

The Walt Disney Family Museum presents
Fireside Chat with Sir Tim Rice, Moderated by Don Hahn

Virtual fundraising event honoring Tim Rice’s inspiring career to feature a medley of performances from notable Disney and Broadway stars

San Francisco, November 16, 2021—The Walt Disney Family Museum is excited to celebrate Walt’s birthday on Sunday, December 5th by honoring internationally acclaimed lyricist, EGOT (Emmy®, Grammy®, Oscar®, and Tony®-winner) and Disney Legend Sir Tim Rice in a spectacular musical event. As part of the museum’s third virtual fundraiser, Sir Rice will be joined via Zoom by his friend and colleague, Oscar-nominated and award-winning filmmaker Don Hahn, as well as a showstopping cast of Disney and Broadway stars, including Jodi Benson, Merle Dandridge, Brandon Victor Dixon, Mandy Gonzalez, Heather Headley, Adam Jacobs, Adam Pascal, and Alton Fitzgerald White.

In an special, virtual conversation, Sir Rice and Hahn will discuss the beginnings of Rice’s inspiring career, his illustrious partnership with Andrew Lloyd Webber, and their own personal experiences collaborating on such classic Disney films as *The Lion King* (1994 and 2019) and *Beauty and the Beast* (1994 and 2017). Our special guest performers will then present their individual renditions of some of Sir Rice’s most celebrated works.

This event will not only pay tribute to Sir Rice’s remarkable accomplishments, but it will also benefit The Walt Disney Family Museum’s education initiatives, including the Animation Academy Certificate Program for at-promise students. More information about the event and how to purchase tickets are available at waltdisney.org/STR.

Fireside Chat with Sir Tim Rice, Moderated by Don Hahn will be streamed from 5–6:30pm PT on December 5, 2021. The virtual fundraiser will be presented as two versions. The first is a paid VIP Experience featuring the full-length conversation between Sir Rice and Hahn, an extended medley of performances, and a special toast to Walt Disney’s birthday.

In the second version, guests can tune into a free program featuring highlights from Sir Rice and Hahn’s discussion and a selection of the evening’s most memorable musical performances. Pre-registration will be required to view the free public program.

Sir Rice has worked in music, theatre, and films since 1965 when he met Andrew Lloyd Webber, a fellow struggling songwriter. Their collaborations include the phenomenally successful musicals *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (1972–2019), *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1971–2019), and *Evita* (1978–2019). Sir Rice has since worked with other distinguished popular composers such as fellow Disney Legends Sir Elton John (*The Lion King*, *Aida* (1998–2002)) and Alan Menken (*Aladdin* (1992), *King David* (1997), *Beauty and the Beast*), Björn Ulvaeus and Benny Andersson (*Chess* (1984–)), and Stuart Brayson (*From Here To Eternity* (2013–2016)). He has also written songs with Freddie Mercury, Ennio Morricone, John Barry, Rick Wakeman, and Gary Barlow, among many others.

Sir Rice’s many accolades include three Oscars, four Tonys, five Grammys, one Emmy, 13 UK Ivor Novello awards, a Hollywood Walk of Fame Star, induction into the Songwriters Hall of Fame, and fellowship of the British Songwriters Academy. He was knighted for service to music and sport in 1994, and was named a Disney Legend in 2002.

“We’re pleased to present our year-end fundraising event—and our biggest cast of virtual presenters and contributors so far—by honoring Sir Tim Rice’s lifetime of incredible contributions to film, music and theatre,” says Executive Director of The Walt Disney Family Museum, Kirsten Komoroske. “Our virtual fundraisers have been a wonderful way to connect our museum community with legendary luminaries, and to continue our mission to provide high-level education in art and animation to the next generation of creative talent.”

Event proceeds will support The Walt Disney Family Museum’s educational programming, including its newest initiative, the At-Promise Youth Animation Academy. The Academy is an intensive animation-focused jobs-training program, with an emphasis on students experiencing economic and social displacement.

Tickets for the virtual fundraiser’s VIP Experience start at \$100, with tiered ticket and sponsorship options, as well as exclusive autographed gifts. There is also a limited the opportunity at the \$35,000 level to attend an intimate private cocktail reception and viewing party hosted at the museum on Sunday, December 5th.

To register or purchase tickets for *Fireside Chat with Sir Tim Rice, Moderated by Don Hahn*, please visit waltdisney.org/STR.

Press Kit: <https://rb.gy/e2bqci>

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ABOUT SIR TIM RICE

The lyricist **Tim Rice** was born in Amersham, Buckinghamshire, England. He is one of 16 individuals to have achieved EGOT status, having won Emmy®, Grammy®, Oscar®, and Tony® Awards. He is best known for his work with composers Andrew Lloyd Webber, Björn Ulvaeus and Benny Andersson, Alan Menken, and Elton John. Rice began his music journey as a self-described “pop music fanatic.” In 1965, then a 20-year-old law student, he approached publisher Desmond Elliot of Arlington Books with his idea for a book about the history of the UK Top 40. Elliot passed on the book but recommended Rice to student composer Andrew Lloyd Webber (17).

