

Gothamites flock to 'Fela!'

NEW YORK

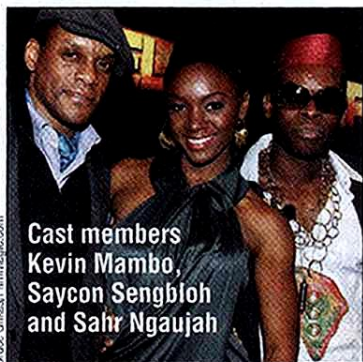
Presenting producers **Will and Jada Pinkett Smith** didn't show up as expected to the Nov. 23 opening of Broadway musical "Fela!" — reportedly because Will's son suffered a sports injury over the weekend — but **Jay-Z**, also a presenting producer, was there, as well as fellow musicians including **David Byrne, Lou Reed** and **Laurie Anderson** and thespians such as **Ben Stiller** and **Jimmy Fallon**.



Jimmy Fallon and Gelan Lambert

Ben Stiller and Jimmy Fallon.

Stephen Hendel, the first-time producer who shepherded the passion project to the stage, wasn't nervous on opening night,



Bruce Glikas/FilmMagic.com

Cast members Kevin Mambo, Saycon Sengbloh and Sahr Ngaujah



Bonnie Bagin/WireImage.com

Jay-Z greets "Fela's" Lillias White; Spike Lee and director-choreographer Bill T. Jones at the musical's opening night.



Bruce Glikas/FilmMagic.com

he said. Nope, the nerves hit a few weeks earlier, as creatives — including director-choreographer **Bill T. Jones** — used the preview period to continue to shape the musical.

"I was worried the show wasn't finding itself or finding its rhythm," Hendel said. "And then suddenly it did, and I wasn't nervous anymore."

— *Gordon Cox*