



RENT

MUSIC, BOOK, AND LYRICS BY JONATHAN LARSON

MUSICAL ARRANGEMENTS BY STEVE SKINNER

ORIGINAL CONCEPT / ADDITIONAL LYRICS BY BILLY ARONSON

MUSIC SUPERVISION AND ADDITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS BY TIM WEIL

DRAMATURGY BY LYNN THOMSON

SARATOGA CIVIC THEATER • 13777 FRUITVALE AVE, SARATOGA, CA

SEPTEMBER 30 THROUGH OCTOBER 21, 2023

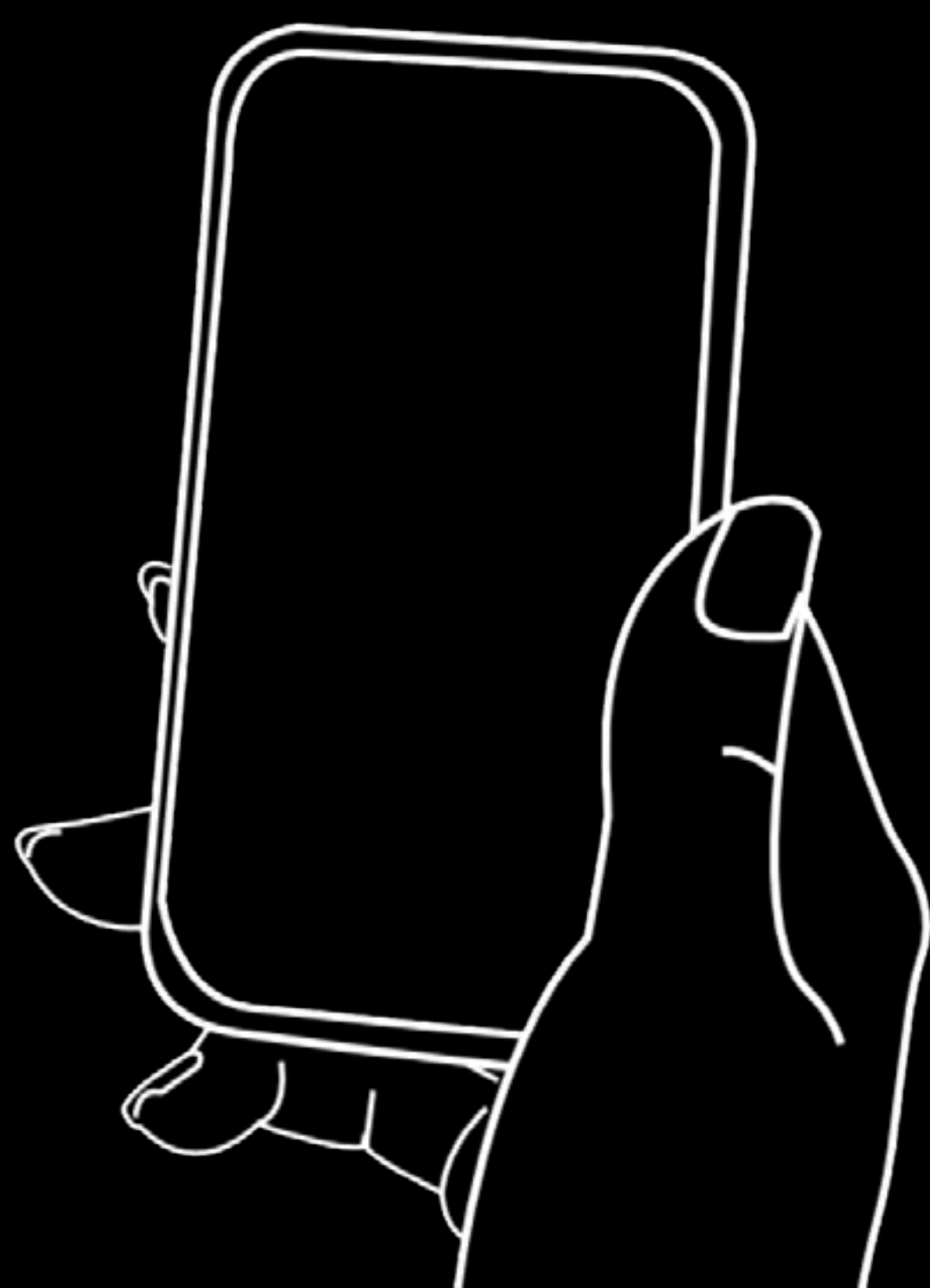
SouthBayMT.com

Welcome to *RENT*!

Enjoy this digital program before the show, and then please turn your phone off when the orchestra begins to play.

TOO SMALL TO READ?

To increase the size of the text, just turn your phone sideways.



FROM THE DIRECTORS



CAST OF CHARACTERS



SONGS & SCENES



PRODUCTION STAFF



ORCHESTRA



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



MEET THE CAST



MEET THE STAFF



EXTERNAL LINKS



LOOKING AHEAD



introduction

SOUTH BAY MUSICAL THEATRE

presents

RENT

Book, Music, and Lyrics by

JONATHAN LARSON

Original Concept / Additional Lyrics by
BILLY ARONSON

Musical Arrangements by
STEVE SKINNER

Music Supervision and
Additional Arrangements by
TIM WEIL

Dramaturgy
by
LYNN THOMSON

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

“White Christmas” used by arrangement with the Irving Berlin Music Company.

