



EVITA

lyrics by **Tim Rice** music by **Andrew Lloyd Webber**

EDUCATION RESOURCE PACK

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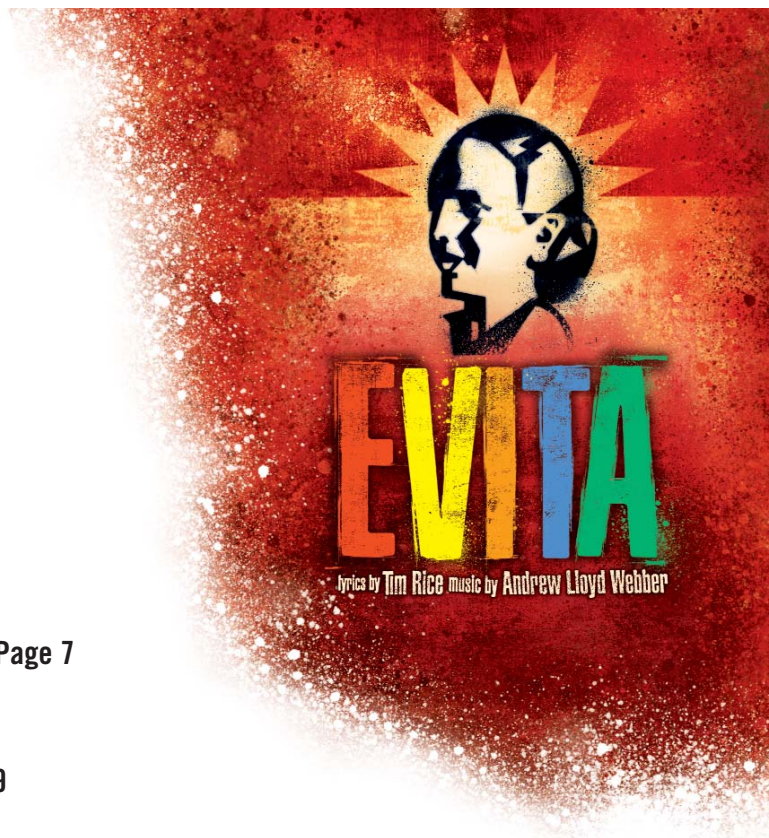
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INTRODUCTION

This Education Pack is full of excellent resources to help prepare young people to get the best out of the experience of seeing a live musical. There are also ideas for follow-up work, so that your visit to **Evita** can form part of your term's work in Drama, Performing Arts, English or Music. There are cross-curricular links with History, Politics and Citizenship, so why not bring the whole school?

This revival of Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber's legendary musical opened in the West End in the summer of 2006, in a splendid new production directed by Michael Grandage, artistic director of the Donmar Warehouse, whose previous hits include *Guys and Dolls* and *Don Carlos*.

Before the show

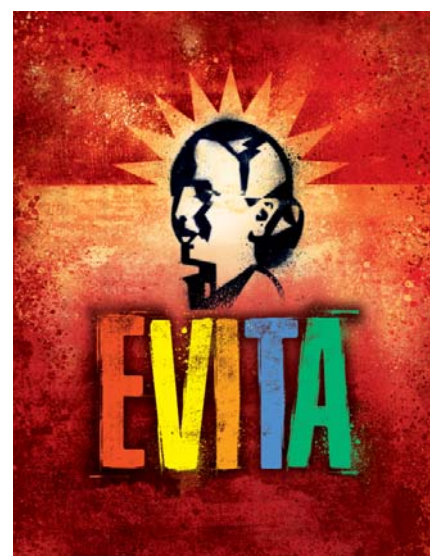
The following pages are useful for students before they see the play: **Synopsis** and **The Characters**. You may also find it useful to dip into the pages in the **Background** section, which has information about the historical and social context of the piece. Talk through **Writing about the Performance** before you go or take it with you, but we would discourage the audience from writing notes during the performance itself. Up-to-the-minute details about the current cast in the West End or on tour can be found in the programme, which you will be able to buy at the theatre.

After the show

The sections on **Who's Who** and **Background** will help deepen students' knowledge of the process of creating the production and of the true story behind it. They are particularly useful for teaching vocational units on Performing Arts Business. There are also a number of lesson ideas in the **Teaching and Learning** section which can be adapted for use in Drama, Performing Arts, Music or English at KS3, KS4, BTEC or A Level.

Enjoy the show!

Education Pack created by Helen Cadbury
with additional material by Mark Fox



SYNOPSIS

Evita tells the story of **Eva Peron**, wife of former Argentinean dictator **Juan Peron**. She was a controversial figure, but much loved by the ordinary people of Argentina. The show opens with the scenes of mourning which accompanied her death.

Our narrator, **Che**, then takes us back to her humble beginnings in the town of Junin, Argentina. From there she follows her lover, the Tango singer **Magaldi**, to the big city, Buenos Aires.

Here she establishes herself as an actress and has many lovers. Eva meets Juan Peron at a fundraising event and he falls for her. She usurps his 16-year-old mistress and moves into his apartment.

Eva's ambition pushes Peron onwards, and she gathers support for him from the working classes. As her career as an actress takes off, so does Peron's political career. Eva rallies the workers, visiting factories, dockyards and union headquarters. In 1946 Peron is elected President of Argentina and Eva becomes First Lady.

Eva despises the women of the aristocracy, who in turn do not accept her. Excluded from the Society of Philanthropy, normally led by the President's wife, she establishes her own fundraising charity, the Social Aid Foundation. Her methods are unconventional and include literally throwing money into the air in poor areas.

Her beauty and glamour ensure she has star quality, she is often compared to a princess or a saint, but her Rainbow Tour of Europe tests her celebrity to the limit.

