

KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN

BOOK BY
TERRENCE MCNALLY

MUSIC BY
JOHN KANDER

LYRICS BY
FRED EBB

BASED ON THE NOVEL BY
MANUEL PUIG



Education Mini-Pack

18 NOVEMBER — 28 DECEMBER

Southbank Theatre, The Sumner

About the Musical

In a dark South American prison, two very different men share a small cell. Valentin is a Marxist revolutionary who refuses to betray his comrades. Molina is a window dresser who distracts himself by escaping to a fantasy world of movies starring the glamorous diva, Aurora. Valentin can't stand Molina's cinematic fantasies and so draws a line on the floor to stop Molina from coming near him. Surely that will keep them apart.

About the Composer and Lyricist

Kander and Ebb were a highly successful American songwriting team consisting of composer John Kander and lyricist Fred Ebb. Known primarily for their stage musicals, which include *Cabaret*, *Chicago*, *Fosse*, *Curtains*, and *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, Kander and Ebb also scored several movies, including Martin Scorsese's *New York, New York*. The team became associated with two actresses, Liza Minnelli and Chita Rivera, whom they worked with closely. *Kiss of the Spider Woman* premiered in London's West End 1992, and on Broadway the following year, winning seven Tony Awards including Best Musical.

Genre

Contemporary International Musical

Cast

Spider Woman/Aurora Caroline O'Connor
Molina Ainsley Melham
Valentin Adam-Jon Fiorentino
Ensemble Jakob Ambrose
Esteban/Ensemble Blake Appelqvist
Marta/Ensemble Elandrah Eramiha
Molina's Mother/Ensemble Natalie Gamsu
Marcos/Ensemble Joe Gaudion
Gabriel/Ensemble Ryan Gonzalez
Warden/Ensemble Bert LaBonté
Ensemble Lyndon Watts

Musicians

Drums Darryn Farrugia
Violin Susannah Ng
Bass Patrick Schmidli
Cello Paul Zabrowarny

Creative Team

Director Dean Bryant
Musical Director & Orchestrator Jack Earle
Choreographer Andrew Hallsworth
Set & Costume Designer Alicia Clements
Lighting Designer Matt Scott
Sound Designer Nick Walker
Projection Designer Jamie Clennett
Voice & Dialect Coach Leith McPherson
Assistant Director & Assistant Choreographer Luca Dinardo
Intimacy Coordinator Michala Banas
Movement Consultant Lyndall Grant
Stage Manager Julia Smith
Deputy Stage Manager Whitney McNamara
Assistant Stage Manager 1 Ben Cooper
Assistant Stage Manager 2 Brittany Coombs
VCA Stage Management Intern Geetanjali Mishra
WAAPA Design Secondment Riley Tapp
Rehearsal Photographer Deryk McAlpin
Production Photographer Jeff Busby

Running Time

Approx. 2hrs 35min, including 20min interval

Attendance Information

Contains the use of gunshot effects and theatrical blood, coarse language, sexual references, violence, partial nudity, mature themes, homophobic language, drug use and herbalcigarettes. For detailed information, please visit www.mtc.com.au/production-content-guide



Turn the page for activities, and discussions.

Before the Show



Kiss of the Spider Woman has had at least four different lives over its four-decade history, from novel to stage and film. Read about the story's evolution at mtc.com.au/backstage. Research the original novel by Manuel Puig, and watch the trailer for the 1980s film.

Read the Attendance Information overleaf and make predictions about what stage action each warning might refer to. Discuss theatrical effects like gunshots, how they might be operated, and their effect on an audience.

Download the show programme at mtc.com.au/backstage to read more about John Kander and Fred Ebb, the composer and lyricist team behind *Chicago*, *Cabaret* and *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. Listen to music from each of these shows online.

See how award-winning set and costume designer Alicia Clements tackled the 'marathon' journey of bringing *Kiss of the Spider Woman* to life through costume at mtc.com.au/backstage. Look at the MTC publicity material for this production, then make your own dress for the Spider Woman out of newspaper that evokes the glamour of Hollywood.

Choreographer Andrew Hallsworth says 'I'm looking at creating this grimy, hard, dirty vibe in the prison, and then juxtaposing that with a lot of flamboyance and theatricality for the movie dream sequences.' Read more at mtc.com.au/backstage, and then choreograph your own phrase for a song from the show.



See the rehearsal gallery at mtc.com.au/backstage and make predictions about how the set design will be used to tell the story.



Watch a video to see the team rehearsing *Kiss of the Spider Woman* at [YouTube.com/melbtheatreco](https://www.youtube.com/melbtheatreco). What clues does this video give you about the characters/story/setting?



Discuss this quote from the play, and consider what it means:

MOLINA: I'm talking about Aurora. I saw every movie she ever made over and over and over. And I loved them all ... All except one. She scared me. It was about a woman who was death. They called her the Spider Woman ... She's real, the Spider Woman is. She's here. I know it. I've seen her.

What has Molina seen that would make him say this?

Post-show Activities



What theatre style/s would you say *Kiss of the Spider Woman* was performed in?

Compare and contrast the ending of *Kiss of the Spider Woman* with the film *La La Land*. How would you describe this storytelling device?



Look at the production photos at mtc.com.au/backstage. Discuss how set and costume design elements were functional for the musical dance numbers.



Download the show programme at mtc.com.au/backstage to read about the cast and creatives who worked on *Kiss of the Spider Woman*. There's also a page at the back that lists everybody who works at MTC. Research roles that you're unfamiliar with and think about how they contributed to this production.

Melbourne Theatre Company acknowledges the Yalukit Willam Peoples of the Boon Wurrung, the First Peoples of Country on which Southbank Theatre and MTC HQ stand. We pay our respects to all of Melbourne's First Peoples, to their ancestors and Elders, and to our shared future.



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MTC Education

MTC is a department of the University of Melbourne