“Do You Know the Way to San Jose” written by Burt Bacharach and Hal David, used by permission of Casa David and New Hidden Valley Music. “The Christmas Song (Chestnuts Roasting on an Open Fire)” by Mel Torme and Robert Wells, used by permission of Edwin H. Morris & Company, a division of MPL Communications Inc. “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer” written by Johnny Marks, used by permission of St. Nicholas Music Inc.

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

Electronic devices: While we encourage you to enjoy this digital program before the show and during intermission, we ask that you please turn off your cell phones once the performance begins.

Concessions: Except for bottled water, food and beverages are not allowed in the theater. Please consume anything purchased during intermission before returning to your seat.

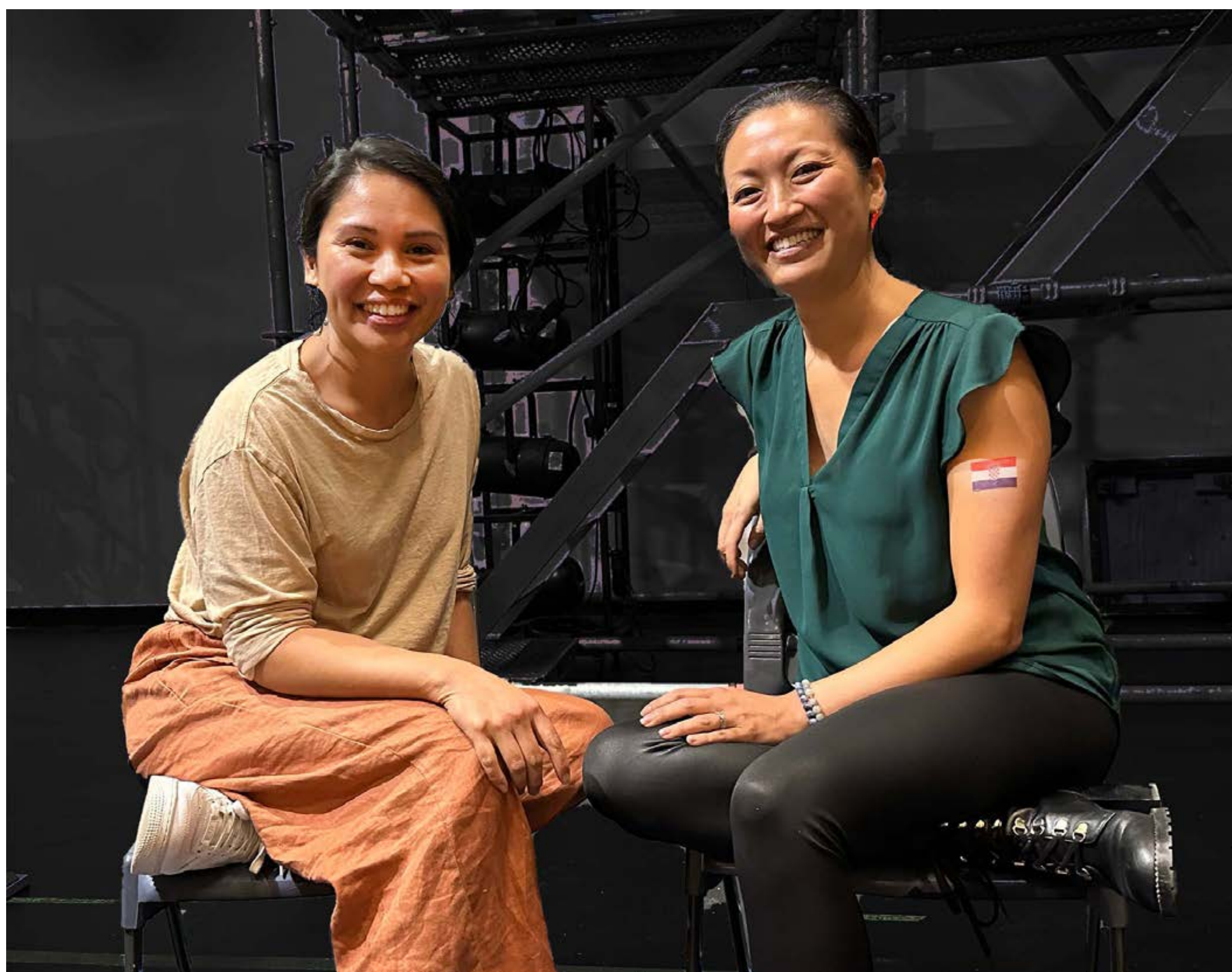
Show length: The show runs about 2 hours and 10 minutes, including a 15-minute intermission:
Act 1 runs approximately 65 minutes.
Act 2 runs approximately 50 minutes.

Safety: Please note the location of all exits.

from the directors

"In these dangerous times, where it seems that the world is ripping apart at the seams, we all can learn how to survive from those who stare death squarely in the face every day, and [we] should reach out to each other and bond as a community, rather than hide from the terrors of life."

— Jonathan Larson, *Rent*



*Above, co-directors and co-choreographers Jennifer Cuevas and Nicole Tung discuss their vision for *RENT* and how best to bring the show to today's Bay Area audience.*

RENT originally debuted off-Broadway in January of 1996, and it was such a hit that it moved to a bigger theater **on** Broadway after just three months. Sadly, *RENT*'s author, Jonathan Larson, never witnessed how well—and how quickly—the public embraced his seminal work. He had died from an aortic dissection the day before the show was to open off-Broadway!

*The directors of SBMT's production sat down recently to reflect about *RENT* and talk about what it means to them.*

What is your personal history with *RENT*?

Nicole: The first time I saw *RENT* was on Broadway. I had sung along with the cast recording so many times with my roommates in college and felt like I knew and related to these characters so much. And as a 20-something artist, I felt inspired by these sexy, passionate characters.