As her health begins to fail, she continues to campaign for the poor but she dies on 26 July 1952. The country goes into mourning for Santa Evita.

'It is the sad duty of the secretary of the press to inform the people of Argentina that Eva Peron, spiritual leader of the nation, entered immortality at 20.25 hrs. today.'

For further biographical information about the lives of Eva and Juan Peron go to the page **The Perons – a Timeline.**

THE CHARACTERS

EVA – a girl from a poor family who became the most powerful woman in Argentina, known to the people as Evita

PERON – her husband, President of Argentina

CHE – the narrator

MAGALDI – one of Argentina's most celebrated tango singers

THE MISTRESS – Peron's partner when he met Eva, she is only 16

ENSEMBLE – acting, dancing and singing to create a wealth of characters

SWING – understudies

Who is Che?

Che is a nickname; it is like calling 'hey' to someone across the street. It can also mean mate or buddy.

In the original production, Che's character was based on Che Guevara, an Argentine born revolutionary who helped Fidel Castro establish a socialist Cuba. He is famously portrayed in a beret bearing a star. This image has been reproduced on posters and tee-shirts all round the world and is still popular today. The real Che Guevara never met Eva Peron.

In this production, Che is an Everyman figure. Like a Greek chorus, he comments on the action and challenges the protagonists, particularly Eva. As he narrates the story, he reminds the audience of Eva's working class origins and exposes the darker side of her character.

Discussion Points (after seeing the show)

Imagine the show without Che. What would be missing from the story? In what ways can a narrator be used to speak the writer's thoughts?

Think of other entertainments that employ a narrator – television shows, novels, films, plays, pantomimes. How does the narrator affect your understanding of the story being told and your reactions to the other characters?

In *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* the character of The Narrator is clearly outside of the actual story being told. How does this differ to the way the authors employ Che in *Evita*? Do these differences result in different responses from the audience. If so, how and why?



THE STORY OF *EVITA*

ORIGINS

On returning from a visit to Argentina in February 1974, Tim Rice began work with Andrew Lloyd Webber on their first collaboration since the double album of *Jesus Christ Superstar*.

Like its predecessor, *Evita* began life as a two-record set embracing all manner of popular music styles. And, like *Jesus Christ Superstar*, it had already produced a smash-hit single, 'Don't Cry For Me Argentina', which, as Tim Rice hoped, would have people 'walking into the theatre whistling the tune'. The song was written 'on the spot', and neither Rice nor Lloyd Webber thought it would be a hit. 'After all, who wants to buy a song about a country you've hardly even heard of?' said Rice.

The £400,000 musical, directed by Harold Prince and produced jointly by the authors and Robert Stigwood, opened at the Prince Edward Theatre, London, on 21 June 1978, amid unprecedented publicity.

(adapted from the original London souvenir brochure, text by John Coldstream)

STARS

The role of Eva Peron was first created for the album recording by Julie Covington. Elaine Paige premiered the role on stage, accompanied by Joss Ackland as Peron and pop heartthrob David Essex as Che. The show won many awards including a Laurence Olivier Award for Paige's performance. Her success was followed by Patti Lu Pone in New York, who also won a Tony Award for Best Actress.

Alan Parker and Oliver Stone's film version in 1996 starred Madonna and brought a new generation of fans to the music. 'Don't Cry For Me Argentina' was an international hit again, 20 years after its first release.

The West End revival in 2006 saw a new search for a star. Actresses from all over the world were auditioned and Andrew Lloyd Webber and Michael Grandage were delighted to discover Elena Roger from Argentina.

'Our criteria were simple: we wanted the best singer and the best actress in the world...and when that person came to us from Argentina it was a very specific added bonus and one that affected how we tackled the whole piece.'

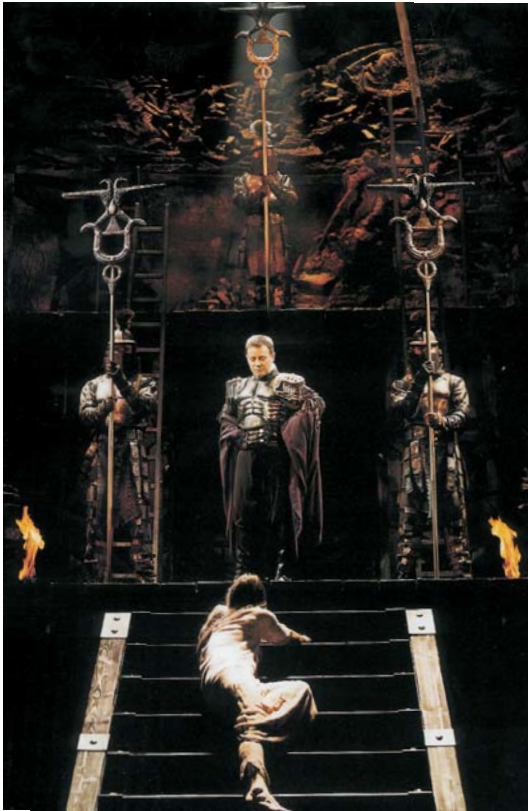
Michael Grandage



From top: Elaine Paige, Madonna, Elena Roger

For further information on past and current performances and biographies go to www.reallyuseful.com or www.evitathe musical.com

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MUSICAL



Top: *Jesus Christ Superstar*
Bottom: *The Phantom of the Opera*

The combination of song and spoken word goes back to ancient Greece and the origins of theatre itself, growing through church liturgy, *commedia del arte* and folk song and dance. The form of the modern musical can be traced directly from English ballad operas, such as John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*, through the phenomenal success of the operettas of Gilbert and Sullivan in Britain and Offenbach in France. In America, musical comedies and burlesque revues developed the musical into the form we recognise now.

