

Click to verify



























Henry Higgins, portrayed by Rex Harrison, is a conceited and irritable phonetics professor who boasts to Colonel Pickering, played by Wilfrid Hyde-White, about his ability to transform any woman into a refined speaker, capable of passing herself off as a duchess. His challenge comes to life with the arrival of Eliza Doolittle, a flower girl with a heavy Cockney accent, brought to life by the enchanting Audrey Hepburn. Determined to rise above her station, Eliza visits Higgins' residence, offering to pay for speech lessons in order to secure work at a flower shop. Intrigued, Pickering wagers that Higgins will fail, prompting him to undertake the challenge without charge.Eliza's father, Alfred P. Doolittle, played by Stanley Holloway, appears three days later, claiming to be concerned for his daughter's virtue but actually seeking monetary gain from Higgins. Doolittle's raw honesty, entertaining language, and unapologetic morality fascinate Higgins, especially when he quips, "Can't afford 'em!"Eliza embarks on a rigorous training regimen, which includes quirky exercises such as speaking with marbles in her mouth and reciting the tongue-twisting phrase "In Hertford, Hereford, Hampshire, hurricanes hardly ever happen" without faltering on her 'h's. Initially, she struggles to make any progress due to Higgins' stern teaching methods. However, just as despair looms, Higgins delivers a passionate discourse on the profound beauty and history of the English language, igniting Eliza's determination to succeed. She finally masters the upper-class accent, showcasing her progress with remarkable elegance.Higgins takes Eliza to her first public appearance at the Ascot Racecourse, where she manages to impress with her genteel manners—until a sudden slip into her Cockney roots shocks the crowd with the words, "C'mon Dover, move your bloomin' arse!" Higgins, who secretly disdains elitism, can't help but smirk at her audacity.The acknowledgment of Higgins' triumph comes during a ball at the embassy, where Eliza successfully passes herself off as a woman of noble lineage, even in the face of unexpected scrutiny from a Hungarian phonetics expert trained by Higgins himself. However, the story takes a poignant turn as Higgins exhibits callousness towards Eliza after the successful test, displaying a shocking disregard for her future. Feeling unappreciated and hurt, Eliza decides to leave, which leaves Higgins bewildered by her perceived ingratitude. In an unexpected moment of reflection, he realizes he has "grown accustomed to her face."With his pride bruised yet determined, Higgins embarks on a quest to win Eliza back the following day, engaging in a strained conversation that only leads to further rejection from his former pupil. Predicting her downfall without him, he stubbornly indulges in playing old recordings of her lessons, until unexpectedly, Eliza reappears, bringing a wave of exhilaration to Higgins that starkly contrasts with his previous arrogance. Signed in Existing password New password Submit Updating your password... Success! Email New Where is the password field? Trouble logging in? By continuing, you agree to the Privacy Policy and the Terms and Policies, and to receive email from the Fandango Media Brands. First name (Required) Last name (Required) Create my account By creating an account, you agree to the Privacy Policy and the Terms and Policies, and to receive email from Rotten Tomatoes and to receive email from the Fandango Media Brands. First name (Required) Last name (Required) Create my account By creating an account, you agree to the Privacy Policy and the Terms and Policies, and to receive email from Rotten Tomatoes. HELP TRY AGAIN CANCEL » Upcoming Movies and TV shows Rotten Tomatoes Podcast Media News + More Sign me up No thanks By clicking "Sign Me Up," you are agreeing to receive occasional emails and communications from Fandango Media (Fandango, Vudu, and Rotten Tomatoes) and consenting to Fandango's Privacy Policy and Terms and Policies. Please allow 10 business days for your account to reflect your preferences. » Upcoming Movies and TV shows Rotten Tomatoes Podcast Media News + More Sign me up No thanks OK, got it! Skip to Main Content Cancel About Rotten Tomatoes© Critics Want to See Ratings Profile Account Log Out Movies Movies in theaters Movies at Home More Certified fresh picks Tv shows New Tv Tonight View All Most Popular TV on RT View All More Certified fresh pick 73% Sirens: Season 1 Link to Sirens: Season 1 FanStore New News Columns Guides View All Full View RT News View Showtimes 94% Tomatometer 90 Reviews 90% Popcornmeter 100,000+ Ratings In this beloved musical, popmopos phonetics professor Henry Higgins (Rex Harrison) is so sure of his abilities that he takes it upon himself to transform a Cockney working-class girl into someone who can pass for a cultured member of high society. His subject turns out to be the lovely Eliza Doolittle (Audrey Hepburn), who agrees to speech lessons to improve her job prospects. Higgins and Eliza clash, they form an unlikely bond—one that is threatened by an aristocratic suitor (Jeremy Brett). Watch on Fandango at Home Buy Now In Theaters Fandango at Home Rent My Fair Lady on Fandango at Home, or buy it on Fandango at Home. Critics Consensus George Cukor's elegant, colorful adaptation of the beloved stage play is elevated to new heights thanks to winning performances by Audrey Hepburn and Rex Harrison. Read Critics Reviews Claudia Cassidy Chicago Tribune What an enchanting picture My Fair Lady turns out to be. Awash with color and sound, it does for the wide screen what the original in its pristine state did for the musical stage. Feb 9, 2022 Full Review Marjory Adams Boston Globe Of course what everyone wants to know first is, does Audrey Hepburn make a glowing, lovely Eliza as did her predecessor, Julie Andrews? She does. Feb 9, 2022 Full Review Carol Stamy Orlando Sentinel I've recently added My Fair Lady to my list of favorite films! Feb 9, 2022 Full Review Mark Johnson Awards Daily Audrey Hepburn is terrific, and Rex Harrison is incomparable. Jun 27, 2023 Full Review Dilys Powell Sunday Times (UK) My Fair Lady persists in being extraordinarily enjoyable; and George Cukor, faced with a huge complex of comedy, music, décor, stars and prestige, has on the whole managed to keep in control. Aug 8, 2022 Full Review Felix Barker Liverpool Echo Hollywood has done right by her Eliza. With My Fair Lady, they have produced a film which has success clearly stamped on every foot of celluloid. Mar 7, 2022 Full Review Read all reviews John Great Classic Musical. Great cast. I