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RENT

Book, Music and Lyrics
by Jonathan Larson



November 16-18, 2023
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DIRECTOR'S NOTES

When I was 11, I took an active liking to how I presented myself with rings, the occasional eyeliner, drawing on myself, painting my nails, often to the ire of the peers around me for some reason. After the verbal and physical altercations with my peers, I realized what it was about. I was a misunderstood artist! I buried myself in Theatre and Film, with people who were similarly looked at and with those shared interests.

It wasn't until I found myself with people and in a space that I felt even more 'me'. Through discussions of shared experiences and honesty, a process, I found a way to live a good life full of fun and honesty. How we do things matter. The places we create to be who we are and the people that are around us and how we're accepted. To be able to work on a project where the focus was the process, the people and places we got to express ourselves in and help ensure everyone felt they could be who they needed or wanted to be was something I've always wanted to do, even more than the art itself.

RENT is a show about finding your people. The people who will cover you in sweet kisses. The people who will tell you all the things they should. The people who will help you pay rent. What better production to make safe and brave to be involved with. So share with us in this place and time. Be loud, be brave and come out with us tonight for there is truly no day but today.

Zechary J. Borrett

Musical Arrangements
Original Concept Additional Lyrics
Music Supervision and Additional Arrangements
Dramaturg

Steve Skinner
Billy Aronson
Tim Weil
Lynn Thompson

RENT was originally produced in New York by New York Theatre Workshop and on Broadway by Jeffrey Seller, Kevin McCollum, Allan S. Gordon and New York Theatre Workshop

RENT is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.mtishows.com

ANY VIDEO AND/OR AUDIO RECODING OF THIS PRODUCTION IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED

SONG BREAKDOWN

ACT 1

"Tune Up A" — Mark, Roger
"Voice Mail #1" — Mark's Mother
"Tune Up B" — Mark, Roger, Collins, Benny
"Rent" — Mark, Roger, Benny, Collins, Joanne, Company
"You Okay, Honey?" — Angel, Collins
"Tune Up Reprise" — Mark, Roger
"One Song Glory" — Roger
"Light My Candle" — Mimi, Roger
"Voice Mail #2" — Mr. and Mrs. Jefferson
"Today 4 U" — Collins, Roger, Mark, Angel
"You'll See" — Benny, Mark, Roger, Collins, Angel
"Tango: Maureen" — Joanne and Mark
"Support Group" — Greg, Paul, Mark, Company
"Out Tonight" — Mimi
"Another Day" — Mimi, Roger, Company
"Will I" — Steve, Company
"On the Street" — Company
"Santa Fe" - Collins, Angel, Mark, Company
"I'll Cover You" — Angel, Collins
"We're Okay" — Joanne
"Christmas Bells" — Company
"Over the Moon" — Maureen
"La Vie Bohème / I Should Tell You" — Company

ACT 2

"Seasons of Love A" — Company
"Happy New Year A" — Mark, Roger, Mimi, Collins, Angel, Maureen, Joanne
"Voice Mail #3" — Mark's Mother
"Voice Mail #4" — Alexi Darling
"Happy New Year B" — Mark, Roger, Mimi, Collins, Angel, Maureen, Joanne, Benny
"Take Me or Leave Me" — Maureen, Joanne
"Seasons of Love B" — Company
"Without You" — Roger, Mimi
"Voice Mail #5" — Alexi Darling
"Contact" — Angel, Company
"I'll Cover You" (Reprise) — Collins, Company
"Halloween" — Mark
"Goodbye Love" — Mark, Roger, Mimi, Collins, Maureen, Joanne, Benny
"What You Own" — Roger, Mark
"Voice Mail #6" — Roger's Mother, Mimi's Mother, Mr. Jefferson, Mark's Mother
"Finale A" — Company
"Your Eyes" — Roger
"Finale B" — Company