Until the 1930s, American musical theatre was strong on dance, songs and ensemble performances, but the plots were unmemorable. But in 1927, Jerome Kern and Oscar Hammerstein's *Show Boat* broke the mould by creating a musical which dealt with a serious social issue: mixed-race relationships. The music combined contemporary popular blues with traditional operetta styles. This set the stage for the elements we still see in musicals today.

Oklahoma!, in 1945, is the next important moment in the history of the musical: Oscar Hammerstein's lyrics and Richard Rodgers's music combined the songs and the book (the dramatic action) together, so that the songs could now be used to move the action forward, not simply to comment on what was happening. This is known as the 'classic book' musical and examples include *My Fair Lady*, *Guys and Dolls* and *West Side Story*.

By the 1960s musical theatre was led by very different influences. Stephen Sondheim broke new ground with *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum* (1962) and continued to explore the darker side of life, while rock music was playing an increasingly important part in the musicals of the late 1960s and early 1970s, beginning with *Hair* in 1967.

In 1968, Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber's collaboration on *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, which started as a pop cantata for a school choir, was a hit record and subsequently became a fully-staged show. It was followed by *Jesus Christ Superstar*. This exploration of serious themes and strong emotion, sung to music with its origins in both rock and classical styles, set the stage for *Evita*, in 1978. Although the term 'rock opera' was now commonplace, Rice and Lloyd Webber chose to describe *Evita* simply as an opera.

Evita was a precursor to the darker, big budget productions of the 1980s such as *Les Misérables*, *Miss Saigon* and *The Phantom of the Opera*, which told dramatic stories through sweeping scores and spectacular effects. While many musicals have been made into films, the latest development in this story has seen films, particularly from Disney, made into stage musicals, satisfying the undying hunger of audiences for shows which are moving, entertaining and spectacular but – above all – live.

TANGO

HISTORY

Tango is thought to have been introduced to Argentina by Spanish settlers. It became popular in the 1890s, in the bars and brothels on the outskirts of the growing Spanish settlement of Buenos Aires. It is said that the first tango dancers were the gauchos (cowboys) who visited the brothels. Their knees permanently bent by the stiffened leather chaps they wore, they held their girl in the crook of their right arm; she – no doubt avoiding their unwashed smell – danced with her head thrown back. The dance evolved in distinctive curves because of the lack of space between the tables. As tango developed it also became a form of song.

Respectable society would have nothing to do with the passionate tango at first. However, as Argentina grew in prosperity in the early 20th century, many wealthy Argentineans had second homes in Europe, where they proudly showed off their culture to their European friends. Tango became popular in the Parisian salons while, in London, Tango Teas were all the rage. In 1921, matinee idol Rudolf Valentino's popularity with his female fans was assured by the steamy tango scene in the film *The Four Horseman of the Apocalypse* – at 17 he had earned his living as a dishwasher and tango dancer in Paris. By the 1930s, tuxedos had replaced the gauchos' chaps and the dance returned to its home country in glory.

HOW TO...

It is not difficult to learn the basics of tango. You begin with a two-step walk, the woman takes two steps back (right then left) and the man takes two steps forward (left then right). The feet should be parallel (with the weight on the woman's left and the man's right, so the opposite foot is ready to move again). The knees are bent (remember the gauchos). Each step is on the off-beat of the music. This is called *el paseo* – or the stroll.

The variations in the dance come from varying the step, by lengthening the stride, reversing, dancing in place and varying the tempo according to the music. Each pair moves forward in a curved line, but they will soon need to turn. Think of how you turn when you walk – this is a very natural movement.

Stay focused, with your head held high, and not only will you avoid bumping into the furniture and the other dancers, but you will begin to develop the passionate intensity of expression of the experienced tango dancer.

ACTIVITY

Listen to the soundtrack of *Evita*, track 3, 'On This Night of a Thousand Stars'. Choreograph your own tango routine, varying the tempo with the song.



THE PERONS — A TIMELINE

1895 **Juan Domingo Peron** born, his parents were not married at this stage.

1911 He enters military school.

1919 **María Eva Iburguren** born in the tiny town of Los Toldos, huddled on the edge of the Argentina pampas. She is the illegitimate daughter of a ranch manager, **Juan Duarte**.

1926 When her father dies, his wife will not let Eva's mother and children attend the funeral. **Eva** hates the middle classes from this point on.

demonstrations organized by the CGT trade union federation, with **Eva's** influence, force his release on 17 October.

21 October: **Peron** and **Eva** marry in secret.

1946 On 24 February, **Peron** is elected President of Argentina and **Eva** becomes First Lady with a prominent role in the Secretariat of Labour. War is over in Europe and **Peron** allows several leading Nazis to start new lives in Argentina.

1947 **Eva** sets up the Social Aid Foundation and campaigns for



1934 **Eva Duarte**, now living in the town of Junin, where her mother runs a boarding house, meets the tango singer **Agustin Magaldi** and elopes with him.

1935 She arrives in Buenos Aires and begins to work as an actress with small roles in theatre.

1938 **Juan Peron** is sent by the army as a military observer to Europe where he becomes an admirer of Mussolini.

1939 Eva plays her first significant role in a play on Argentine radio.

1943 In May, **Colonel Juan Peron** is a significant figure in the military coup by the secretive GOU (United Officers' Group), which overthrows the conservative civilian government of Ramón Castillo. **Peron** becomes chief of the Secretariat of the War Ministry with the slogan 'Hitler's fight in peace and war will be our guide'.