was impressed by the way the theatres sound quality Rated 3/5 Stars + Rated 5 out of 5 stars 05/10/25 Full Review Veronica Can't believe I got to see My Fair Lady in the big screen! A movie I've literally grown up watching! Rated 5/5 Stars + Rated 5 out of 5 stars 05/03/25 Full Review Benny Fantastic experience finally seeing this on the big screen! My only gripe was with Fathom Events presenting it in 2.39:1 rather than its 2.2:1 aspect ratio Rated 4/5 Stars + Rated 4 out of 5 stars 02/05/24 Full Review Jonathan Mastropietro, Better than Disney transforms a Cockney working-class girl into someone who can pass for a cultured member of high society. His subject turns out to be the lovely Eliza Doolittle (Audrey Hepburn), who agrees to speech lessons to improve her job prospects. Higgins and Eliza clash, they form an unlikely bond—one that is threatened by an aristocratic suitor (Jeremy Brett). Watch on Fandango at Home Buy Now In Theaters Fandango at Home Rent My Fair Lady on Fandango at Home, or buy it on Fandango at Home. Critics Consensus George Cukor's elegant, colorful adaptation of the beloved stage play is elevated to new heights thanks to winning performances by Audrey Hepburn and Rex Harrison. Read Critics Reviews Claudia Cassidy Chicago Tribune What an enchanting picture My Fair Lady turns out to be. Awash with color and sound, it does for the wide screen what the original in its pristine state did for the musical stage. Feb 9, 2022 Full Review Marjory Adams Boston Globe Of course what everyone wants to know first is, does Audrey Hepburn make a glowing, lovely Eliza as did her predecessor, Julie Andrews? She does. Feb 9, 2022 Full Review Carol Stamy Orlando Sentinel I've recently added My Fair Lady to my list of favorite films! Feb 9, 2022 Full Review Mark Johnson Awards Daily Audrey Hepburn is terrific, and Rex Harrison is incomparable. Jun 27, 2023 Full Review Dilys Powell Sunday Times (UK) My Fair Lady persists in being extraordinarily enjoyable; and George Cukor, faced with a huge complex of comedy, music, décor, stars and prestige, has on the whole managed to keep in control. Aug 8, 2022 Full Review Felix Barker Liverpool Echo Hollywood has done right by her Eliza. With My Fair Lady, they have produced a film which has success clearly stamped on every foot of celluloid. Mar 7, 2022 Full Review Read all reviews John Great Classic Musical. Great cast. I was impressed by the way the theatres sound quality Rated 3/5 Stars + Rated 5 out of 5 stars 05/10/25 Full Review Veronica Can't believe I got to see My Fair Lady in the big screen! A movie I've literally grown up watching! Rated 5/5 Stars + Rated 5 out of 5 stars 05/03/25 Full Review Benny Fantastic experience finally seeing this on the big screen! My only gripe was with Fathom Events presenting it in 2.39:1 rather than its 2.2:1 aspect ratio Rated 4/5 Stars + Rated 4 out of 5 stars 02/05/24 Full Review Jonathan Mastropietro, Better than Disney transforms a Cockney working-class girl into someone who can pass for a cultured member of high society. His subject turns out to be the lovely Eliza Doolittle (Audrey Hepburn), who agrees to speech lessons to improve her job prospects. Higgins and Eliza clash, they form an unlikely bond—one that is threatened by an aristocratic suitor (Jeremy Brett). Watch on Fandango at Home Buy Now In Theaters Fandango at Home Rent My Fair Lady on Fandango at Home, or buy it on Fandango at Home. Critics Consensus George Cukor's elegant, colorful adaptation of the beloved stage play is elevated to new heights thanks to winning performances by Audrey Hepburn and Rex Harrison. Read Critics Reviews Claudia Cassidy Chicago Tribune What an enchanting picture My Fair Lady turns out to be. Awash with color and sound, it does for the wide screen what the original in its pristine state did for the musical stage. Feb 9, 2022 Full Review Marjory Adams Boston Globe Of course what everyone wants to know first is, does Audrey Hepburn make a glowing, lovely Eliza as did her predecessor, Julie Andrews? She does. Feb 9, 2022 Full Review Carol Stamy Orlando Sentinel I've recently added My Fair Lady to my list of favorite films! Feb 9, 2022 Full Review Mark Johnson Awards Daily Audrey Hepburn is terrific, and Rex Harrison is incomparable. Jun 27, 2023 Full Review Dilys Powell Sunday Times (UK) My Fair Lady persists in being extraordinarily enjoyable; and George Cukor, faced with a huge complex of comedy, music, décor, stars and prestige, has on the whole managed to keep in control. Aug 8, 2022 Full Review Felix Barker Liverpool Echo Hollywood has done right by her Eliza. With My Fair Lady, they have produced a film which has success clearly stamped on every foot of celluloid. Mar 7, 2022 Full Review Read all reviews John Great Classic Musical. Great cast. I was impressed by the way the theatres sound quality Rated 3/5 Stars + Rated 5 out of 5 stars 05/10/25 Full Review Veronica Can't believe I got to see My Fair Lady in the big screen! A movie I've literally grown up watching! Rated 5/5 Stars + Rated 5 out of 5 stars 05/03/25 Full Review Benny Fantastic experience finally seeing this on the big screen! My only gripe was with Fathom Events presenting it in 2.39:1 rather than its 2.2:1 aspect ratio Rated 4/5 Stars + Rated 4 out of 5 stars 02/05/24 Full Review Jonathan Mastropietro, Better than Disney transforms a Cockney working-class girl into someone who can pass for a cultured member of high society. His subject turns out to be the lovely Eliza Doolittle (Audrey Hepburn), who agrees to speech lessons to improve her job prospects. Higgins and Eliza clash, they form an unlikely bond—one that is threatened by an aristocratic suitor (Jeremy Brett). Watch on Fandango at Home Buy Now In Theaters Fandango at Home Rent My Fair Lady on Fandango at Home, or buy it on Fandango at Home. Critics Consensus George Cukor's elegant, colorful adaptation of the beloved stage play is elevated to new heights thanks to winning performances by Audrey Hepburn and Rex Harrison. Read Critics Reviews Claudia Cassidy Chicago Tribune What an enchanting picture My Fair Lady turns out to be. Awash with color and sound, it does for the wide screen what the original in its pristine state did for the musical stage. Feb 9, 2022 Full Review Marjory Adams Boston Globe Of course what everyone wants to know first is, does Audrey Hepburn make a glowing, lovely Eliza as did her predecessor, Julie Andrews? She does. Feb 9, 2022 Full Review Carol Stamy Orlando Sentinel I've recently added My Fair Lady to my list of favorite films! Feb 9, 2022 Full Review Mark Johnson Awards Daily Audrey Hepburn is terrific, and Rex Harrison is incomparable. Jun 