Lloyd Webber and Rice quickly hit it off both musically and personally. Their first collaboration *The Likes of Us* (lyrics by Rice, music by Lloyd Webber) was based on the life of 19th century London philanthropist Thomas John Barnardo. The musical failed to attract a producer at the time, although 40 years later it was presented at Lloyd Webber’s Sydmonton Festival and a recording of the show was released.

Rice soon gave up pursuing his legal career, moving into the music business full-time in 1966 as a trainee at EMI Records under music producer Norrie Paramor in the Artists and Repertoire (A&R) Department. Two years later, he would become Paramor’s personal assistant at the Norrie Paramor Organisation.

While waiting for *The Likes Of Us* to hit the West End and/or Broadway, Rice and Lloyd Webber were commissioned by Colet Court School in London to create a short musical show for boys aged 8 to 11. The world premiere of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* took place at the school on 1 March 1968 and lasted 20 minutes. From that day on, *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* grew in length and popularity, reached new audiences, and featured performers of all ages and nationalities in both theatre and film.

Impressed by the first recording of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*, show business entrepreneurs Sefton Myers and David Land signed the young writers to a three-year management contract, enabling them to work full time on their musical theatrical ambitions.

After briefly considering a *Joseph*-style treatment of the story of King Richard The Lionheart, Rice and Lloyd Webber returned to the Bible for inspiration. Tim had long been fascinated by the New Testament figures of Judas Iscariot and Pontius Pilate, which quickly led to an idea for a musical about the last days of Christ on earth as seen through the eyes of Judas, and to a lesser extent, Pilate. Theatrical producers were skeptical of *Jesus Christ Superstar*'s commercial appeal, but the UK branch of MCA Records successfully launched the work as a double album, a move which turned out to be an accidental stroke of marketing genius.

The album of *Jesus Christ Superstar* was released in October 1970 around the world. It featured Ian Gillan, Murray Head, Yvonne Elliman, and Barry Dennen together with the Grease Band and Orchestra. It was a hit in many territories, notably in the US, where it became the #1 bestselling album of 1971. Theatre producers were now convinced of the show's potential, opening on Broadway in October 1971 starring Jeff Fenholt and Ben Vereen as Jesus and Judas respectively. The rock opera became a feature film in 1973 directed by Norman Jewison and starring Ted Neely and Carl Anderson with Elliman and Dennen again reprising their album and Broadway roles.

In 1973, Rice heard a radio program about former First Lady of Argentina Eva Perón and felt that her story had dramatic musical possibilities. The following year, he travelled to Buenos Aires to learn more about her and her country, returning convinced his idea could work as the next Lloyd Webber-Rice project.

They decided to repeat the concept album route that had worked so well with *Jesus Christ Superstar*. In 1976, their album of *Evita*—featuring Julie Covington in the title role—was released and became an instant hit in the UK, with Eva's principal aria "Don't Cry For Me Argentina" becoming a surprise #1 single. American director Hal Prince directed the first stage version of *Evita* which opened in the West End in 1978, starring Elaine Paige, David Essex, and Joss Acland. It moved to Broadway the following year, starring Patti LuPone, Mandy Patinkin, and Bob Gunton. The show won seven Tonys including Best Musical, Best Original Score for Rice and Lloyd Webber, and Best Book of a Musical for Rice. Rice and Lloyd Webber also won a Grammy Award for the Broadway cast album. In 1996, the opera became a feature film starring Madonna, Antonio Banderas, and Jonathan Pryce. Rice and Lloyd Webber received an Oscar for Best Original Song for "You Must Love Me" a song added specifically for the movie.

Post-*Evita*, Rice and Lloyd Webber went their separate ways creatively. Rice wrote a medieval musical romp *Blondel* with Stephen Oliver (1983) and then joined forces with ABBA's Björn Ulvaeus and Benny Andersson to create the Cold War musical *Chess*, which produced the international hits "One Night In Bangkok" with Murray Head and "I Know Him So Well" with Elaine Paige and Barbara Dickson. The show ran for three years in London from 1986, and many productions around the globe continue to this day.

In 1991, he joined the Walt Disney Animation Studios team and teamed up with his fellow countryman and legend Elton John to write the songs for *The Lion King* (1994). After the passing of Academy Award-winning lyricist Howard Ashman, Rice joined composer Alan Menken to complete the music on Disney's *Aladdin* (1992). *Aladdin* and *The Lion King* achieved considerable commercial and critical success. "A Whole New World" the first song Rice and Menken wrote together won the Oscar for Best Original Song and two Grammys, notably Song of the Year. "Can You Feel the Love Tonight" from *The Lion King* won Rice and John the Oscar for Best Original Song.