1944 In January, **Eva** meets **Juan** at a fundraising event for the victims of the San Juan earthquake.

1945 **Peron** is forced into resignation by opponents within the armed forces on 9 October, and imprisoned, but mass

the poor. She opens schools and hospitals and her work confirms her popularity among the ordinary people of Argentina. However, her methods are questionable, she forces businesses to close if they do not donate money and she keeps no proper accounts. It seems that money is siphoned off into the **Peron's** private accounts. In June, she goes on the Rainbow Tour of Europe. Although she is greeted warmly in Spain, elsewhere Europeans are less impressed. **Peron's** support for Hitler and Mussolini in the Second World War has not been forgotten or forgiven.

1951 **Eva** turns down the possibility of becoming Vice President; her health is failing. In November, her tireless campaign for the rights of women finally succeeds; all women get the vote. **Eva** votes for **Peron** from her hospital bed.

1952 4 June: **Eva's** last public appearance when **Peron** is sworn in for his second presidential term.

26 July: Eva Peron dies of cancer, aged 33.



LIFE IN ARGENTINA

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE 20TH CENTURY

MACHISMO

Argentinean men prided themselves on their passion and their strength. Women were second-class citizens. The tango songs told of women who were either pure or treacherous.

WORKERS

Many people were employed in farming. The Argentinean Pampas was a huge expanse of prairie where beef cattle roamed. Ranches were owned by a minority of very wealthy families but wages for the workers were low and living conditions rough.

The cities along the East Coast were thriving and growing, fuelled by the cheap labour of European immigrants. New jobs in factories also drew many poor peasants into the cities from the countryside.

POLITICS

Since the revolution of 1930, Argentina had been through turbulent times. The army became an important political force and aligned itself with Nationalism. Peron hoped to impose firm government which could also offer social reforms. But by the time he left office, the economy was in a mess and there was beef rationing.

RELIGION

Argentina has always been a Catholic country. In rural areas a kind of folklore mixed easily with Catholic tradition and many unofficial saints were credited with miracles.



WHO'S WHO?

TIM RICE Lyricist

Tim Rice was born in 1944. He began songwriting in 1965 when the first song he wrote 'That's My Story' (tune as well as words) was recorded by a rock group called the Nightshift. That same year he met fellow budding songwriter Andrew Lloyd Webber whose musical ambitions were in theatre rather than rock or pop. They teamed up and wrote four musicals together from 1965-78. The first, *The Likes of Us* (1965-66) was performed for the first time in 2005 and became available on CD just 40 years after its creation. The other three, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (1968), *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1969-71) and *Evita* (1976-78) became, and remain, hugely successful all around the world, on both stage and screen.

Tim Rice then wrote *Blondel* (1983), a mediaeval romp, with Stephen Olivier, which ran for a year in London. This was followed in 1986 by *Chess*, in collaboration with ABBA's Björn Ulvaeus and Benny Andersson. In 1989 Tim translated the famous French musical *Starmania* (by Michel Berger and Luc Plamondon) into English, which resulted in a hit album – in France.

In the 1990s he worked primarily with the Disney empire, contributing lyrics to the movies *Aladdin* (music Alan Menken) and *The Lion King* (music Elton John and Hans Zimmer) and to the stage shows *Beauty and the Beast* (Alan Menken), *The Lion King* and *Aida* (both Sir Elton). Between Disney commitments he wrote the words for Cliff Richard's theatrical blockbuster *Heathcliff* (music John Farrar), which toured the UK in 1995-96.

He is currently reworking an operatic musical he has written with Alan Menken (*King David*), and on new treatments, for both stage and screen, of *Chess*. He has won a variety of awards. He lives in London, Cornwall and on the motorway between the two, has three children, his own cricket team and a knighthood.



WHO'S WHO?

ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER

Composer

Andrew Lloyd Webber is the composer of *The Likes of Us*, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, *By Jeeves*, *Evita*, *Variations* and *Tell Me on a Sunday* later combined as *Song & Dance*, *Cats*, *Starlight Express*, *The Phantom of the Opera*, *Aspects of Love*, *Sunset Boulevard*, *Whistle Down the Wind*, *The Beautiful Game* and *The Woman in White*. He composed the film scores of *Gumshoe* and *The Odessa File*, and a setting of the Latin Requiem Mass, *Requiem*.

He has also produced in the West End and on Broadway not only his own work but the Olivier Award-winning plays *La Bête* and *Daisy Pulls It Off*. In summer 2002 in London he presented the groundbreaking A R Rahman musical *Bombay Dreams*.

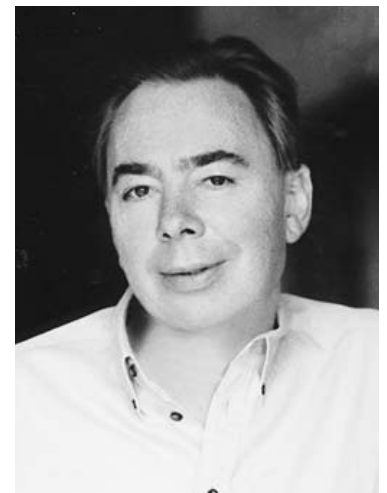
In 2004 he produced a film version of *The Phantom of the Opera* directed by Joel Schumacher.

In 2006 he oversaw the new production of *Evita* in London, a unique version of *The Phantom of the Opera* in Las Vegas and his new production of *The Sound of Music* at the London Palladium, the leading role having been cast via the hit BBC TV series *How Do You Solve a Problem Like Maria?*

He bought the Palace Theatre in 1983 and now owns seven London theatres including the Palace, the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, and the London Palladium.