27, 2023 Full Review Dilys Powell Sunday Times (UK) My Fair Lady persists in being extraordinarily enjoyable; and George Cukor, faced with a huge complex of comedy, music, décor, stars and prestige, has on the whole managed to keep in control. Aug 8, 2022 Full Review Felix Barker Liverpool Echo Hollywood has done right by her Eliza. With My Fair Lady, they have produced a film which has success clearly stamped on every foot of celluloid. Mar 7, 2022 Full Review Read all reviews John Great Classic Musical. Great cast. I was impressed by the way the theatres sound quality Rated 3/5 Stars + Rated 5 out of 5 stars 05/10/25 Full Review Veronica Can't believe I got to see My Fair Lady in the big screen! A movie I've literally grown up watching! Rated 5/5 Stars + Rated 5 out of 5 stars 05/03/25 Full Review Benny Fantastic experience finally seeing this on the big screen! My only gripe was with Fathom Events presenting it in 2.39:1 rather than its 2.2:1 aspect ratio Rated 4/5 Stars + Rated 4 out of 5 stars 02/05/24 Full Review Jonathan Mastropietro, Better than Disney transforms a Cockney working-class girl into someone who can pass for a cultured member of high society. His subject turns out to be the lovely Eliza Doolittle (Audrey Hepburn), who agrees to speech lessons to improve her job prospects. Higgins and Eliza clash, they form an unlikely bond—one that is threatened by an aristocratic suitor (Jeremy Brett). Watch on Fandango at Home Buy Now In Theaters Fandango at Home Rent My Fair Lady on Fandango at Home, or buy it on Fandango at Home. Critics Consensus George Cukor's elegant, colorful adaptation of the beloved stage play is elevated to new heights thanks to winning performances by Audrey Hepburn and Rex Harrison. Read Critics Reviews Claudia Cassidy Chicago Tribune What an enchanting picture My Fair Lady turns out to be. Awash with color and sound, it does for the wide screen what the original in its pristine state did for the musical stage. Feb 9, 2022 Full Review Marjory Adams Boston Globe Of course what everyone wants to know first is, does Audrey Hepburn make a glowing, lovely Eliza as did her predecessor, Julie Andrews? She does. Feb 9, 2022 Full Review Carol Stamy Orlando Sentinel I've recently added My Fair Lady to my list of favorite films! Feb 9, 2022 Full Review Mark Johnson Awards Daily Audrey Hepburn is terrific, and Rex Harrison is incomparable. Jun 27, 2023 Full Review Dilys Powell Sunday Times (UK) My Fair Lady persists in being extraordinarily enjoyable; and George Cukor, faced with a huge complex of comedy, music, décor, stars and prestige, has on the whole managed to keep in control. Aug 8, 2022 Full Review Felix Barker Liverpool Echo Hollywood has done right by her Eliza. With My Fair Lady, they have produced a film which has success clearly stamped on every foot of celluloid. Mar 7, 2022 Full Review Read all reviews John Great Classic Musical. Great cast. I was impressed by the way the theatres sound quality Rated 3/5 Stars + Rated 5 out of 5 stars 05/10/25 Full Review Veronica Can't believe I got to see My Fair Lady in the big screen! A movie I've literally grown up watching! Rated 5/5 Stars + Rated 5 out of 5 stars 05/03/25 Full Review Benny Fantastic experience finally seeing this on the big screen! My only gripe was with Fathom Events presenting it in 2.39:1 rather than its 2.2:1 aspect ratio Rated 4/5 Stars + Rated 4 out of 5 stars 02/05/24 Full Review Jonathan Mastropietro, Better than Disney transforms a Cockney working-class girl into someone who can pass for a cultured member of high society. His subject turns out to be the lovely Eliza Doolittle (Audrey Hepburn), who agrees to speech lessons to improve her job prospects. Higgins and Eliza are... (read more) This section contains 637 words (approx. 3 pages at 300 words per page) Copyrights My Fair Lady from BookRags. (c)2025 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved. No matter where you are on your theatrical journey, our innovative production resources will enhance your show experience! Performance Pre Performance Pre Performance See the entire orchestration on one page. Performance The ultimate book for theater lovers of all ages. Promote your show with the officially licensed logo. Pre Performance Play your show's full score by adding in your orchestra's missing instruments. Performance Performance Accompaniment Recording Perform your entire musical with a pre-recorded score played by a full orchestra of LIVE professional musicians right from your Apple iOS device. Performance Performance Pre Performance Facilitate cueing, blocking and all of your production needs with this customizable copy of the libretto. Pre Performance Pre Performance My Fair Lady (1964), directed by George Cukor, follows Cockney flower girl Eliza Doolittle's transformation into a poised lady under the tutelage of phonetics professor Henry Higgins. As Eliza masters the speech and manners of high society, the story explores themes of class, identity, and independence. Lavishly produced with iconic performances by Audrey Hepburn and Rex Harrison, the film became a landmark in musical cinema, winning eight Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Director. Its elegant visuals, memorable music, and emotional depth cemented its place as a Hollywood classic. Beyond its immediate success, My Fair Lady influenced the portrayal of female self-empowerment in later films and remains a defining example of how musicals can tackle complex social issues with wit and beauty. Set in Edwardian London, My Fair Lady tells the story of Eliza Doolittle, a poor Cockney flower girl with a thick accent that marks her social class. After a chance encounter at Covent Garden with the self-assured phonetics professor Henry Higgins, Eliza's life changes dramatically. Higgins boasts to Colonel Hugh Pickering, a fellow linguist, that he could transform any woman—even a common street vendor like Eliza—into a refined lady simply by teaching her to speak properly. Intrigued, Eliza seeks out Higgins to take speech lessons, hoping to improve her job prospects. Higgins, seeing an opportunity to prove his boast, accepts her as a project, with Pickering wagering that Higgins will succeed in passing Eliza off as a duchess at the Embassy Ball within six months. This begins a grueling transformation, during which Eliza endures endless vocal drills and strict discipline. Meanwhile, Eliza's estranged father, Alfred P. Doolittle, a cheerful dustman with questionable morals, sees an opportunity for personal gain. After selling his daughter's "rights" to Higgins for a pittance, he unwittingly catapults himself into unwanted "middle-class morality" when he comes into money through a strange twist of fate. As Eliza's speech and manners improve, she becomes unrecognizable. She successfully dazzles high society at the Ascot races and ultimately triumphs at the Embassy Ball, where aristocrats, including a foreign linguistics expert, believe she is a royal in disguise. However, Eliza feels used and unappreciated by Higgins, who credits himself entirely for her success and fails to acknowledge her feelings and individuality. After a bitter argument, she leaves Higgins and finds herself at a crossroads—courted by the earnest but shallow Freddy Eynsford-Hill, yet still emotionally tethered to Higgins. Higgins, meanwhile, is shocked to realize how much he has come to depend on Eliza's presence. In the end, Eliza returns to Higgins, suggesting a complicated but enduring bond between two strong-willed individuals. My Fair Lady is a lavish, elegant musical, but beneath its surface shines a rich, complex exploration of themes like class, identity, language, independence, and transformation. Character Dynamics: The heart of the film lies in the evolving relationship between Eliza and Higgins. Initially, Higgins sees Eliza as little more than a human experiment—a vessel for showcasing his own genius. Eliza, for her part, is determined but vulnerable, seeking dignity and self-worth. Over time, their rigid teacher-student relationship evolves into something more nuanced and deeply emotional. Eliza becomes a person in her own right—not just a product of Higgins' lessons but a woman who demands respect. Themes: "Class and Social Mobility": The film critiques rigid class distinctions in British society, showing how superficial these boundaries are when a mere change in speech can grant access to the upper class. • Language as Power: The ability to speak "properly" is portrayed as a tool for social advancement, but also as a potential loss of identity. • Independence and Self-Respect: Eliza's journey is one of self-discovery. Though Higgins "creates" a lady out of her, Eliza ultimately asserts her independence, choosing her own path and demanding recognition as an equal. • Transformation and Authenticity: While Eliza transforms externally, the deeper question the film poses is about internal transformation. Does changing one's appearance and speech alter one's true self, or is authenticity something that survives beneath any exterior? Style and Direction: George Cukor's direction is grand yet delicate. He balances opulence (the spectacular sets and costumes) with intimacy (the psychological evolution of the characters). The musical numbers are woven seamlessly into the narrative, serving not just as entertainment but as extensions of character and theme. Music and Lyrics: The score, composed by Frederick Loewe with lyrics by Alan Jay Lerner, is a masterpiece in its own right. Songs like "Wouldn't It Be Lovely?," "I Could Have Danced All Night," "On the Street Where You Live," and "The Rain in Spain" are not only memorable tunes but emotional beats that trace Eliza's transformation and Higgins' slow, grudging emotional awakening. Visuals and Atmosphere: The film's production design is rich and meticulous. From the crowded, grimy streets of Covent Garden to the polished splendor of the Embassy Ball, Cecil Beaton's costume design is especially iconic, particularly the black-and-white Ascot scene, where stylized elegance borders on the surreal. Cultural Context: At its core, My Fair Lady is based on George Bernard Shaw's sharp social critique. However, the film softens the ending compared to Shaw's play, suggesting a romantic reconciliation between Higgins and Eliza, keeping with Hollywood sensibilities of the time. Audrey Hepburn as Eliza Doolittle • Rex Harrison as Professor Henry Higgins • Stanley Holloway as Alfred P. Doolittle • Wilfrid Hyde-White as Colonel Hugh Pickering • Gladys Cooper as Mrs. Higgins • Jeremy Brett as Freddy Eynsford-Hill • Theodore Bikel (voice of Zoltan Karpathy) • Theodore Bikel (voice of Zoltan Karpathy) • Violet Farebrother as Cockney woman • Myrna MacGill as Lady Boxington • Olive Reeves-Smith as Queen of Transylvania • Cecil Beaton (uncredited cameo as a Ball guest; Beaton also designed costumes and production) • Audrey Hepburn's singing voice was mostly dubbed by Marni Nixon, although Hepburn's real voice can faintly be heard in parts of "Just You Wait" (the angry sections). • Jeremy Brett's singing ("On the Street Where You Live") was dubbed by Bill Shirley. In My Fair Lady, George Cukor directs with a kind of invisible hand — a style so refined that it feels as though the story is simply unfolding naturally, without interference. Yet underneath that effortless surface lies a deep precision, a clear understanding of the delicate balances the film demands: between comedy and drama, between spectacle and intimacy, between character-driven moments and grand theatricality. Cukor was known in Hollywood as an "actor's director," and in My Fair Lady, this skill is unmistakable. He approaches the towering set pieces — the lavish Embassy Ball, the dazzling Ascot races, the intricate street scenes of Covent Garden — not just as displays of grandeur but as extensions of character. Every sweeping camera movement, every meticulously composed frame, serves to illuminate the emotional journeys of Eliza and Higgins rather than overwhelm them. He treats the visual splendor as a backdrop to the human transformation, never allowing the film's ornate surface to drown out its beating heart. Cukor captures the whimsy and charm of the musical without ever letting it become cartoonish. There's a subtle undercurrent of melancholy that runs through the film — the loneliness of Higgins, the painful self-awareness that Eliza gains, the moral and compromise of Alfred P. Doolittle. Cukor allows these emotional shades to flicker quietly beneath the wit and music, enriching the story without making it heavy. The film's pacing is graceful but deliberate. Cukor is patient, letting conversations breathe and songs unfold without rushing them. This was especially risky with a nearly three-hour running time, but it's crucial for giving weight to Eliza's transformation. Each triumph and setback feels earned because the film takes the time to live in the moments between them. Cukor draws a remarkable performance from Audrey Hepburn — one of vulnerability, pride, and determination — even though much was made at the time of her singing being dubbed. He gives Hepburn the space to craft Eliza's evolution with great subtlety. Rex Harrison, known for his talk-sing delivery, is perfectly captured in long, fluid takes that