Following *Aladdin*, Rice reunited with Menken to pen additional original songs for the theatrical adaptation of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* and Menken's *King David*. He collaborated with Menken again on Disney's live-

action adaptations of *Beauty and the Beast* (2017) and *Aladdin* (2019), and also with Elton John on Disney Theatrical Productions' original musical, *Aida*. Opening on Broadway in 2000, *Aida* won four Tony Awards, including Best Original Score for Rice and John, and also a Grammy for Best Musical Show Album. Besides their collaborations for Disney, John and Rice wrote the music for DreamWorks Animation's *The Road to El Dorado* (2000). His most recent works include the musical written with fellow Englishman Stuart Brayson, *From Here To Eternity* (2013).

In 1994, Rice was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II and in 1999, he released his autobiography, *Oh What a Circus: The Autobiography of Tim Rice*, detailing his theater and film career up to 1979. He is still working on Part Two. He became a Disney Legend in 2002 and achieved EGOT status upon winning a Primetime Emmy Award for the 2018 televised production of *Jesus Christ Superstar Live in Concert*.

Rice is a well-known broadcaster in the UK and can be heard on his podcast *Get Onto My Cloud*.

ABOUT DON HAHN

Don loves to write, paint, and make movies. As a student he studied music and art and often peered over the fence at The Walt Disney Studios, wondering if he could ever get a job there. In 1976, he started in the basement of the Inking & Painting Building where the old animation was stored and later worked for Disney Legend Woolie Reitherman who directed the animated classics *One Hundred and One Dalmatians* (1961) and *The Jungle Book* (1967), and other movies that Don idolized as a kid. Don went on to produce dozens of films, three that are now on the Library of Congress collection as culturally, historically and esthetically important: *Who Framed Roger Rabbit* (1988), *Beauty and the Beast* (1991), and *The Lion King* (1994).

His documentaries *Waking Sleeping Beauty* (2009) and *Howard* (2018) chronicle the incredible Disney animation renaissance of the 1980s and 1990s and serves as host in the much-anticipated *Adventure Thru the Walt Disney Archives* documentary, a back stage tour of the legendary Walt Disney Archives, all streaming now on Disney+. He guest lectures at Microsoft, Deloitte, Apple, and is on the advisory board of The Walt Disney Family Museum and a former trustee of PBS SoCal. He holds two Academy Award® nominations, two Emmy® nominations, two Golden Globes® for Best Picture, two Honorary Doctorate degrees, and often orders the two tacos for 99¢ special at his local drive thru.

Don wants to live in a world where people connect through stories, music, coffee, and a love for the common good. A world where dark chocolate is left on your pillow each night no matter where you sleep.

ABOUT THE AT-PROMISE YOUTH ANIMATION ACADEMY

In the past several years, The Walt Disney Family Museum has significantly increased its commitment to providing art and animation instruction, with a focused emphasis on serving underrepresented communities. In addition to offering on-site and virtual classes, workshops, and school experiences, our animation instructors also travel to our Title I partner schools to teach the students on campus.

This year, as a part of our At-Promise Youth Animation Academy initiative, the museum is thrilled to be launching an Animation Academy Certificate Program at Eastside High School, a school in East Palo Alto, California that is dedicated to providing opportunities for students historically underrepresented in higher education. This year-long program consists of two weekly sessions—a day of instruction on Saturday and an additional after-school session—and provides the students with state-of-the-art training in the principles of animation. All costs for the program, including equipment and materials, are made possible by generous donor support.

Building on Walt Disney's legacy of fostering the next generation of creative talent, as well as the museum's own commitment to underserved individuals and communities, the Academy's mission is to provide a nurturing, creative environment in which the students receive comprehensive training in art, animation, and storytelling. Our plan is to expand the reach of the program, with the long-term goal of diversifying the employee ranks in the animation and film industries.

ABOUT THE WALT DISNEY FAMILY MUSEUM

The Walt Disney Family Museum presents the fascinating story and achievements of Walt Disney, the man who raised animation to the level of fine art, transformed the film industry, tirelessly pursued innovation, and created a global, yet distinctively American legacy. Opened in October 2009, the 40,000-square-foot facility features innovative technology alongside a vast collection of historic materials and artifacts that bring Disney's achievements to life. There is a myriad of interactive galleries, which present early drawings and animation, movies, music, listening stations, a spectacular model of Disneyland, and much more. The museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in the scenic Presidio of San Francisco.

Hours: Open Thursday through Sunday: 10am to 5pm, last gallery entry at 4pm. Closed Mondays through Wednesdays and the following public holidays: January 1, Thanksgiving Day, and December 25.

Where: The Presidio of San Francisco, 104 Montgomery Street, San Francisco, CA 94129

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