In December 2006 he received a Kennedy Center Honor, one of the highest awards for achievement in the arts in the United States. Other awards include seven Tonys, three Grammys including Best Contemporary Classical Composition for *Requiem*, six Oliviers, a Golden Globe, an Oscar, an International Emmy, the Praemium Imperiale and the Richard Rodgers award for Excellence in Musical Theatre. *The Beautiful Game*, which used the sectarian war in Northern Ireland as a metaphor of the tragedy of religious conflict worldwide, was his first to receive the London Critics' Circle Award.

He was knighted in 1992 and created an honorary life peer in 1997.



WHO'S WHO?

Meet the Director: MICHAEL GRANDAGE

This interview took place during the rehearsal process for the West End opening in the summer of 2006.

What is the biggest challenge of directing *Evita*?

The original version was 25 years ago and we want to stay true to the iconic moments which that audience will remember. But there is an audience who have never seen *Evita* before and I want to make sure we can do things that weren't possible before; one thing in particular is that we've got greater access to Argentina this time round. We've got greater access to Buenos Aires and to so many things that we can put into it this time. It would be my wish and the designer's, and everyone involved in making the production, to try to bring as much authenticity of that country to this version as possible. As a result, it's going to be a re-invention, but we want to make sure we hold on to the iconic moments.

Can you describe the feeling as you begin the rehearsal process with an actress who comes from Argentina playing Eva?

Yes, we've done some extensive work with Elena Roger, meetings and developing the work and listening to the songs in the way she interprets them; she just brings something extraordinarily moving to the role, because of where she comes from and the history of that country. I would like to place that at the very centre of our production.

What will an audience, who may only know the film version, get from seeing *Evita* live on stage?

Seeing *Evita* on stage is about experiencing a very strong narrative journey and a true story. And charted along that story are some of the great, iconic musical moments in the history of musical theatre. When you sit down in your seat in the theatre and have that happen in front of you, it should be a very, very pleasurable experience.

Transcribed and reproduced by kind permission of London TV

We caught up with Michael again recently to find out more about his work

When you were at school, did you know you wanted to be a director?

No, I wanted to be an actor or a writer.

At what age did you direct your first play and what was it?

Sixteen. A production of *Suddenly Last Summer* for my local arts centre. I directed it again in the West End when I was 40.

What did you study at school or university which led to a career as a director?

I studied acting at the Central School of Speech and Drama, and then acted for 12 years before needing a change.

Can you describe 'a day in the life of' a West End musical director?

Each day is different. When it goes well you find you sing the songs to yourself, but for the most part it is focused on solving problems to make things work.

What were the challenges of directing *Evita*?

Making a new production that people look at afresh.

You work very closely with the designer. Can you tell us about the ideas behind the design for *Evita*?

We wanted to set it in a real world. It had previously only been done in a black box style and we wanted to give it a real physical presence that evoked the Argentina that we all know about.

What changes will have to be made to take *Evita* from the West End into a national tour?

It is probably too big to fit into a lot of theatres, so it would have to be redesigned to keep all the exciting elements but make it flexible enough to move from place to place.

What would be your dream job?

A wine taster who directs one production a year.

WHO'S WHO?

MEET TWO YOUNG PERFORMERS



ASHLEY DAY – Ensemble

I started dancing at the age of three, inspired by the likes of Fred Astaire, Bob Fosse and all the old MGM musicals. At the age of 11, I went to a full-time vocational school and after finishing my GCSEs I went to Bird College of Performing Arts for four months to study dance, singing and acting. I was also a member of the National Youth Music Theatre which had a massive effect on my training, working with fantastic directors and choreographers.

I had four auditions for *Evita* and it was possibly the most auditions I've ever been to. Rob (Ashford, choreographer) was so inspiring. I was desperate to work for him. We had five weeks in the rehearsal room and two weeks teching the show. We also had a month of previews where bits and pieces were changed.

One of the challenges of this show is to keep my performance as fresh and as exciting as I possibly can. Michael (Grandage) was adamant that the ensemble were not just the chorus, so it was refreshing to be able to do as much as possible with our characters and our overall performance.

My dream job would be to play a Fred Astaire role like *Top Hat* or a dance-based musical like Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Song & Dance*, or maybe a revival of *West Side Story* with Rob Ashford doing the choreography... Actually the list goes on and on! Really my dream job is anything which is exciting and involves working with an amazing creative team.



FIONA REYES – Swing

I wanted to be a performer from a very young age. I did a lot of pantos and dance shows and enjoyed it so much I knew I wanted to do it as a career. I was always inspired by any musical I saw and always left with a longing to get up and do it myself.

I did A Levels in performing arts and dance at college, which also included lighting design and stage management. I then went on to do a degree in musical theatre at Mountview Academy of Theatre Arts. The casting director for *Evita* came to college and saw me in a performance; from there I was asked to audition for *Evita*.

The biggest challenge being a swing, is that you have to know what every girl does and be ready to go on at the last minute (even half way through the show!).

My dream job would be to create a role in a new musical and I've also always wanted to play Anita in *West Side Story*.



WHO'S WHO?

BEHIND THE SCENES

LORNA COBBOLD – Company Manager

I'm usually at the theatre from 4pm, but when we're teching a show we're here 12 hours a day. There are three main roles in stage management: assistant stage manager, who sets up and finds the props; deputy stage manager, who blocks the movement of the actors; and stage manager, who looks at the show technically and the logistics of moving furniture on and off stage. The company manager makes sure the actors have everything they need, but in most companies the roles of company manager and stage manager are combined. On *Whose Life Is It Anyway?* I was both.

