day!” Led by charismatic Jack and independent, young newspaper reporter Katherine Plumber, the newsies form a union and organize a strike against the greedy publisher of the New York World. Can a group of idealistic newsboys win against a foe as powerful as acclaimed publisher Joseph Pulitzer?

The score includes the show-stopping “Seize the Day”, power ballad “Santa Fe” and lovely new songs like Katherine’s “Watch What Happens”.

Adapted from *Stage Agent.com*



## The Newsboys Strike of 1899

In 1899, the streets of New York City were filled with the voices of newsboys ... The two major newspapers - *The New York World* and *The New York Journal* were owned by the two most powerful men in the city, Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hearst.

The newsboys were made up of mostly poor orphans and runaways who slept on the street. The only way they made money was from selling newspapers for a "penny a paper". In addition, all of the money they earned from selling newspapers was the money they used to purchase important needs for survival; they also had to store some of their money so that they could pay for more papers to sell the next day. If a newsboy did not sell enough papers, then he would not be able to sell more papers the next day, which meant they could be very persuasive with their selling.



Pulitzer (L) and Hearst (R)

Pulitzer and Hearst got together and agreed that they wanted to increase their profits. Instead of layoffs or salary cuts, they decided to raise the price that the newsboys paid for newspapers from 50 cents to 60 cents.

In July of that year, a large group of newsboys refused to sell newspapers that were published by Pulitzer and Hearst. The strike expanded across the Brooklyn Bridge blocking traffic for several days.

They hosted rallies which included more than 5,000 newsboys across New York City. These rallies included speeches, given by the leader of the strike himself, Kid Blink. He was blind in one eye and wore an eye patch. Because of his strong Brooklyn accent, *The New York Tribune* often demeaned him when quoting him.

He was famous for a saying that he told the strikers: "*Friens and feller workers. Dis is a time which tries de hearts of men. Dis is de time when we'se got to stick together like glue.... We know wot we wants and we'll git it even if we is blind.*"





The event inspired many other strikes to occur in other parts of the country, and a few decades later, there was an introduction of an urban child-welfare practice (child labor laws) that led to the improvement of the newsboys' quality of life.

Adapted from *weebly.com* article by Kira Morisako



## Alan Menken

Composer (1949-present)

Alan Menken was born on July 22, 1949 in New Rochelle, New York. From his early years his parents described Alan as a "Lover of Music". He even used to fake conduct to recordings of Beethoven's 5th Symphony, etc. When the time came for him to attend college he attended New York University, studying pre-med but later changing his focus to music. His first professional work, with Howard Ashman, was 1979 WPA theatre of "God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater". Three years later, he received huge success with the 1982 off-Broadway production of *Little Shop of Horrors*, again with Ashman, in which he received a Drama Desk nomination. *Little Shop of Horrors* was made into a motion picture and received a Broadway run. Alan Menken also received his first Oscar nomination with "Mean Green Mother from Outer Space".

Perhaps Alan Menken is best known for his work with Walt Disney Pictures. During his time with the film company, he received 18 Academy Award nominations and 16 Golden Globe nominations. He is seen as one of the key players in the Disney Renaissance.

In addition to *NEWSIES*, he composed music for *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Aladdin*, *Pocahontas*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Hercules*, *Home on the Range*, *Enchanted*, and *Tangled*. He has worked with lyricists Howard Ashman (1950-1991), Tim Rice, Stephen Schwartz, David Zippel and Glenn Slater.

Also, he is one of two people to receive three musical nominations in the same year (Academy Awards). Doing so once for *Enchanted* and once for *Beauty and the Beast*.

Adapted from *Disney Wikia*



## Harvey Forbes Fierstein

Book (1954-present)

Harvey Fierstein is an American actor, playwright, and voice actor. Fierstein has won the Tony Award for Best Actor in a Play for his own play *Torch Song Trilogy* ... and the Tony Award for Best Actor in a Musical for playing Edna Turnblad in *Hairspray*. He also wrote the book for the musical *La Cage aux Folles*, for which he won the Tony Award for Best Book of a Musical, and wrote the book for the Tony Award-winning *Kinky Boots*. He was inducted into the American

Theater Hall of Fame in 2007.

Adapted from *Wikipedia*

## Differences with the 1992 film

In addition to the songs from the original movie, *NEWSIES the Broadway Musical* contains several new numbers such as "Brooklyn's Here" and "Something To Believe In". The songs "My Lovey Dovey Baby" and "High Times Hard Times" were removed and replaced by the singular song "That's Rich", which is performed by the same character, Medda Larkin, while the remaining songs were rewritten to fit the changes in the storyline between the film and the musical. The characters of Sarah Jacobs (Davey and Les' sister and Jack's original love interest) and the New York Sun reporter Brian Denton are replaced by the composite character, Katherine Plumber ... a reporter with whom Jack falls in love. Also omitted was the solo for "Patrick's Mother". A scene with Jack, Davey, and Spot Conlon is absent, as is Spot's involvement in the fight between the newsies and scabbers; Spot doesn't appear until the rally.

Adapted from *Wikipedia*

