

Volume  
24  
Number 4  
April 2021



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In the Supper Room, Town Hall, Ferguson St St Williamstown, at 7.30 pm, last Wednesday of the month.

## 2021 Program

# Miss Saigon

A reworking of Puccini's 1904 opera **Madam Butterfly**, **Miss Saigon** similarly tells the tragic tale of a doomed romance involving an Asian woman abandoned by her American lover.. Written by Claude Michel Schönberg and Alain Boublil and produced by Cameron Mackintosh, the same team who brought us **Les Miserables**, it has been in theatres around the world constantly since its opening in London's Drury Lane theatre in 1989 This is a live record of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary performance from the Prince Edward Theatre, in London's West End.

The setting of the plot is relocated to 1970s Saigon during the Vietnam War, and **Madame Butterfly's** story of marriage between an American lieutenant and a geisha is replaced by a romance between a United States Marine and a seventeen-year-old South Vietnamese bargirl.

American G.I. Chris and Vietnamese bar girl Kim fall in love, and when the Americans finally pull out of Saigon, their lives are torn apart and the aftermath takes a heart-breaking turn as 3 years later, we learn, Kim has had Chris's child, Tam, and Chris has taken an American wife.

The musical was inspired by a photograph, which Schönberg found serendipitously in a magazine. It showed a Vietnamese mother leaving her child at a departure gate at Tan Son Nhut Air Base to board an airplane headed for the United States where the child's father, an ex-GI, would be in a position to provide a much better life for the child. Schönberg considered this mother's actions for her child to be "The Ultimate Sacrifice," an idea central to the plot of **Miss Saigon**.

Jon Jon Briones is sensational as The Engineer, the strip club owner who finds Kim, he is conniving, seedy, funny, ruthless and sleazy. Eva Noblezada is sweet and assured as Kim, and Alistair Brammer, too, is excellent as Chris, with a strong stage presence and another wonderful voice.

From the two showstoppers at the beginning and end, The Heat is On in Saigon and American Dream, to the beautiful duet, The Last Night of the World, the score and the performances are fantastic.

Highlights of the show include the evacuation of the last Americans in Saigon from the Embassy roof by helicopter while a crowd of abandoned Vietnamese people scream in despair, the victory parade of the new communist regime, and the frenzied night club scene at the time of defeat.

Watch out too for the final 35 minutes of the DVD as a special encore brings together the original cast with the 25th anniversary cast to sing a few numbers and pay tribute. It is spine-tingling stuff. Original cast members Lea Salonga, Simon Bowman and Jonathan Pryce perform alongside their contemporaries.

See the trailer at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nj9lxgsSTT4>

Colour Running time: 142 mins

## Starbox Results

	5	4	3	2	1	Average
<b>The Farewell</b>	6	19	4	1	0	4.0