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ARTISTIC TEAM

DIRECTOR

Zachary L. Barrett

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Jenny Price

CHOREOGRAPHER

Jenna Fewer

ASSISTANT MUSICAL DIRECTOR

Akshaya Lakshmi

SET & LIGHTING DESIGNER

Karlie Christie

COSTUME & PROPS DESIGNER

Rhiannon Eldridge

PROJECTIONS DESIGNER

Luay Eljamal

INTIMACY DIRECTOR

Ashley Laurenson

STAGE MANAGER

Courtney Orr

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS

Sheri Reed

Mikhala Brideau

PRODUCTION TEAM

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Hanna Fridhed

SCENIC PAINTER

Madeline Blondal

CARPENTERS

Dave Lynch

Jonathan Bowers

Zenon Campbell

LIGHT BOARD OPERATORS

Clayton Brown

Lyndsay Dolansky

SOUND BOARD OPERATOR

Chloe Mohan

PLAYBACK & MIC TECHNICIAN

Jaycie White

MIC TECHNICIAN

Delaney Dalheim

DRESSER

Larissa McCloy

FOLLOW SPOT OPERATORS

Chané Nel

Perseus Napierala

CREW

Andrew Williams

Cassandra Milley

Lynda Balaniuk

BIOGRAPHIES: ARTISTIC TEAM

DIRECTOR



ZACHARY L. BARRETT

Zach (they/he) has been a part of the theatre community in Fort McMurray for nearly 20 years. Attending Keyano College as a student for theatre, acquiring a diploma for Theatre as well as a degree in Filmmaking from Red Deer College, they started directing for one-acts in Fort McMurray's interPLAY Summer Arts Festival before taking on work across the province. This led to a series of Stage Management positions at Keyano Theatre and shadowing several directors

over the years, both in Keyano's summer youth intensive Drama Force, with *Aladdin Jr.*, *The Little Mermaid Jr.*, *Bugsy Malone Jr.*, and as Resident Stage Manager at Keyano Theatre for six years, with notable shows including *The Drowsy Chaperone*, *Mamma Mia!*, and *A Christmas Story*. The past few projects as the Director have been with the summer youth intensive on *Newsies Jr.* and *Finding Nemo Jr.* This project has been especially exciting to be in the Director's chair for, to help show that everyone can have a creative space where we all can feel comfortable and accepted. What show could encapsulate this better than *RENT!*

MUSIC DIRECTOR



JENNY PRICE

Jenny Price is a local arts champion who has been involved with community theatre in the RMWB for over 20 years. Recent music directing credits include Disney's *Finding Nemo Jr.* (KTC Drama Force 2023), *Summer of '69* (Swamp Rat Experience for Waypoints) and Disney's *Moana Jr.* (KTC Drama Force 2021). She curated, coached, and hosted the inaugural edition of Pride Cabaret (Swamp Rat Experience), a Pride month event this past June. When not working on

theatre projects, you can find Jenny at the Suncor Energy Centre for the Performing Arts where she manages programming for UpTown! at SECPA. Otherwise, Jenny can be found spending time with her child, Kelpie, and her dog, Gnasher. *RENT* was the first musical Jenny fell in love with. She is incredibly grateful for the way the entire community has embraced all of the elements of this project. Jenny continues to be amazed at how this has grown from friends chatting around the fire to the fully realized production it has become.

HEADSHOTS BY RACHELSIERRA PHOTOGRAPHY

BIOGRAPHIES: ARTISTIC TEAM

CHOREOGRAPHER



JENNA FEWER

Jenna is a dancer, teacher and choreographer with a love of movement and connection. Her experiences as a dancer and genuine love for the art of dance inspired her to pursue her dance career at the Source Dance Company in Vancouver, British Columbia. Upon completion, Jenna found herself back at home in Wood Buffalo, teaching the incredible youth in our region. She teaches and choreographs at YMM Dance Company where she finds so much joy in

sharing her love and passion for movement with her students. Locally, Jenna has choreographed for Keyano Theatre's Drama Force Productions of *Peter Pan Junior* and *Finding Nemo Junior*. Her first time choreographing a Swamp Rat Experience production was during the *Summer of '69 Dinner Theatre* in support of Waypoints. Away from the studio, Jenna can be found at Arts Council Wood Buffalo advocating for and supporting artists in our region or spending quality time with her people and her pup. Jenna is so grateful to join the Artistic Team of *RENT*. The experience has already opened her eyes and her heart to so many new people and she's proud to work alongside such incredible artists.