Jen: I actually resisted having anything to do with *RENT* at first. I still had *Miss Saigon* and *Les Miz* on my playlist rotation.

*"Forget regret, or life is yours to miss.
No other path, no other way, no day but today."*

— Jonathan Larson

Thanks to Miss Lea Salonga, there wasn't any room for this "new sound musical" in my life. However, inevitably, I got curious enough and shelled out the money for the two-CD set. It was the only thing I listened to for a ver-r-ry long time.

The show just felt so *cool* and was doing so many new things all at the same time: It was rock *and* opera. It had traditional roots *and* a modern face. It highlighted homosexuality *and* a deadly epidemic *and*—dare I say, celebrated those who were living those lives. That was really bold and exciting—and yes, sexy. I fell in love with the music instantly. Somehow the music made you want to *be* these people.

Nicole: Yeah. When I watched the show, I wasn't prepared for how much it would move me. I still get emotional reflecting on those who lost their lives to HIV/AIDS in the early years of the epidemic when the virus was a death sentence. Thank goodness for medical breakthroughs. They have come a very long way since then. However, I realized at the time, I was

more taken in by the rock music and how little I actually had in common with these characters. The show didn't address the darker issues these characters were facing, like having to take AZT or struggling to have a roof over their heads. And why didn't they just get a survival job in order to pay their rent?

Jen: I also saw the show on Broadway, and remember feeling disconnected. It all felt safe and tidy sitting away from the stage as if I were looking into a box. I silently sang every word to every song as I watched, but at

some point, I realized I didn't know what half the songs actually meant.

WTF is AZT? What dignity are they so afraid of losing? And I also wondered, why aren't they going to pay their rent? Maybe I don't know enough about these people's lives aside from them singing some really great songs. These characters were indeed beautiful, but I had completely forgotten about the pain and suffering and grasping for survival they were enduring.



"I fell in love with the music instantly. Somehow the music made you want to be these people." — Jen Cuevas

*“How do you document real life,
when real life’s getting more like fiction each day?”*

— Jonathan Larson

What have been your most inspiring influences as you think about the vision of this show?

Nicole: I think for me, looking at the show now with fresh and older eyes, the vision I had for our version is very different than how we probably would have tackled this in younger years. I think it’s important to bring the HIV/AIDS crisis of the time more to the forefront, because current generations might not know what that experience was for older generations to live through that. I also want to pay homage to some things that are quintessential to NYC that I think might have been missed in the original production.



“I wanted to keep the message of hope, love, and sense of community present throughout this story.” – Nicole Tung

out long planks throughout the space where patrons sat on each side of each plank. All the acting was done amongst the audience. Instantly, the audience became part of the show. Even though you were just an observer, you became involved. It was an amazing experience. For *Parade*—which was such a

beautiful show—the use of projections to educate that audience through pictures and newspaper clippings to help understand the who, what, where of the story was invaluable. I think the projections connected me even closer to the show.

How would you sum up the story of RENT in one word?

Jen/Nicole: Community!

Nicole: It’s kinda crazy how our thoughts are so similar. Freaky.

Jen: Ha ha ha. Twinsies! For real, though. *RENT*’s community is so passionately filled with culture. It faces disease, homelessness, and addiction. It celebrates people of all shapes,

Jen: I completely agree! I wanted to see if there was a way for us to bring the darker issues to the forefront a bit, and two shows came to mind for inspiration: *The Jungle*, which I saw at SF’s Curran Theatre and *Parade*, which I just recently saw in New York. The Curran Theatre ripped out all of its orchestra seating for *The Jungle* and laid

“The criminal justice system is accurately symbolized by a large sculpture that sits at the foot of the United States attorney’s building: four metal circles that interlock. The wheels of justice, as it were, frozen in legal and social gridlock.”

— Jonathan Larson

heritages, and genders. It’s through **community** they are able to find a way to push forward with life, despite life trying to turn its back on them. They have each others’ backs through everything—even during the hardest times. They really have to lean on each other.

Nicole: Totally! I wanted to keep the message of hope, love, and sense of community present throughout this story. Each of us now has the experience of going through the recent COVID pandemic. The isolation, the fear of not knowing what this virus was, the heartbreak, the longing for connection and community. Some of us may also have the experience of being unhoused. The themes of

this show still resonate today. So even if we can’t directly relate to the characters, maybe we can relate to the emotions they’re experiencing.

Jen: Yup, and do all that whilst celebrating the kick-ass music. I’m going to have to remind myself to sing along *silently*.

Nicole: Same.

*Dear patrons: We invite you to experience this show with us, not as an observing audience, but as a community. Let’s be there for each other and experience the pain, the joy, the fear, and the hope **together**. May it bring you renewed hope, love, and compassion that can be carried out into our world. “No day but today.”*

—Jen Cuevas and Nicole Tung



Above, Jen and Nicole (kneeling in the right foreground) join the company of RENT to celebrate the first meeting of orchestra and singers at the Sitzprobe rehearsal.