You have some weird conversations in this line of work. For Martin McDonagh's *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* we had to have life-like bodies to cut up, so I found myself in hardware stores asking the shop assistants if they had anything that would resemble the consistency of a neck when being sawn in half!

It can be frustrating, but the beauty of the job is that it's unpredictable. Listening to the audience is part of the fun. While the audience is in the bar discussing the performers, we're backstage discussing the audience, saying things like 'They're not giving it their all'.

Every stage management person will tell you they're waiting to find out what they want to do. No doubt one day I'll think of something else, but right now I love this job.

SHEREEN HIBBERT – Wardrobe Mistress

I've worked on various West End shows, including *The Lion King*, *The King and I* and *Acorn Antiques*, and am now wardrobe mistress on *Evita*. A lot of people start off as dressers and are taught to sew on the job, but I'd done a degree in costume so came to the job with quite a bit of experience.

I have two deputies and on a normal day the three of us come in and get the washing machines loaded. There are over 250 costumes in the show and 150 pairs of shoes, so we do six or seven loads of washing and iron 94 shirts every day. *Evita* is a tough show because characters will take off a costume and put it back on two scenes later so the clothes get more of a battering. We have a diary where actors log their costume problems, so we check this daily to see what alterations need doing.

There's been lots of nightmare experiences when people have gone onstage in the wrong costume, or come undone halfway through a scene. I worked on *Ducktastic*, a magic show where tricks were hidden inside the costumes. A pyrotechnic device was slipped into the trousers of one character so that when he was fired out of a cannon he appeared to have a smoking bottom. If folded incorrectly, it wouldn't go off properly, so it was tricky. It failed quite a lot and one night the actor had to reach inside his costume and pull out the device as it was burning against his skin. That was scary!



WRITING ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Why does a director make certain choices? Watch carefully and write notes at the interval, or after the performance. These questions will help you:

The Set

- what effects and colours do you see?
- why have they been chosen?
- how are the different locations and scenes in the show demonstrated?

Costume

- what colours and styles are being used?
- what impression do they give about the historical period and the social class of the characters?
- compare different costumes, for example Eva before she arrives in Buenos Aires to when she is on the Rainbow Tour. What story do the costumes tell?

Lighting

to work out why different lighting effects are being used, ask yourself these practical questions:

- what time of day is it?
- are we inside or outside?
- what is the climate/weather?
- what colours and shades of colour are being used?
- what levels of brightness are being used and why?
- think about angles of light, who is well lit and who is in shadow.
- when do the lights change?
- what is the atmosphere and what emotions are suggested by the lighting?

The Performers

- how has each performer used facial expression and gesture to create their character?
- what is the effect of the whole story being told in song?
- how are attitude and feeling expressed in the dance numbers?
- how do the performers use the set?
- how do the performers relate to the audience?
- which performances do you find the most convincing? Why?
Which performances do you find less convincing? Why?

And Lastly but Most Importantly

- what does *Evita* make you think, feel, want to talk about?

DRAMA AND ENGLISH STARTERS

1 THE BALCONY OF THE CASA ROSADA

The famous balcony of the Presidential Palace has been graced by many famous people, including: Pope John Paul II, Diego Maradona, Mother Teresa, General Galtieri and Madonna.

Choose one of these celebrities and see if you can find out more about them; use the internet to find a photograph of them on the balcony.

Drama: Use these pictures as a stimulus for a scene. Who is speaking to the crowd, how do the crowd react?

Research your character and create a scene just before the celebrity goes out onto the balcony. How do they feel?

English: Write the speech that your celebrity makes to the crowd.

Decide what their objective is: to win support, to influence, to say thank you, to impress?



DRAMA AND ENGLISH STARTERS

2 THE STORY OF THE MISTRESS

I DON'T EXPECT MY LOVE AFFAIRS TO LAST FOR LONG
NEVER FOOL MYSELF THAT MY DREAMS WILL COME TRUE
BEING USED TO TROUBLE I ANTICIPATE IT
BUT ALL THE SAME I HATE IT – WOULDN'T YOU?
SO WHAT HAPPENS NOW?

Read these lyrics from the song 'Another Suitcase
Another Hall'.

Drama: Create a scene about Peron's 16-year-old mistress. Where does she go next? Try to tell the story from her point of view.

English: Imagine you are The Mistress and write a letter to your friend explaining what has happened to you.