STAGE MANAGER



COURTNEY ORR

Courtney Orr is a local arts lover and Music Teacher at Good Shepherd School. This is her 4th time as Stage Manager since coming to Fort McMurray. Her previous credits include Keyano Theatre's *Finding Nemo Jr.*, *Newsies Jr.* and Swamp Rat Experience's production of *Purge*. She enjoys her time backstage but also can be seen onstage, usually trying out for at least one show a year. She was trained in multiple roles behind the curtain while attending the University

of Lethbridge for her Theatre Art and Education degrees. When not spending her time in the theatre she enjoys cultivating young artists in her Teaching position, as well as relaxing with a good book or a good video game. *RENT* has always had a special place in Courtney's heart as she grew up surrounded by the arts. It was one of two musicals that, as a young performer, she gathered extensive knowledge of its conception and production. *RENT* was a new path in the development of popular musical theatre and a major influence on a young girl's love of music. She hopes this production can be a new road and a new adventure for theatre in this city, for to make change and grow there is "No day but today!"

HEADSHOTS BY RACHEL SIERRA PHOTOGRAPHY

BIOGRAPHIES: ARTISTIC TEAM

SET & LIGHTING DESIGNER



KARLIE CHRISTIE

Karlie is super excited to be part of this fantastic team. Enjoy the show! Selected credits include: Costume assistant for Stratford Festival (*King Lear*, *All's Well That Ends Well*); Production designer of Kompany Family Theatre (2020-present), The Buffys Award Show, Fort McMurray (2022-2023) Assistant Set and Costume Designer SACT (2015-2020); Set design Fort Steele, *Scrimley's Spectacular Vaudeville* (2018), SACT *Elf* (2023); Set and Lighting design, Swamp Rat

Experience's *RENT* (2023). Film: Set and Lighting designer for *The Bold Ones*; Assistant Set Decorator *Before I Change My Mind* (2021); Training: BFA Theatre Design (University of Alberta), Technical Theatre Diploma (MacEwan University), Diploma of Makeup Artistry and Special FX (John Casablancas Institute). Current projects: Set designer SACT (*Elf* 2023), Set and Lighting designer Swamp Rat Experience (*RENT*).

@KChristieDesigns, www.kchristiedesigns.com



PROJECTIONS DESIGNER



LUAY ELJAMAL

Luay (he/him) is a Lebanese-Canadian theatre artist and Arts & Culture Manager living in Edmonton, with roots in Fort McMurray. He has worked as a writer, director and audiovisual designer on projects across Canada and the United Kingdom. As an audiovisual designer, he has created sound, video and projections for such projects as *Misery* (Keyano Theatre), *Quarter Life Crisis* (Edinburgh Fringe 2017), *Proud* (Finborough Theatre), *Lottery* (The Pleasance

Theatre), *The Slave* (Tristan Bates Theatre), *Oracle* (Antonin Artaud Theatre), as well as the 2020, 2021, and 2022 Wood Buffalo Excellence in Arts Awards (the Buffys). Luay carries an MA in Contemporary Performance Making from Brunel University London and is currently the Grants Consultant for Indigenous Arts and Theatre projects with the Alberta Foundation for the Arts.

www.luayeljamal.com



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BIOGRAPHIES: ARTISTIC TEAM



RHIANNON ELDRIDGE

COSTUME & PROPS DESIGNER

Rhiannon is a multiple disciplinary theatre artist. She works as a technician, stage manager, actor, and burlesque performer. She is based in Edmonton but was born and raised right here in Fort McMurray. She's been a part of many theatre productions in town both on stage and behind the scenes and is super excited to be working with the community once again. Rhiannon has graduated from Keyano's Visual and Performing Arts program and recently MacEwan University's

Theatre Production program. If you know Rhiannon, you know she's had a long-time love of *RENT*, so she hopes you enjoy the show!