cast of characters

ROGER DAVIS	Tyler Savin
MARK COHEN.....	Justin Kerekes
TOM COLLINS	Adrien Gleason
BENJAMIN (Benny) COFFIN III	James M. Jones
JOANNE JEFFERSON.....	Sydney Bamberg
ANGEL SCHUNARD	Justin Sabino
MIMI MÁRQUEZ.....	Lindsay Sporleder
MAUREEN JOHNSON.....	Nicole Roca
MRS. COHEN, POLICE OFFICER	Syeda Huq
MR. JEFFERSON, POLICE OFFICER.....	Jamari McGee
MRS. JEFFERSON, ALEXI DARLING	Lucy Nino
PAUL	Steven McCloud*
GORDON, PASTOR.....	Victor Velasquez
STEVE, MR. GREY	Chris Fernandez
MAN WITH SQUEEGEE, WAITER, ROGER’S MOM.....	Rachel Rivera
BLANKET PERSON.....	Juliet Green
MIMI’S MOM, POLICE OFFICER	Luna Lau
CHRISTMAS CAROLERS	Chris Fernandez, Juliet Green, Cleopatra Howell*, Lucy Nino, Steven McCloud
“SEASONS” SOLOISTS	Juliet Green, Jamari McGee, Lucy Nino
* swing performer	



songs & scenes

All action takes place in New York’s Lower East Side, during a one-year period from Christmas Eve 1991 to Christmas Eve 1992.

ACT ONE

“Tune Up / Voice Mail #1”	Roger, Mrs. Cohen, Collins, Benny
“Rent”	Company
“You Okay Honey?”	Angel, Collins
“One Song Glory”	Roger
“Light My Candle”	Roger, Mimi
“Voice Mail #2”	Mr. and Mrs. Jefferson
“Today 4 U”	Angel
“You’ll See”	Benny, Mark, Collins, Roger, Angel
“Tango: Maureen”	Mark, Joanne
“Life Support”	Paul, Gordon, Company
“Out Tonight”	Mimi
“Another Day”	Roger, Mimi, Company
“Will I?”	Company
“On the Street”	Company
“Santa Fe”	Collins, 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 TWO

“Seasons of Love”	Company
“Happy New Year / Voice Mail #3”	Mimi, Roger, Mark, Maureen, Joanne, Collins, Angel, Mrs. Cohen, Alexi Darling, Benny
“Take Me or Leave Me”	Maureen, Joanne
“Without You”	Roger, Mimi
“Voice Mail #4”	Alexi Darling
“Contact”	Company
“I’ll Cover You” (Reprise)	Collins, Company
“Halloween”	Mark
“Goodbye, Love”	Mark, Mimi, Roger, Maureen, Joanne, Collins, Benny
“What You Own”	Pastor, Mark, Collins, Benny, Roger
“Voice Mail #5”	Roger’s Mom, Mimi’s Mom, Mr. Jefferson, Mrs. Cohen
“Your Eyes/Finale”	Roger, Company

Film by Don Nguyen

production staff

Box Office Manager	Diane Hughes
Cast Deputies.....	Luna Lau, Rachel Rivera
Co-Directors & Choreographers.....	Jennifer Cuevas, Nicole Tung
Costume / Hair & Makeup Designer	Y. Sharon Peng
Development & Patron Manager.....	Kama Belloni
Dramaturg.....	Walter M. Mayes
House Manager & Volunteer Coordinator	Diane Hughes
Lighting Designer.....	Noah Price
Lighting Crew.....	Alex Barbieri, Benjamin King
Light Board Operators.....	Cosmo Cooper, Dragon Neal
Follow Spot Operators	Don Masuda, Nita Rabe-Uyeno
Marketing, Social Media, Video, Web Design	Doug Hughes
Lobby Display.....	Barbara Heninger
Meta Advertising	Lisa Litchfield
Photographer.....	Dave Lepori
Master Carpenter, Set Shop Manager	Richard Cartwright
Assistant Master Carpenter	Jay Steele
Scenic Construction & Painting	Brett Carlson, Richard Cartwright, Justin Kerekes, Jonathan Jackel, Walter M. Mayes, Kalyn McKenzie, Jay Steele
Musical Director	Christine Lovejoy
Producer	Walter M. Mayes
Assistant to the Producer.....	Gioconda Mirra
Production Manager	Kalyn McKenzie
Program Designer	Doug Hughes
Program Proofreaders.....	David Mister, Jennifer Yuan
Props Designer	Patricia Bilello
Projection Designer, in-show video.....	Don Nguyen
Set Designer	Brett Carlson
Sound Designer	Angela Yeung
Engineers.....	Shannon Ding, Dan Singletary, Braden Taylor
Stage Manager	Cayleigh Coester
Assistant Stage Managers.....	Alanna Bardell, Gioconda Mirra
Technical Director	Chris Beer
Truck Driver	Luke Cook
Vocal Director	Andy Kline
Vocal Captain	Adrien Gleason
Accompanists.....	Anita Hsiung Carey, Bob Sunshine

orchestra

Keyboard 1	Sean Green
Keyboard 1 substitute for October 19	Nick Kenrick
Keyboard 2.....	Anita Hsiung Carey
Guitar	Dylan Escudero
Bass.....	Adam Strauss
Bass substitute for October 7.....	Andrew Lawrence
Drums, Conductor.....	Christine Lovejoy



Rent musicians. Standing: Andrew Lawrence (bass substitute), Christine Lovejoy (drums, conductor, Music Director). Seated: Anita Hsiung Carey (keyboard 2), Sean Green (keyboard 1), and Dylan Escudero (guitar). Not pictured: Adam Strauss (bass) and Ruiran Xun (keyboard 1 substitute).

land acknowledgment

South Bay Musical Theatre acknowledges that its theater, rehearsal studio, and set shop are located on the ancestral home of the Muwekma Ohlone peoples of the Tamien Tribe who are the original inhabitants of the South Bay Area. We recognize that we benefit from living and working on their traditional homeland, and we send our appreciation.