complement his style rather than cutting it to pieces. Cukor also resists making Higgins charming in an obvious way; instead, he lets Harrison lean into Higgins' arrogance and irascibility, trusting that the audience will see the cracks in the armor when they're ready. It's a bold, confident choice, and it keeps the character complex and compelling. Though My Fair Lady is rich in visual spectacle — from the candy-colored market scenes to the black-and-white surrealism of the Ascot race — Cukor directs with a painter's sense of control. He knows when to step back and simply let the costumes, the sets, and the performances speak. His compositions often emphasize social divisions visually: low shots looking up at aristocrats, tight close-ups on Eliza when she feels trapped, wide, symmetrical framing during scenes where appearances are everything. Cukor honors the spirit of George Bernard Shaw's Pygmalion by maintaining a sharp edge to the story's commentary on class, manners, and identity, even within the lush trappings of a Hollywood musical. He avoids softening the characters into easy archetypes. Eliza's triumph is not her romantic pairing with Higgins but her assertion of dignity — and Cukor preserves that hard-won self-respect through his careful, respectful handling of her arc. George Cukor's direction in My Fair Lady is a balancing act of grandeur and intimacy, of theatricality and psychological depth. He orchestrates the film like a symphony — sometimes soaring, sometimes whispering — always with an unshowy mastery that allows the material and the performers to shine. His work on this film is a prime example of how great direction can be both invisible and essential, creating a world that feels complete, lived-in, and utterly transporting. In My Fair Lady, Audrey Hepburn gives a performance that is often overshadowed by controversy over her singing being dubbed — but when you look past that, her portrayal of Eliza Doolittle is an extraordinary piece of physical, emotional, and psychological acting. From the very first scene in Covent Garden, Hepburn inhabits Eliza with raw authenticity. She plays the flower girl not as a caricature of poverty but as a vibrant, scrappy survivor — dirty, yes, and shrill in voice, but bursting with pride and a fierce sense of self. Her early scenes are filled with sharp, quick movements; her body is hunched, hands are restless, eyes dart about anxiously, always on guard against humiliation. Hepburn uses her body as much as her face to show that Eliza has spent her life dodging insults, bargaining for scraps, clinging to dignity in a society that doesn't see her. As the transformation begins under Higgins' stern tutelage, Hepburn layers her performance with incredible subtlety. Eliza doesn't instantly become graceful — she struggles, stumbles, and strains, and Hepburn makes us feel the pain of every misstep. Even in scenes heavy with humor (like the "The Rain in Spain" breakthrough), there's a deep sense of effort behind Eliza's triumphs. Hepburn shows that Eliza's refinement isn't magic — it's hard-earned. Visually, her transformation is stunning, but what's more impressive is how gradually Hepburn alters her inner life. As Eliza's speech improves, so too does her posture, her gestures, her very gaze. Hepburn shows Eliza growing into herself: confidence blooming awkwardly, then fully. Even as she dons spectacular gowns and enters glittering ballrooms, Hepburn lets flickers of the old, earthy Eliza show through — a quick glance, a sudden stiffening of the shoulders — reminding us that this lady has not forgotten where she came from. Perhaps the most powerful aspect of Hepburn's performance is her ability to convey Eliza's deep emotional shifts without grand speeches. After the Embassy Ball, when Higgins and Pickering congratulate themselves and ignore her, Hepburn barely says a word — yet her devastation, her isolation, and her pride wounded almost beyond repair are etched across her face. It's a masterclass in silent acting: a tight jawline, burning eyes, a fragile, trembling mouth, all speaking volumes where dialogue doesn't. In the final act, when Eliza confronts Higgins and finally asserts herself, Hepburn gives Eliza a new kind of strength — quieter, more composed, but utterly unbreakable. Her voice is steady, her movements deliberate. Hepburn portrays not a puppet polished by Higgins but a woman who has forged her own identity from the pieces given to her — and demands to be seen on her own terms. Throughout the film, Hepburn maintains a delicate balance between fairy-tale magic and social realism. She is glamorous without losing grit, fragile without losing force. Even though she didn't provide her own singing voice for most of the songs, she gives full emotional meaning to them through performance — especially in numbers like "I Could Have Danced All Night," where her joy feels palpable, or in "Without You," where her newfound self-respect resounds clearly. Audrey Hepburn's Eliza Doolittle is not just a beautiful figure of cinematic elegance — she is a fully living, breathing woman whose journey from guttersnipe to self-possessed lady is portrayed with intelligence, subtlety, and a heartaching depth that few actresses could match. Higgins respects Eliza into a symbol of personal growth: not a creature shaped by others, but a soul that claims its own destiny. "The rain in Spain stays mainly in the plain." (The famous phrase used to teach Eliza proper pronunciation.) "I'm a good girl, I am! (Eliza's defiant cry, showing her pride even when treated poorly.) "Why can't a woman be more like a man?" (From the song "A Hymn to Him," revealing Higgins' frustration and his skewed view of women.) "The difference between a lady and a flower girl is not how she behaves, but how she is treated." (One of the film's central themes about class, respect, and identity.) "I've grown accustomed to her face." (Higgins' reluctant admission of how deeply Eliza has affected him.) "I'm willing to tell you. I'm wanting to tell you. I'm wanting to tell you. I'm wanting to tell you." (Showing how Eliza's transformation has affected her father, Alfred P. Doolittle.) "Setting up the wager that drives the plot." "By George, she's got it! By George, she's got it!" (Higgins' excitement when Eliza finally perfects her accent.) "What's to become of me? What's to become of me?" (A heart-breaking moment when she realizes she has no place left — neither in the lower class nor fully accepted among the elite.) "Eliza, where the devil are my slippers?" (A famously ambiguous and controversial ending line — blending Higgins' affection with his stubbornness. The film