MUSIC/MUSICAL THEATRE STARTERS

Resources

Soundtrack: Evita: 2006 Cast Recording: Really Useful Records

Sheet Music: Evita: Vocal Selections (Paperback) for piano/vocal/guitar

ISBN-10: 1846097495 and ISBN-13: 978-1846097492

Issues in Musical Theatre

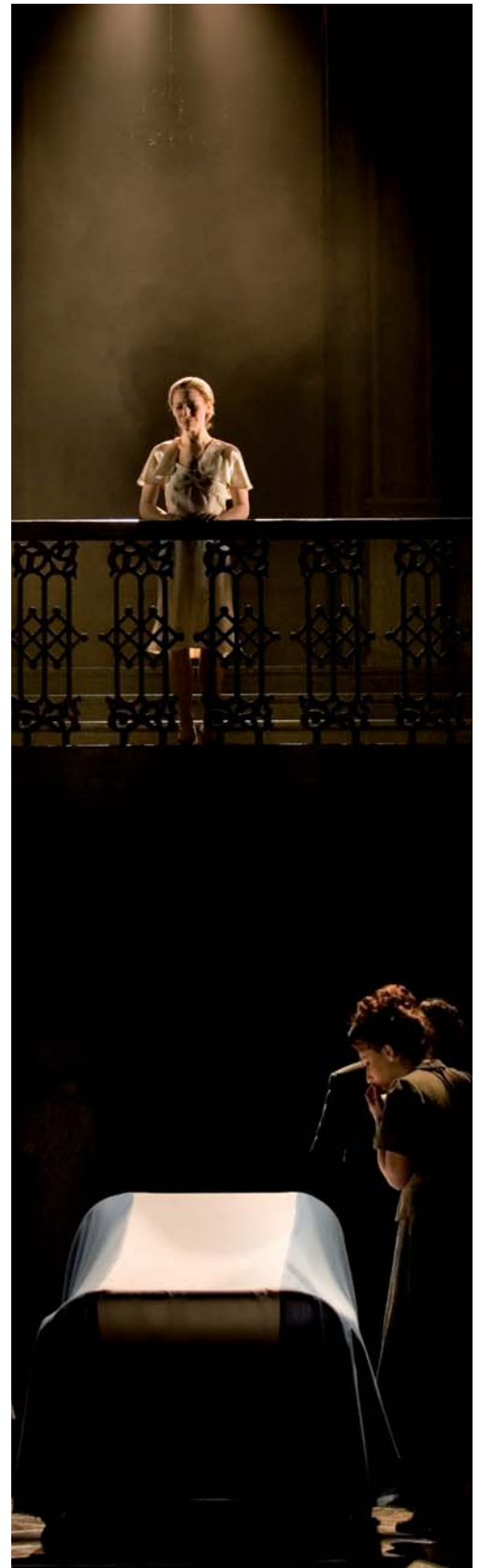
- 1 After your visit to **Evita**, discuss the issues that are highlighted in the musical.
- 2 Compare it to another musical you have seen. Which issues are similar and which are different?
- 3 If you were going to create a new musical, based on events in the news today, what issues would you choose? Which are similar to the issues in **Evita**?

The Purpose of a Song

- 1 **Evita** is a sung-through musical – there is no additional dialogue. After you have watched the show, share with your group which songs have stayed with you.
- 2 Choose two or three songs which you think serve different purposes. Do the songs tell us new information about a character, set a scene, affect us emotionally or comment on the action?
- 3 Think of popular song that you like. Can you think of a context for that song? How could it fit into a bigger story?

Musical Themes

- 1 Andrew Lloyd Webber describes the interweaving musical themes in **Evita** as ‘catalysts for what is happening on the stage’. Listen to the soundtrack. Can you identify the motifs of recurring themes? When they are repeated, how do they change?
- 2 Listen to ‘**Another Suitcase Another Hall**’. Can you hear a harp interlude? Now listen to the final song – ‘**Eva’s Lament**’. Can you hear that theme again? Notice how it builds throughout the intervening songs until the death scene.
- 3 Why do you think Lloyd Webber introduces the death theme at the point where Eva turns The Mistress out of the flat?



RAINBOW HIGH LESSON PLAN

Resources

'Rainbow High': Lyrics in this pack

Soundtrack: Evita: 2006 Cast Recording:
Really Useful Records

Sheet Music: Evita: Vocal Selections
(Paperback) for piano/vocal/guitar
ISBN-10: 1846097495 and
ISBN-13: 978-1846097492

Preparation

Read the lyrics for '**Rainbow High**'.

Talk through what is happening; see the Glossary page for explanations of some unfamiliar terms and names. Who is in the scene? Discuss how the song was performed in the production. What is the significance of the ensemble and the individual when you watched this scene? How was it staged to indicate the different status of the characters?



Improvisation/Rehearsal/Performance

In groups, re-create the scene in the following ways:

1. Without speaking. This is harder than it sounds. Do not use sign language or mouth any words, just focus on the actions and facial expressions of the characters and what they are feeling inside. It might help if you have access to props and costumes to explore how you handle these.
2. Perform your silent versions to the rest of the group. What do you notice when there is no speech?
3. Rehearse and then show your scene again with the soundtrack playing. As performers, does the music help you feel any different? As an audience, how does the song help you understand the scene?
4. Develop the scene naturalistically – this time using speech: you will need to develop dialogue for the characters. Remember to use gestures, furniture and props (if you have them) carefully to show the scene as it really may have happened. Look at the objectives of each character. What does she/he want? Each dresser needs to be played as a real person; what is their backstory? What do they think of Eva and what does she think of them?
5. Rehearse and polish this scene. Decide how you would like to use music. If you have musicians in your group, they can experiment with live music from the score.
6. Extension: Ask yourselves what has happened just before this scene in the lives of the dressers? Invent your own scene, rehearse and perform it, before your '**Rainbow High**' scene. You might want to look at the page **Life in Argentina**, to get ideas about the ordinary lives of Argentinean people in the 1940s. Can anyone in your group write a new song in the style of **Evita** for this new scene?

RAINBOW HIGH

EVA I DON'T REALLY THINK I NEED THE REASONS WHY
I WON'T SUCCEED
I HAVEN'T STARTED
LET'S GET THIS SHOW ON THE ROAD
LET'S MAKE IT OBVIOUS
PERON IS OFF AND ROLLING

DRESSERS EYES! HAIR! MOUTH! FIGURE! DRESS! VOICE! STYLE! MOVEMENT! HANDS! MAGIC!
RINGS! GLAMOUR! FACE! DIAMONDS! EXCITEMENT! IMAGE!

EVA I CAME FROM THE PEOPLE
THEY NEED TO ADORE ME
SO CHRISTIAN DIOR ME
FROM MY HEAD TO MY TOES
I NEED TO BE DAZZLING
I WANT TO BE RAINBOW HIGH
THEY NEED THEIR ESCAPE
AND SO DO I

DRESSERS EYES! HAIR! MOUTH! FIGURE! DRESS! VOICE! STYLE! MOVEMENT! HANDS! MAGIC!
RINGS! GLAMOUR! FACE! DIAMONDS! EXCITEMENT! IMAGE!