acknowledgments

Our deepest gratitude goes out to Marcy Bates, Luke Cook, Jonathan Jackel, and the many good friends at our sister arts organization, WVLO Musical Theatre Company. Thanks (and apologies) to anyone inadvertently omitted from this program. SBMT's use of the Saratoga Civic Theater is courtesy of The City of Saratoga, with support from patrons, donors, and arts organizations.



donor recognition

SBMT donors over the past few years have been exceptionally generous. More than 400 individuals and corporations gave to ensure the longevity of the arts in Saratoga. The patrons who are gratefully acknowledged on our website donated between Jan. 1, 2022 and Sept. 25, 2023. Thanks to everyone! Please consider joining the donor family by making a [monthly](#) contribution or a [one-time](#) donation. We also welcome gifts of [volunteerism](#) (especially if your corporation provides matching funds!), in-kind donations, sponsorships, IRA distributions, and legacy gifts. [See our list of donors here.](#)

community partner



HEALTHTrust

In keeping with the theme of *RENT*, South Bay Musical Theatre has partnered with **The Health Trust**, a local foundation that provides a variety of safety net services to low-income Santa Clara County residents living with HIV/AIDS. This highly rated non-profit provides home-delivered meals, HIV and chronic illness care management, and housing support. Please see the display in our lobby for more information and to leave a donation that will help some of the most vulnerable people here in our own community.

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A South Bay Musical Theatre special event!
One night only—Sunday, October 15 at 7 pm.

LIPS TOGETHER TEETH APART

“A brilliant comedy” – *The New Yorker*



A PLAY BY
TERRENCE McNALLY

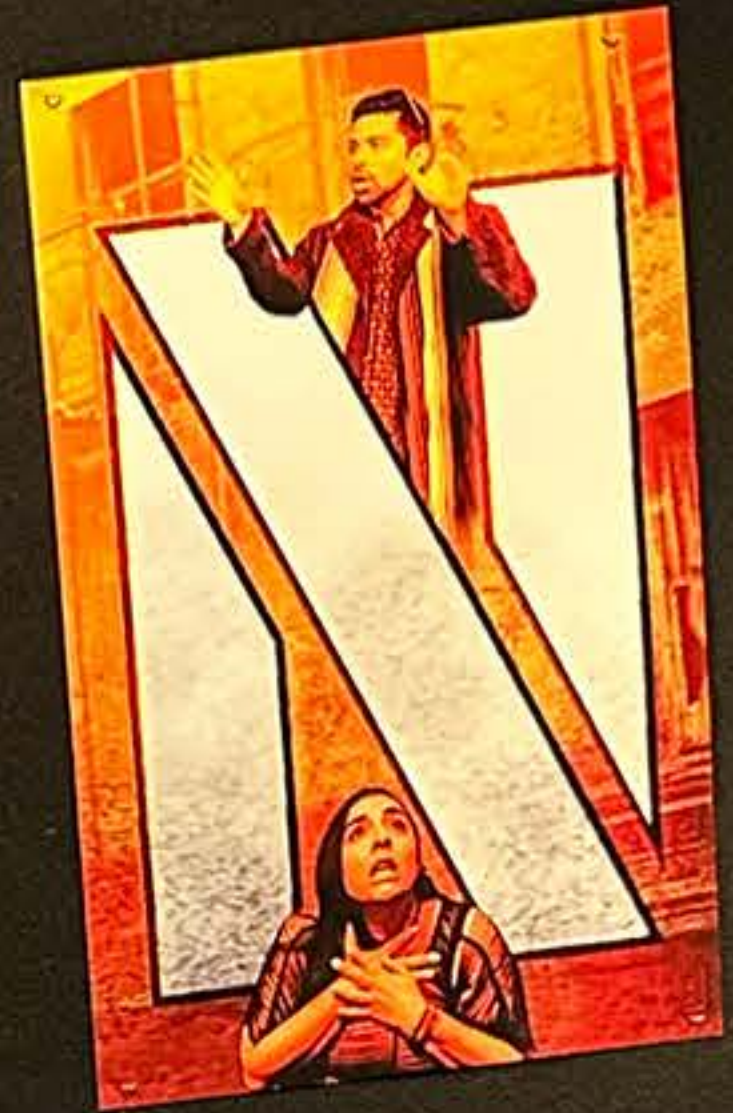
To complement our current production of *RENT*, South Bay Musical Theatre proudly presents *Lips Together, Teeth Apart*—a **FREE**, staged reading of the award-winning play by Terrence McNally. This special one-night-only event takes place Sunday, October 15 at 7:00 p.m. here at the Saratoga Civic Theater. It will last 2 hours and 30 minutes (with intermission), and stars Joey McDaniel, Alicia Teeter, Mary Melnick, and Michael Rhone.

These four beloved South Bay actors come together to present a play about privileged, white, straight couples coming to understand that the HIV/AIDS epidemic is not just touching the lives of gay men and intravenous drug users. Set in the same time as the setting of our production of *RENT*—the early 1990s—when the rate of infection was still not under control and the death toll was continuing to rise, *Lips Together, Teeth Apart* humorously explores the folly of people who think their wealth and position protects them from the realities of the world in which we live. First produced in 1991, the play starred Nathan Lane, Christine Baranski, Anthony Heald, and Swoosie Kurtz.

FREE TICKETS available now at SouthBayMT.com/eStudio

recognition

Congratulations to Rachel Rivera, ensemble member who won the Legacy Robe Award.



Congratulations also go to stage manager Cayleigh Coester, recipient of the Bobo Reardon Newcomer Award.