opens in the bustling, chaotic market of Covent Garden, where flower girl Eliza Doolittle shouts her wares in her thick Cockney accent. The setting is full of color, grime, and humanity — a vivid tableau of London's lower classes. Why it's classic: It establishes the stark class divide that will be central to the story and immediately immerses us in Eliza's world. Hepburn's lively, scrappy energy on her is unforgettable. Inside a dingy little pub-like shelter, Eliza dreams aloud about a better life in the whimsical number "Wouldn't It Be Lovely?" She wishes for simple comforts — a warm room, a big chair, and someone who cares for her. Why it's classic: This scene gives emotional depth to Eliza early on, making her not just a caricature of poverty but a relatable, hopeful human being. It's tender, bittersweet, and beautifully staged. After countless grueling lessons, Eliza suddenly, joyfully pronounces "The rain in Spain stays mainly in the plain" correctly — a breakthrough that transforms the mood entirely. Higgins, Pickering, and Eliza erupt into celebration, dancing around the study. Why it's classic: It's the first moment Eliza truly believes she might succeed, and it's filmed with a giddy, infectious energy. Hepburn's sheer delight, combined with the playful choreography, makes it an irresistible turning point. At the posh Ascot races, Eliza is introduced to high society. Dressed in an extravagant black-and-white gown and giant hat, she tries to behave like a lady — until she loudly cheers for her favorite horse in pure Cockney enthusiasm ("Come on, Dover! Move your bloomin' arse!"). Why it's classic: This scene is a hilarious collision between Eliza's rough roots and her polished surface. The stylized, almost surreal visual design (the costumes, the slow, formal pacing) makes it one of the film's most visually memorable sequences. Eliza's final test: she must pass as royalty at the glittering Embassy Ball. She moves through the crowds with stunning grace, mesmerizing everyone, including the suspicious linguist Zoltan Karpathy. Why it's classic: It's a triumphal yet poignant moment. Hepburn's poised, luminous presence shows how far Eliza has come — yet beneath the glitter, there's a sense that she's playing a part, not fully belonging to this new world either. After being ignored and taken for granted after her Embassy Ball triumph, Eliza finally stands up to Higgins, telling him she can live without him and reclaim her own life. Why it's classic: This emotional showdown is the true climax of Eliza's character arc. Hepburn's controlled anger and wounded pride are palpable, and Higgins' baffled arrogance is laid bare. It's a quiet, fierce assertion of independence. In the final moments, Higgins listens to a recording of Eliza's early voice and smiles wistfully — when Eliza suddenly reappears. Instead of a romantic declaration, Higgins simply says, "Eliza, where the devil are my slippers?" Why it's classic: The ending is famously ambiguous: affectionate, but unresolved. It resists a traditional love story closure, leaving their future relationship open to interpretation. Hepburn's soft, knowing smile adds just the right emotional ambiguity. When Eliza first comes to Higgins' house seeking lessons, there's a wonderfully awkward, almost farcical scene where she's treated like a scientific specimen. Higgins measures her voice with machines, records her speech, and critiques her like a lab project. Why it's a hidden gem: It shows how coldly Higgins views people — especially the lower class — as puzzles to be solved, not as individuals. It sets up the emotional distance he'll have to overcome later, and Hepburn plays Eliza's growing humiliation beautifully. Alfred P. Doolittle leads a joyful, slightly chaotic street celebration with the song "With a Little Bit of Luck," dancing with his pals in the streets, singing about dodging responsibility. Why it's a hidden gem: Beyond its comedic surface, this scene is a social commentary. Doolittle is happy precisely because he avoids the "morality" that middle and upper classes worship. Stanley Holloway's performance makes Doolittle both lovable and a bit sly. There's a small but hilarious scene where Higgins tries to teach Eliza acceptable "small talk" for high society, and she keeps going off the rails with her own vivid, earthy stories ("How about them strawberries and the bird's droppin'?!"). Why it's a hidden gem: It highlights just how unnatural and staged high-class conversation can be, compared to the colorful authenticity Eliza naturally brings. It's a clever critique hidden inside a funny moment. While Freddy Eynsford-Hill sings passionately outside Higgins' house, professing his love after barely meeting Eliza, the scene shows him as earnest but ultimately superficial. Why it's a hidden gem: It paints Freddy as a charming but shallow figure — a boy who falls in love with an ideal, not the real Eliza. It quietly strengthens the audience's sense that Freddy may not be the right choice for her after all. Before the famous final scene, there's a quieter moment when Higgins, home alone, roams around his study, confused and irritated by Eliza's absence. He's so used to her presence that her disappearance unsettles him more than he's willing to admit. Why it's a hidden gem: This scene shows Higgins' humanity creeping through his arrogance. It's one of Rex Harrison's most subtle pieces of acting — no speeches, just small movements, a restless pacing that betrays deeper feelings. The clothing in My Fair Lady is one of its most iconic elements, designed by the legendary Cecil Beaton, who won an Oscar for his work on the film. The costumes are not just beautiful — they tell the story of Eliza's transformation and reflect the social themes of the film. At the beginning, Eliza's clothes are tattered, grimy, and heavily layered — shawls, ragged skirts, and worn boots. Her costume emphasizes her lower-class status and harsh life. The muted, earth-toned fabrics visually tie her to the dirty streets of London. As Eliza starts her lessons, her clothing becomes simpler, cleaner, and more structured. She still wears practical, modest outfits, but they're neater — signaling her slow movement away from the street life without yet entering full high society. Perhaps the most famous costume sequence: the black-and-white Ascot scene. All the characters wear monochromatic costumes — an artistic choice by Beaton to create a surreal, almost dreamlike atmosphere of rigid class formality. Eliza's stunning black-trimmed white gown with the radiant black-and-white hat is the defining fashion image of the movie. It's sophisticated yet still just a