ASHLEY LAURENSON

INTIMACY DIRECTOR

Ashley Laurenson (she/her) is an Intimacy Director and Coordinator, a fairly new position in Theatre, Film and Television. She began her training in 2021 to navigate context, communication, consent, choreography, and closure to advocate for the mental, emotional and physical safety of the cast, crew and artistic teams work on theatre and filmed projects. Ashley is excited to be working with the team at Swamp Rat Experience and the cast of *RENT* throughout the

production process from rehearsals to performances, to ensure what you see on stage is performed safely, with wellbeing as the top priority.



MADELINE BLONDAL

SCENIC PAINTER

Madeline Blondal (she/her) is a scenic painter as well as a set and lighting designer. Recent design credits include *The Dark Lady* (Lunchbox Theatre), *Pippin* (Storybook Theatre), *Cottagers and Indians* (Lunchbox Theatre), *After Faust* (RISER and Invisible Practice), *Smoke* (Tiny Bear Jaws), *Ministry of Mundane Mysteries: Sound Off* (Outside the March). Her paint credits include all of the above and more! She enjoys many artistic crafts, including quilting, embroidery and rock climbing

"FIVE HUNDRED TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND JOURNEYS TO PLAN"

BIOGRAPHIES: ARTISTIC TEAM



MIKHALA BRIDEAU

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Mikhala is delighted to join the crew of *RENT* as Assistant Stage Manager. Mikhala is a lover of all things music, is obsessed with *RENT*, and used to participate in musicals and musical theatre competitions in her hometown, Charlottetown, PEI. As a child she was convinced she would play Anne Shirley one day. Though that didn't quite work out for her (insert 15-year musical theatre hiatus), she is SO excited to jump back into the musical theatre world now as an adult. Mikhala is

a mother of two (Leo and Calla), a Speech-Language Pathologist, and has called Fort McMurray home since 2015. She would like to thank her husband Mark for encouraging her to get out of her comfort zone, jump back into things she loves, and join the amazing crew of *RENT*!



SPECIAL THANKS

Keyano Theatre & Arts Centre staff and volunteers, Derek Brown, Elizabeth Wells, Courtney Munn, Chané Nel, Mike Jones, Ashley Brockway, Fadden Family Artworks, The Twisted Body, Ashley Home Store, Cheryl Tang Realty, What's In Store, Northern Dance Apparel, Generation Dance, Anna & Andrew Pottie, Heather Cameron, Kevin Christie, Aleaha Frigon, Zenon Campbell, Dave Lynch, Kayla Erlandson, Arts Council Wood Buffalo, Brandi Villeneuve, Helen Killorn

BIOGRAPHIES: ARTISTIC TEAM



SHERI REED

ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGER

Sheri is thrilled to be part of the crew for *RENT*. She has been on stage for numerous readings, showcases, seminars and productions. When not on stage, she is a full-time mom of four children and a teacher at Ecole McTavish. She would like to thank her kids Bryan, Jared, Andrew, and Katelyn for their patience and encouragement in these endeavours. Sheri hopes everyone finds the courage to follow their dreams and be truly thankful for the arts and the journey your

imagination can take you. Please remember to be "Be Kind" and "Leave a footprint to follow and not a scar to heal".



AKSHAYA LAKSHMI

ASSISTANT MUSIC DIRECTOR

Akshaya Lakshmi is an Indo-Canadian artist who has been an active member of community over the past few years. Growing up in Fort McMurray, Akshaya's spark for music and theatre started in elementary school. This love continued as she pursued the Elective Music program in Voice Performance while completing her Bachelor of Medical Sciences. Currently, Akshaya is an instructor/director and choreographer at the Parr Academy of Vocal Arts and is actively pursuing

her dream of being a professional performer. Her most recent local projects include: *Anne of Green Gables* (KTC), *Summer of '69* (SRE), *Ghost Quartet* (BRJ Theatre) and *Mary Poppins* (KTC). Although this is her first time in the Music Directing world, she has enjoyed every part of the process, especially getting to help grow such great talent in the community. Enjoy the show!