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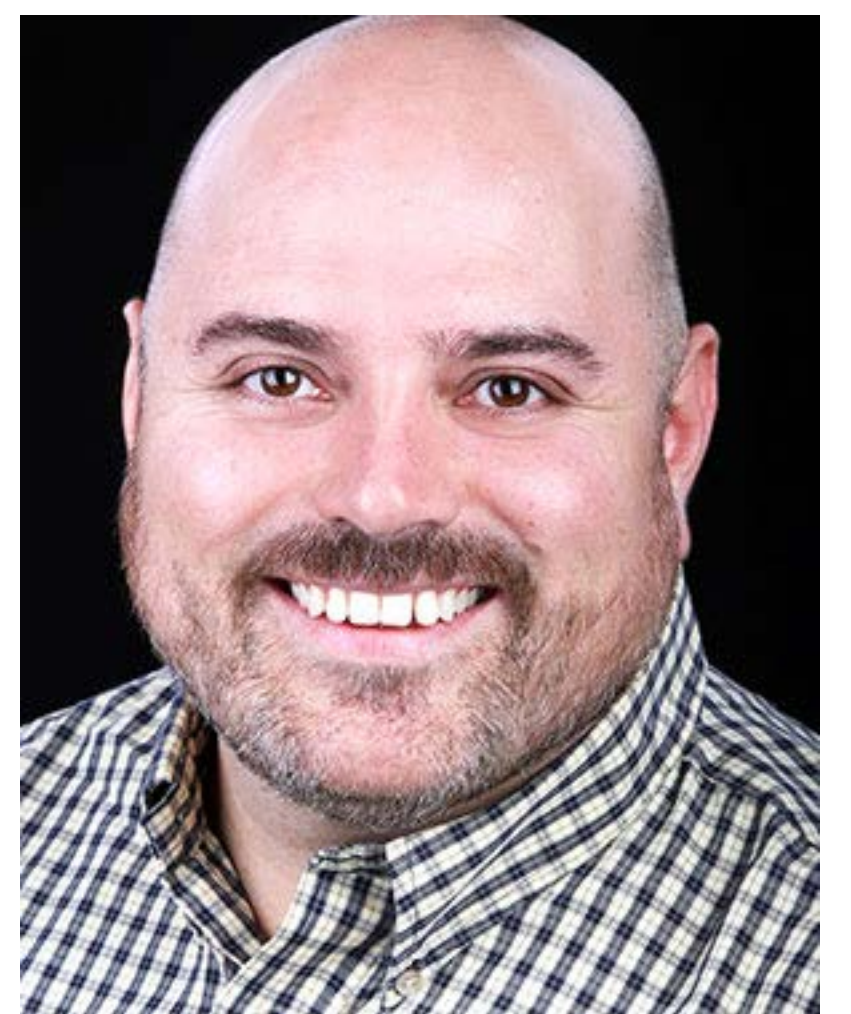
meet the cast



Sydney Reiko Bamberg (*Joanne Jefferson*) is thrilled to be making her SBMT debut with *Rent!* Some of her previous roles include Sarah (understudy) in *Ragtime* at LTSJ, music hall singer in *Violet* at FMT, and the Witch in *Into the Woods* at WVC. She also graduated from WV with an AA degree in Arts & Humanities in 2021 and

loved being a part of their choral program. She is currently studying to get into a nursing program. When she isn't doing homework or working, she enjoys roller skating, riding her bike, journaling, and Disco Night.

Chris Fernandez (*Ensemble: Steve, Mr. Gray, Caroler*) (he/him) is excited to perform in the Ensemble of *Rent*. Not only is this one of his favorite musicals, it's a "bucket list item" for him to be leading the number, "Will I?" Chris was previously seen at SBMT as the Captain in *Anything Goes*. The first time Chris had the opportunity to play a gay character was as Richard, the nice nurse, in



A New Brain at the Tabard Theatre, where he also performed his first non-singing role as Clarence in *It's A Wonderful Life*. He has also performed with various Bay Area companies, including the Oakland Symphony as Alchemist/Sultan/Crook in *Candide* and BBB as Jacob in *Joseph...Dreamcoat*. Other notable appearances include Herr Schultz in *Cabaret*, Danilo in *The Merry Widow*, and all the asshole conservatives in a play by Lisa Loomer, titled *Roe*.



Adrien Gleason (*Tom Collins*) is thrilled to be reprising the role of Tom Collins with SBMT. SBMT credits also include *Les Misérables* (Enjolras) and *Anything Goes* (Evelyn Oakley), as well as performing in several concerts over the last 10 years. Other favorite roles include Gordon in *A New Brain* at TTC, and John in *Miss Sai-*

gon at PAP. He is a proud music teacher in Fremont during the day. He would like to extend his gratitude to the dream team that put this show together, his fellow actors, and his friends and family for always supporting him in his theatrical pursuits.

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Juliet Green (*Ensemble: blanket person, caroler*) (she/her) is grateful to be back at SBMT, where she last played Hannah in *The Spitfire Grill*. She was also seen at PAP as Mrs. Potts in *Beauty and the Beast*, Mama Murphy in *Bright Star*, and Lady of the Lake in *Spamalot*. Other favorite roles have been Beggar Woman in HBT's *Sweeney Todd* and the Witch in LASC's *Into the Woods*. She is a music educator and jazz vocalist, and was honored with Downbeat's Education Achievement Award in 2019.

Cleopatra Howell (*Ensemble: female swing, caroler*) is a recent college graduate excited to be a part of San Jose community theatre performing in her debut show with SBMT. A community health center worker by day and a performer in the evenings, Cleopatra's other hobbies consist of taking care of her cat Henny, cooking, and singing a cappella. (Speaking of *Rent*, if you want to help her pay hers, the Venmo is @Cleopatra-Howell)!