bit extravagant — perfectly mirroring her struggle to fit in. Eliza's shimmering white ball gown, heavily beaded and crowned with a tiara, transforms her completely into the image of aristocratic grace. The gown is simple but radiantly elegant — soft, fluid, and unlike the stiff, restrictive fashion of the true aristocrats. It represents not just her external transformation but her inner refinement. Higgins, Pickering, and others are consistently dressed in tailored, traditional Edwardian menswear — morning coats, cravats, and waistcoats — representing the rigid, structured society that Eliza is being trained to enter. The costumes in My Fair Lady are visual storytelling tools — tracing Eliza's journey from a flower girl to a lady, while also highlighting how class and appearance are deeply intertwined. Cecil Beaton's designs are elegant, theatrical, and emotionally rich, helping to make the film's world unforgettable. Won (8 Awards) • Best Picture — Jack L. Warner (producer) • Best Director — George Cukor • Best Actor — Rex Harrison (as Professor Henry Higgins) • Best Cinematography, Color — Harry Stradling Sr. • Best Art Direction — Color — Gene Allen, Cecil Beaton, George James Hopkins • Best Costume Design — Color — Cecil Beaton • Best Sound — George Groves (Warner Bros. Studio Sound Department) • Best Music, Scoring of Music, Adaptation or Treatment — André Previn Nominated (4 Additional Nominations): • Best Supporting Actor — Stanley Holloway (as Alfred P. Doolittle) • Best Supporting Actress — Gladys Cooper (as Mrs. Higgins) • Best Film Editing — William H. Ziegler • Best Screenplay Based on Material from Another Medium — Alan Jay Lerner Nominated: • Best British Actor — Rex Harrison • Best British Actress — Audrey Hepburn • Best Film from any Source (Note: It did not win at BAFTA despite the multiple nominations.) • National Board of Review Awards: o Included in the Top Ten Films of 1964 o Best Actor — Rex Harrison • Directors Guild of America (DGA) Award: o Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Motion Pictures — George Cukor (Won) • Writers Guild of America (WGA) Award: o Nominated for Best Written American Musical — Alan Jay Lerner • Laurel Awards: o Top Musical — 1st Place o Top Male Musical Performance — Rex Harrison (1st Place) o Top Female Musical Performance — Audrey Hepburn (2nd Place) • Preservation: o Selected for preservation in the United States National Film Registry by the Library of Congress for being "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant" (in 2018). My Fair Lady swept most of the major awards in 1964–1965, particularly at the Oscars, where it dominated both technical and artistic categories. Rex Harrison's performance was universally praised, and George Cukor finally received his long-overdue Academy Award for directing after a long and distinguished career. While Audrey Hepburn didn't win major awards for her role (and controversially wasn't nominated for an Oscar), her performance remains beloved. 9/10 7/10 10/10 My Fair Lady, a movie about a lady (Eliza Doolittle) that was born and raised in the lower class, who meets a snobby professor who wonders why a woman can't behave like a man. Professor Henry Higgins makes a bet with Colonel Hugh Pickering that he could change this flower lady (Eliza Doolittle), into a proper lady. He takes her in and teaches her how to walk, talk, dress, and act like a lady. Eliza learns the ways of being a proper woman, as Professor Higgins shows her off to high class parties, where there is a queen and a prince. He fools everyone into thinking that she is a princess and even gets the prince to ask her to dance. Even Freddy Eynsford-Hill, a young aristocrat falls in love with her, trying to get her to marry him. Taking all the credit and not acknowledging Eliza's efforts, Professor Higgins drives Eliza away from him. She leaves him angry, to go off and marry Freddy. Though, as she is gone, Professor Higgins realizes how much he misses her and wants her back because he can't live without her. My personal opinion to this quite unique story, is that I enjoy it. I usually don't prefer to watch really old musicals, but with being instructed to do so, I chose to watch this one. I am very grateful that I did chose this movie, because I've grown to enjoy it more than I thought that I would have. At first in the very beginning, listening to Eliza's voice, it drove me crazy. At the same time though, it also made me laugh, because it PAUL MILES SCHNEIDER was born in New York City and raised in Lawrence, Kansas. At various times he has been an actor, writer, composer, singer, and arranger. In 2010, he relocated to the Midwest from Los Angeles, where he spent a decade producing and designing DVD/Blu-ray menus and interactive content for Hollywood films and television shows. "Silver Shoes," was his first novel, selected as a 2010 Kansas Notable Book by the Kansas Center for the Book and the State Library of Kansas. A sequel, "The Powder of Life," was released in 2012. A combined edition of the two books was offered in 2013, under the title, "The Complete, Incomplete Adventures of Donald Gardner and the Silver Shoes." Next came a biography co-authored with Warner Bros. film star Andrea King, entitled "More Than Tongue Can Tell," which was published in 2014. His latest entry, establishing a trilogy in the "Silver Shoes" series, is "The Magic Belt," published in 2018. Jump toSummaries (4)Synopsis (1)EditSuggest an edit or add missing contentBy what name was Mana skaisita Iedja (1964) officially released in India in Hindi?AnswerYou have no recently viewed pages How AARP Is Fighting for You Every Day! AARP is your fierce defender Alan Band/Keystone/Getty Images Share a copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format for any purpose, even commercially. Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially. The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms. Attribution — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may not use the material in a way that suggests endorsement or your use. Share your content. If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must attribute your contributions under the same license as the original. No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits. You do not have to comply with the license for elements of the material in the public domain or where your use is permitted by an applicable exception or limitation . No warranties are given. The license may not give you all of the permissions necessary for your intended use. For example, other rights such as publicity, privacy, or moral rights may limit how you use the material.

