

Duron takes shine to 'Evita'

By J. E. Duron
Theatre Critic

Andrew Lloyd Webber's blockbuster musical, "Evita," which chronicles the life and exploits of Argentina's beloved Eva Peron, loses none of its luster in the McCoy/Rigby Entertainment production now featured at the La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts. In fact, the show is nothing less than spectacular.

A grand and elaborate show, "Evita," stars Christa Jackson in the title role, with Marc Cardiff playing Eva's powerful husband, Col. Juan Peron. Not to diminish Jackson's talent or voice (which is amazing), but the true star of this production is Eric Kunze, who plays famed revolutionary Che Guevara.

Kunze is a true scene-stealer, his presence is so strong that, even when he's just somewhere in the background, your attention is drawn to him immediately. During "Goodnight and Thank you," and "And the Money Kept Rolling in (and Out)" his abilities truly shine. He is a joy to watch, truly entertaining.

Just as entertaining is Jackson, playing the title role. She does nothing less than carry the show, being on stage for more than three-quarters of the production. Her numbers with Kunze ("Goodnight and Thank you," "High Flying Adored," and "Waltz for Eva and Che") are wonderful. Their voices and talents blend together perfectly for the stage.

And what a stage it is. One of the first things that sets this show apart from many of the others McCoy/Rigby has done is the elaborate lighting design. A unique lighting plot is, of course, demanded for a production of this type, but Lighting Designer David Barber has come up with some truly creative and imaginative ways to help set tone and mood. The cast couldn't have asked for a better way to shine than to be lit by Barber.

With such a large, and talented, ensemble and truly gifted actors up front there is no way that this

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production of "Evita" could be anything but stellar. The show will run at the La Mirada Theatre for the Performing Arts until April 8. Tickets are \$35.

For more information about tickets and show times call the La Mirada Box Office at (562) 944-9801 or (714) 994-6310, or visit the website www.lamiradatheatre.com