Syeda Huq (*Ensemble: police officer, Mrs. Cohen*) is thrilled to be part of the cast in *Rent*, her first musical production. This also marks her second time on the SBMT stage, following her debut in the *Welcome to the Sixties* concert last April. She has sung in cabaret shows at The Pear Theatre in Mountain View, and also participated in improv and sketch comedy performances in the Bay Area. Syeda's past performances also include Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra* with SVS and *Stop Kiss* at SFSU.

James M. Jones (*Benjamin "Benny" Coffin III*) was last seen as Leo Bloom in *The Producers* at HBT. His previous roles in theatre include Jimmy (*Thoroughly Modern Millie* - SBMT), Sir Robin (*Monty Python's Spamalot* - WCT), Davey (*Newsies* - HBT), Roy Cohn (*Angels in America Part 2* reading - St. Mary's College of CA) and David (*Company* - SBMT). When not on the stage, James teaches 7th grade math within FUSD. He wants to dedicate this show to Reid Davis (St. Mary's theatre professor and director). "Thanks for your fight and passion and, most importantly, my decisions—whether good or bad."





Justin Kerekes (*Mark Cohen*) (he/him) was most recently Old Man Jenkins in *The SpongeBob Musical* at PAP. At SBMT he was most recently seen as Bobby in *Company*. Favorite roles include Private Knight in *Allegiance* (PAP), Freddy Eynsford-Hill in *My Fair Lady* (WCT), Charlie Price in *Kinky Boots* (RCCT), and Charlie Brown in *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown* (PSP). He is grateful for the support from all of his friends, family, and co-workers.

Luna Lau (*Ensemble: Mimi's Mom, police officer*) was last seen at SBMT as Shelby in *The Spitfire Grill* under the name Laura Barragán. Other recent shows include RWS's *Follies* (Young Heidi), LTSJ's *Into the Woods* (the Witch) and *HMS Pin afore* (Hebe), and SCP's *West Side Story* (ensemble, Maria understudy). She has also performed with OSJ, LLMT, SJSU, and First Street Opera. She studied Music Education and Vocal Performance at WVC and SJSU. Her work as a choir director and worship director at Trinity Presbyterian Church became her segue into working with contemporary music. She is thrilled to step further into the world of American musical theatre and thanks her musical Bay Area community for their love and support.



Steven McCloud (*Ensemble: male swing, Paul, caroler*) is delighted to be making his stage debut with SBMT! Steven earned his B.A. in Theatre Arts at SFSU and has performed across the Bay Area for over ten years now. He recently performed in WSM's production of *Gypsy* and *Something Rotten*. When not performing, he works as a phlebotomist at One Medical in Berkeley. He would like to share his gratitude to Justin, his family, and friends for all the love they bring to his life! Insta: @stevecloud26 / Venmo: @Steven-McCloud47

Jamari McGee (*Ensemble*) is over the moon to join SBMT. This is one of Jamari's favorite musicals as he will be performing this show for a third time. Some of his other favorites include Brian in *Avenue Q*, Chip Tolentino in *...Spelling Bee*, and being in the Ensemble of *Heathers*. He also recently assistant directed a junior version



of *Into the Woods* with Stage One. Jamari wants to attend Ohlone College in Fall '24 to obtain his degree in Musical Theatre and Deaf Studies. When Jamari isn't in the theatre he's assistant managing a KFC/Taco Bell or trying to watch the latest horror movie, and he loves going to Six Flags. Check him out on social media for more shows and insight. FB: Jamari McGee IG: itsmeemasterj.



Lucy Nino (*Ensemble: Mrs. Jefferson, caroler, Alexi Darling*) is thrilled to make her SBMT debut in *Rent*. Previous roles include Johanna in *Sweeney Todd* (SVCT) and Emmy in *The Book of Holding On* (SCU). A graduate of SCU, she sang with SCU's Wind Ensemble and Orchestra as a winning soloist in the Concerto Aria competition. Lucy is currently a development coordinator at Story Force Entertainment. All the love and gratitude to her family, friends, and voice teacher Nancy Wait-Kromm!

Rachel Rivera (*Ensemble: Roger's Mom, squeegee man, waiter*) (they/them) is a versatile performer known for their roles as the Leading Player in *Pippin*, Kurt Kelly in *Heathers*, and Eulalie Shinn in *Music Man*. They take pride in being a student of Dream Team, Boxed in Theatre, and the American Conservatory of Theatre. This production marks their debut with SBMT, and they already feel like a part of the family. In addition to their stage performance, Rachel Rivera also directs for Starting Arts, bringing their passion to nonprofit local elementary and middle schools. Get ready to experience every season of love!



Nicole Roca (*Maureen Johnson*) (she/her) is a Bay Area native excited to make her SBMT mainstage debut in *Rent* after performing in the company's *Welcome to the Sixties* anniversary concert earlier this year. Favorite past roles include Cindy Lou (*Marvelous Wonderettes*), Violet Hilton (*Sideshow*), and Marty (*Grease*). One of her most memorable performing experiences was sailing the seas as a production vocalist with Carnival Cruise Lines. When not onstage, Nicole has her own private voice studio, Limelight Performing Arts, and can be heard singing and speaking on toys, commercials, and radio ads as a voice-over artist, working with companies including Leap-Frog, Hallmark, and Google.