Henry Higgins, portrayed by Rex Harrison, is a conceited and irritable phonetics professor who boasts to Colonel Pickering, played by Wilfrid Hyde-White, about his ability to transform any woman into a refined speaker, capable of passing herself off as a duchess. His challenge comes to life with the arrival of Eliza Doolittle, a flower girl with a heavy Cockney accent, brought to life by the enchanting Audrey Hepburn. Determined to rise above her station, Eliza visits Higgins' residence, offering to pay for speech lessons in order to secure work at a flower shop. Intrigued, Pickering wagers that Higgins will fail, prompting him to undertake the challenge without charge.Eliza's father, Alfred P. Doolittle, played by Stanley Holloway, appears three days later, claiming to be concerned for his daughter's virtue but actually seeking monetary gain from Higgins. Doolittle's raw honesty, entertaining language, and unapologetic morality fascinate Higgins, especially when he quips, "Can't afford 'em!"Eliza embarks on a rigorous training regimen, which includes quirky exercises such as speaking with marbles in her mouth and reciting the tongue-twisting phrase "In Hertford, Hereford, Hampshire, hurricanes hardly ever happen" without faltering on her 'h's. Initially, she struggles to make any progress due to Higgins' stern teaching methods. However, just as despair looms, Higgins delivers a passionate discourse on the profound beauty and history of the English language, igniting Eliza's determination to succeed. She finally masters the upper-class accent, showcasing her progress with remarkable elegance.Higgins takes Eliza to her first public appearance at the Ascot Racecourse, where she manages to impress with her genteel manners—until a sudden slip into her Cockney roots shocks the crowd with the words, "C'mon Dover, move your bloomin' arse!" Higgins, who secretly disdains elitism, can't help but smirk at her audacity.The acknowledgment of Higgins' triumph comes during a ball at the embassy, where Eliza successfully passes herself off as a woman of noble lineage, even in the face of unexpected scrutiny from a Hungarian phonetics expert trained by Higgins himself. However, the story takes a poignant turn as Higgins exhibits callousness towards Eliza after the successful test, displaying a shocking disregard for her future. Feeling unappreciated and hurt, Eliza decides to leave, which leaves Higgins bewildered by her perceived ingratitude. In an unexpected moment of reflection, he realizes he has "grown accustomed to her face."With his pride bruised yet determined, Higgins embarks on a quest to win Eliza back the following day, engaging in a strained conversation that only leads to further rejection from his former pupil. Predicting her downfall without him, he stubbornly indulges in playing old recordings of her lessons, until unexpectedly, Eliza reappears, bringing a wave of exhilaration to Higgins that starkly contrasts with his previous arrogance. Signed in Existing password New password Submit Updating your password... Success! Email New Where is the password field? Trouble logging in? By continuing, you agree to the Privacy Policy and the Terms and Policies, and to receive email from the Fandango Media Brands. First name (Required) Last name (Required) Create my account By creating an account, you agree to the Privacy Policy and the Terms and Policies, and to receive email from Rotten Tomatoes and to receive email from the Fandango Media Brands. First name (Required) Last name (Required) Create my account By creating an account, you agree to the Privacy Policy and the Terms and Policies, and to receive email from Rotten Tomatoes. HELP TRY AGAIN CANCEL » Upcoming Movies and TV shows Rotten Tomatoes Podcast Media News + More Sign me up No thanks By clicking "Sign Me Up," you are agreeing to receive occasional emails and communications from Fandango Media (Fandango, Vudu, and Rotten Tomatoes) and consenting to Fandango's Privacy Policy and Terms and Policies. Please allow 10 business days for your account to reflect your preferences. » Upcoming Movies and TV shows Rotten Tomatoes Podcast Media News + More Sign me up No thanks OK, got it! Skip to Main Content Cancel About Rotten Tomatoes© Critics Want to See Ratings Profile Account Log Out Movies Movies in theaters Movies at Home More Certified fresh picks Tv shows New Tv Tonight View All Most Popular TV on RT View All More Certified fresh pick 73% Sirens: Season 1 Link to Sirens: Season 1 FanStore New News Columns Guides View All Full View RT News View Showtimes 94% Tomatometer 90 Reviews 90% Popcornmeter 100,000+ Ratings In this beloved musical, popmopos phonetics professor Henry Higgins (Rex Harrison) is so sure of his abilities that he takes it upon himself to transform a Cockney working-class girl into someone who can pass for a cultured member of high society. His subject turns out to be the lovely Eliza Doolittle (Audrey Hepburn), who agrees to speech lessons to improve her job prospects. Higgins and Eliza clash, they form an unlikely bond—one that is threatened by an aristocratic suitor (Jeremy Brett). Watch on Fandango at Home Buy Now In Theaters Fandango at Home Rent My Fair Lady on Fandango at Home, or buy it on Fandango at Home. Critics Consensus George Cukor's elegant, colorful adaptation of the beloved stage play is elevated to new heights thanks to winning performances by Audrey Hepburn and Rex Harrison. Read Critics Reviews Claudia Cassidy Chicago Tribune What an enchanting picture My Fair Lady turns out to be. Awash with color and sound, it does for the wide screen what the original in its pristine state did for the musical stage. Feb 9, 2022 Full Review Marjory Adams Boston Globe Of course what everyone wants to know first is, does Audrey Hepburn make a glowing, lovely Eliza as did her predecessor, Julie Andrews? She does. Feb 9, 2022 Full Review Carol Stamy Orlando Sentinel I've recently added My Fair Lady to my list of favorite films! Feb 9, 2022 Full Review Mark Johnson Awards Daily Audrey Hepburn is terrific, and Rex Harrison is incomparable. Jun 27, 2023 Full Review Dilys Powell Sunday Times (UK) My Fair Lady persists in being extraordinarily enjoyable; and George Cukor, faced with a huge complex of comedy, music, décor, stars and prestige, has on the whole managed to keep in control. Aug 8, 2022 Full Review Felix Barker Liverpool Echo Hollywood has done right by her Eliza. With My Fair Lady, they have produced a film which has success clearly stamped on every foot of celluloid. Mar 7, 2022 Full Review Read all reviews John Great Classic Musical. Great cast. I was impressed by the way the theatres sound quality Rated 3/5 Stars + Rated 5 out of 5 stars 05/10/25 Full Review Veronica Can't believe I got to see My Fair Lady in the big screen! A movie I've literally grown up watching! Rated 5/5 Stars + Rated 5 out of 5 stars 05/03/25 Full Review Benny Fantastic experience finally seeing this on the big screen! My only gripe was with Fathom Events presenting it in 2.39:1 rather than its 2.2:1 aspect ratio Rated 4/5 Stars + Rated 4 out of 5 stars 02/05/24 Full Review Jonathan Mastropietro, Better than Disney transforms a Cockney working-class girl into someone who can pass for a cultured member of high society. His subject turns out to be the lovely Eliza Doolittle (Audrey Hepburn), who agrees to speech lessons to improve her job prospects. Higgins and Eliza are... (read more) This section contains 637 words (approx. 3 pages at 300 words per page) Copyrights My Fair Lady from BookRags. (c)2025 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved. No matter where you are on your theatrical journey, our innovative production resources will enhance your show experience! Performance Pre Performance Pre Performance See the entire orchestration on one page. Performance The ultimate book for theater lovers of all ages. Promote your show with the officially licensed logo. Pre Performance Play your show's full score by adding in your orchestra's missing instruments. Performance Performance Accompaniment Recording Perform your entire musical with a pre-recorded score played by a full orchestra of LIVE professional musicians right from your Apple iOS device. Performance Performance Pre Performance Facilitate cueing, blocking and all of your production needs with this customizable copy of the libretto. Pre Performance Pre Performance My Fair Lady (1964), directed by George Cukor, follows Cockney flower girl Eliza Doolittle's transformation into a poised lady under the tutelage of phonetics professor Henry Higgins. As Eliza masters the speech and manners of high society, the story explores themes of class, identity, and independence.