HEADSHOTS BY RACHELSIERRA PHOTORAPHY



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BIOGRAPHIES: CAST

MARK



MIKE JONES

Mike is extremely excited to be a part of *RENT*, in what he's considered to be his dream role since seeing the show on Broadway. Mike is also excited to be making his on stage debut with SRE. He was most recently on stage with Keyano Theatre in *Mary Poppins*. Past credits include *Nurse Jane Goes to Hawaii*, *Into The Woods* (KTC), *A Knight to Remember* (TJB) and as the writer/director of *What Time Does the 3 O'Clock Parade Start?* Mike works with CMHA and Balsom Communications,

Owner and Operator of Topsy Trivia FMM and co-owner of On Stage Productions. He is also the founder of the ever popular Rock The Rails Music & Extreme Sports Festival.

ROGER



JOSH LANGUEDOC

Josh is a proud member of Saugeen First Nation and lives as a guest in Treaty 6 Territory and could not be more overjoyed to be in this production of his absolute favorite musical, *RENT!* Josh is an Anishinaabe playwright, producer, storyteller, and teacher who has also been doing musical theatre since the tender age of 6. Since 2018, Josh has been touring his solo performance *Rocko and Nakota: Tales From the Land* all across Turtle Island. Josh recently finished his MFA Theatre

Practice with a focus on Indigenous Playwriting, where he is officially the third Indigenous person to ever finish this program. Always believe in love!

MIMI



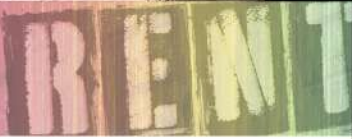
JANESSA COLES

Janessa is very excited to make her first return to the stage in almost twenty years (!) in Swamp Rat's production of *RENT*. Her last time on a stage was portraying Rosalind in a production of Shakespeare's *As You Like It*. By day she can be found working with small businesses as a bookkeeper. When not at work she enjoys several nerdy hobbies, including playing Dungeons & Dragons and recording a variety of role playing games with local production company Twisted

Gears Studios. She'd like to thank her partner Derek for being supportive of everything she has been filling her schedule with this fall.

HEADSHOTS BY RACHELSIERRA PHOTOGRAPHY

BIOGRAPHIES: CAST



JOANNE / OFFICER



KG BANJOKO

Kg is really excited to have the opportunity to take the stage for the second time ever in Swamp Rat's production of *RENT*. As a song-writer and creative artist she is excited to expand her musical horizons in this production as Joanne. Professionally, Kg proudly works for the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation and is committed to community advocacy. Kg's organization United4Change has established a mutual aid program (Alpha Hub) and works to share political (and decolonized) education within

our community. *RENT* is a production with many layers and shares perspectives that deserve a platform and she is delighted to be part of the magic making process.

MAUREEN / OFFICER



CARLY HENRY

Carly is proudly Métis and is honoured to live in Treaty 8 territory. She's filled with excitement to have the opportunity to take the stage in Swamp Rat's production of her very favourite musical, *RENT!* Music has always been her first love, whether singing, playing piano and guitar, or sharing her knowledge through teaching. By day you can find her infusing joy into her work at the Regional Recreation Corporation of Wood Buffalo, and when she's not performing, you can find her

with her nose in a book, doing yoga, or snuggling her dog. *RENT* is a complex and beautiful story, and Carly is thrilled to be part of bringing it to life in our community.

ANGEL



RACHEL ELSER

Rachel is thrilled to be returning to the stage in *RENT*. Absent from the stage since high school, she looks forward to becoming reacquainted with her passion for the arts as she shares her love for singing, movement and dancing with the community and fellow cast members. When not at work or parenting, Rachel loves to laugh, enjoys supporting her friends and family, being immersed in a good book, and sharing her skill sets with those in need. She would like to thank her children

Avery and Owen for the daily love and support they provide as well as her bio and chosen families!