EVA ALL MY DESCAMISADOS EXPECT ME TO OUTSHINE THE ENEMY –
THE ARISTOCRACY
I WON'T DISAPPOINT THEM
I'M THEIR SAVIOUR!
THAT'S WHAT THEY CALL ME
SO LAUREN BACALL ME
ANYTHING GOES
TO MAKE ME FANTASTIC
I HAVE TO BE RAINBOW HIGH
IN MAGICAL COLOURS
YOU'RE NOT DECORATING A GIRL FOR A NIGHT ON THE TOWN!
AND I'M NOT A SECOND RATE QUEEN GETTING KICKS
WITH A CROWN!
NEXT STOP WILL BE EUROPE!
THE RAINBOW'S GONNA TOUR
DRESSED UP, SOMEWHERE TO GO – WE'LL PUT ON A SHOW!
LOOK OUT MIGHTY EUROPE!
BECAUSE – YOU WANNA KNOW WHAT'CHA GONNA GET IN ME
JUST A LITTLE TOUCH OF
JUST A LITTLE TOUCH OF
ARGENTINA'S BRAND OF STAR QUALITY!

PERSUASIVE LANGUAGE EXERCISE

To persuade = to influence, win over, convince

'Everything I did, I did it out of love for this people. I am not anything because I did something, I am not anything because I renounced anything; I am not anything because I am somebody or have something. All that I have, I have in my heart, it hurts my soul, it hurts my flesh and it burns my nerves, and it is my love for this people and for Peron. And I thank you, my General, for having taught me to know love and to value it. Were the people to ask me for my life, I would give it to them singing, for the happiness of one descamisado* is worth more than my own life.'

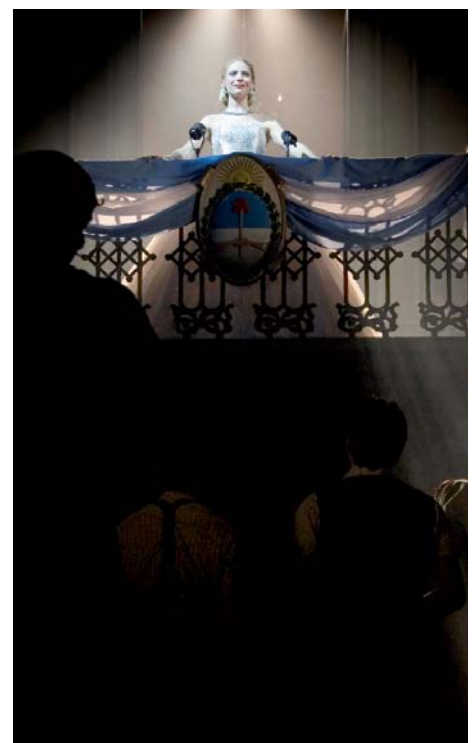
EVA PERON

Read the speech above by Eva Peron.

- 1 How does Eva Peron use repetition to make her point?
- 2 How does she use lists?
- 3 What can she offer to the people that no ordinary politician can?
- 4 Underline every time she uses the word 'love'. Do you think this an unusual word for a politician to use?
- 5 Eva started out as an actress. What skills do actors and politicians have in common?
- 6 Do you know of any contemporary politicians who used to be actors?
- 7 Compare the speech above with the lyrics from the song 'A New Argentina' below.
What themes or features has Tim Rice included from Eva's own words?

EVA THERE IS ONLY ONE MAN WHO CAN LEAD ANY WORKERS'
REGIME
HE LIVES FOR YOUR PROBLEMS, HE SHARES YOUR IDEALS
AND YOUR DREAM
HE SUPPORTS YOU FOR HE LOVES YOU
UNDERSTANDS YOU, IS ONE OF YOU
IF NOT – HOW COULD HE LOVE ME?

NOW I AM A WORKER I'VE SUFFERED THE WAY THAT YOU DO
I'VE BEEN UNEMPLOYED AND I'VE STARVED AND I HATED
IT TOO
BUT I FOUND MY SALVATION
IN PERON – MAY THE NATION
LET HIM SAVE THEM AS HE SAVED ME



*Descamisado = shirtless one, the poorest in society

GLOSSARY

Requiem – a Latin Mass sung to honour the dead.

Santa – Spanish for saint. After Eva's death, over 40,000 people wrote to the Pope, asking that she be made a saint.

La Casa Rosada – literally the Pink House. It is the Presidential Palace and Government Headquarters in Buenos Aires.

Prima Donna – literally the first lady. In common English usage it often means a female star or someone who is overly theatrical and is behaving badly.

Descamisados – Spanish for the shirtless ones. It was a term used to describe working class Argentines and was considered quite insulting. Eva Peron used it as a term of pride and changed its connotation.

Madonna – the mother of Christ.

Philanthropy – the giving of money by the wealthy to improve the lives of the poor. The Perons were very generous, and Eva campaigned genuinely to change living and working conditions for working class people. However, the Perons were criticised for raising much more than they gave away; the rest disappeared, probably into Swiss bank accounts. Peron was a very wealthy man when he left office.

Christian Dior – Paris fashion designer whose 'New Look' dominated world fashion during the decade after the Second World War.

Machiavelli – 15th-century Italian statesman. His book *The Prince* described a system in which governments should use whatever means necessary to survive. Machiavellian – ruthless, plotting.

Lauren Bacall – famous and beautiful Hollywood actress, particularly popular in the 1940s. She married Humphrey Bogart in 1945.



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For more information visit

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