HEADSHOTS BY RACHELSIERRA PHOTOGRAPHY

BIOGRAPHIES: CAST



Headshot by Twisted Gears Studios

ALDRICH ESCARAN

COLLINS

Aldrich has enjoyed working with Keyano Theatre Company on *Anne of Green Gables*. Now he's very excited to be back and very proud to be part of Swamp Rat's production of *RENT* this year and of this wonderful cast. As a creative Artist, I'm very thrilled to show my artistic range to you guys yet again. Mabuhay sa inyong lahat! (Long live to you all!)



ZACH NEL

BENNY / STEVE

Zach Nel is very excited to make his theatrical debut in *RENT* presented by Swamp Rat Experience. Moving to Canada from South Africa and finding a career with the RCMP, joining the world of theatre may not seem like the obvious choice. However, being part of such a welcoming and diverse community has both humbled and excited him. He would like to thank his wife Alana for encouraging him to audition. When not on stage he enjoys playing video games and spending quality time with his wife and two small doggos.



ALANA NEL

PAM / MRS. COHEN / THE MAN

After a fifteen year hiatus Alana is delighted to be making her way back onto the stage in SRE's production of *RENT*. Alana studied at Wood Street School's music art/drama program in Whitehorse for two years but went on to pursue other dreams. Alana is excited to be adding ensemble member to her list of accolades, which also include Gertrude McFuzz in *Seussical* and Miss Stacey in *Anne of Green Gables* (Wood Street MAD program), as well as many performances in her family band Tyrannosaurus-Bekks and as part of the Whitehorse community choir. When Alana is not on stage you can find her drinking coffee, sharing her love of fitness through personal training and teaching yoga and enjoying life's adventure with her best friend aka her husband.

HEADSHOTS BY RACHELSIERRA PHOTOGRAPHY

BIOGRAPHIES: CAST

PAUL / MRS. DAVIS / GRAY



JENNA HUBER

Jenna is thrilled to be back on a theatre stage, and is deeply honored to be part of the Swamp Rat Experience. Always on the hunt for an audience, Jenna has spent her 12 years in Fort McMurray as a karaoke host, a paint nite artist, and most recently as a stand up comedian. Jenna spends most of her time caring for her family's young children. She loves to craft and cook things for them to complain about, and enjoys iced coffee, charcuterie, and crossword puzzles. Jenna is very

grateful to her partners, family, and the Cheese Geese for supporting her through the rehearsal process, and for listening to her sing the entire production approximately 525,600 times.

GREG / MR. JEFFERSON / PASTOR



MITCHELL STEEVES

Mitchell is very excited to participate in Swamp Rat Experience's performance of *RENT*, he is eager to learn and play the many roles of the ensemble. Mitchell once performed as Lysander in Theatre; Just Because's production of *A Kid's Summer Nights Dream*. This performance, led by Justin Shaw, awakened his inner actor and inspired him to follow the path of art. Mitchell looks forward to making friends and performing with Swamp Rat Experience.

ALI / ALEXI DARLING / MRS. JEFFERSON / MRS. VASQUEZ



Headshot by Twisted Gears Studios

YVONNE STEWART

Yvonne used to love performing for many years, but since moving to Fort McMurray from Ireland 12 years ago she hadn't rejoined until Keyano's show *All Together Now*. Yvonne is super excited to be performing in *RENT* with Swamp Rat Experience. By day she works with numbers, and now in the evening she will be taking to the stage. She is very grateful for such a huge opportunity and of course massive thanks to her Hubby and kids for their unwavering support.

HEADSHOTS BY RACHELSIERRA PHOTOGRAPHY

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SHARING STORIES, HISTORIES,
AND PERSPECTIVES IN TREATY 8

Swamp Rat Experience acknowledges that we live, work and create in Treaty 8 territory, the traditional and ancestral land of the nêhiyawak, Dene, and Métis. We acknowledge the many First Nations, Métis and Inuit who have lived in and cared for these lands for generations. We make this acknowledgement as an act of reconciliation and gratitude to those whose territory we reside on or are visiting.