Justin Sabino (*Angel*) (he/him) is a musical theatre performer/choreographer in the Bay Area and first-timer at SBMT! Credits: *Kansas* (*Gypsy*, WSM), *Eddie* (*Damn Yankees*, TVRT), *Clopin Trouillefou* (*Disney's The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, TVRT), *Luke* (*Altar Boyz*, CenterREP), *Adrian* (*Smokey Joe's Cafe*, TVRT), *Wells/Louie Snaps* (*Disney's Freaky Friday*, CenterREP), *Graffiti Pete* (*In The Heights*, TVRT). Choreography credits: *Rent* (LMT) and *...Putnam County Spelling Bee* (CCMT). He is a teaching artist with Kaiser Permanente Educational Theatre, and a graduate student at USF studying Counseling Psychology. Gratitude to "The Man," my man, Steven <3 and SBMT! Connect with Justin @sabinosaur

Tyler Savin (*Roger*) is excited to be performing for SBMT in this production of *Rent*. He was last seen on this stage as Shakespeare in WVLO's production of *Something Rotten*. Some of his favorite roles include Frank Abagnale, Jr. in *Catch Me If You Can* (WVLO) and Seymour in *Little Shop of Horrors* (PCT).



Lindsay Sporleder (*Mimi Marquez*) (they/ them) is thrilled to make their SBMT debut alongside this beautiful cast of bohemians! Some of their favorite stage credits include: *Heathers The Musical* (Veronica Sawyer); *Spring Awakening* (Ilse); *Hair* (Crissy); *Cry Baby The Musical* (Allison Vernon-Williams); *Zoot Suit* (Alice Bloomfield); and *The Rocky Horror Show* (Phantom). They



also performed in the National Tour of *Evil Dead The Musical: HD* (Linda). When not performing onstage, Lindsay serves as San Francisco Playhouse's Rising Star Program Coordinator. Follow them on IG @lindsaysporleder to see what projects are up next. Thank you to their loving partner and kitty who are their light in the dark. Meow! ♥

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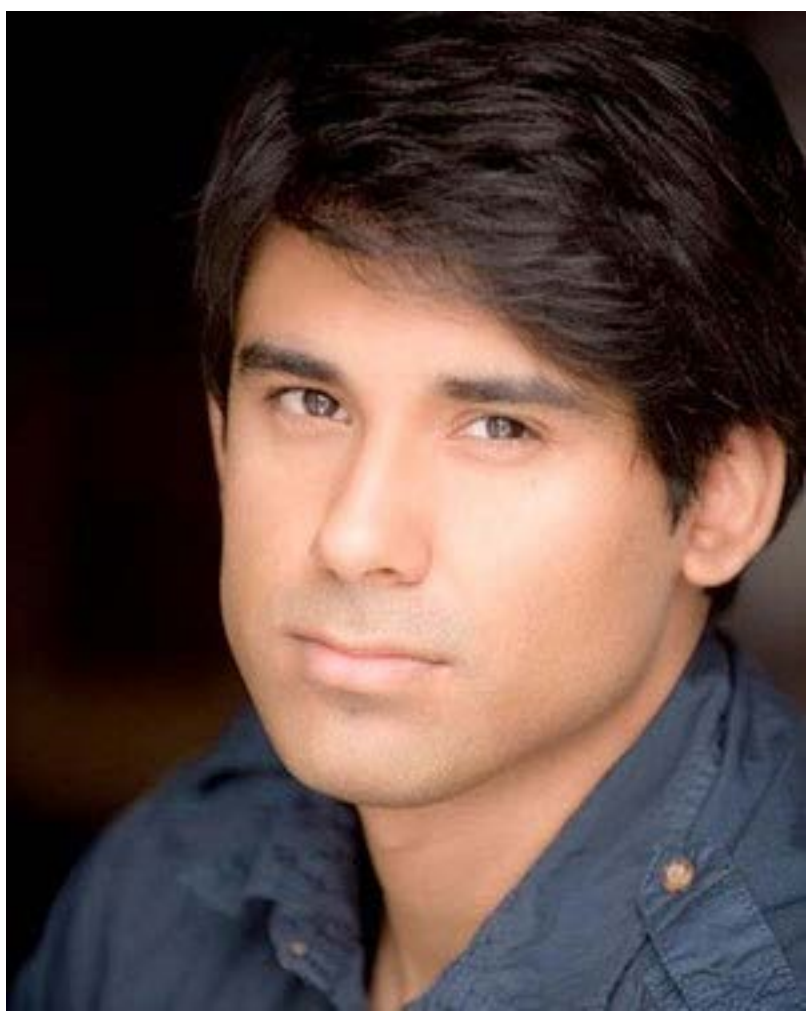
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Victor Velasquez (*Ensemble: Gordon, Pastor*) is excited to take part in their first production with SBMT in a personal favorite musical – *RENT*! Some favorite roles include Pinocchio in *Shrek* (FMT), Sir Andrew Aguecheek in *Twelfth Night* (SJSU), and Chip Tolentino in *...Putnam County Spelling Bee* (MPC). “Thanks to the wonderful cast, my friends and family, Tyler P. for the cat sitting, and to my kitten Matcha, who is NOT my biggest fan.”

meet the staff

Alanna Bardell (*Assistant Stage Manager*) is excited to debut at SBMT with this production of *RENT* and return to stage management after nearly a decade. Recent theatre work is primarily projections design with TTC, plus some assistance with sound design/programming. “*RENT* was my dream show long before I could fathom the scale of the grief and betrayal of the AIDS crisis. I resent that I have a better frame of reference now, but my younger self was right: it’s been great to work. Thinking of those we’ve lost to AIDS, to COVID, to queerphobia, to fascism, to everything – and those they left behind.”



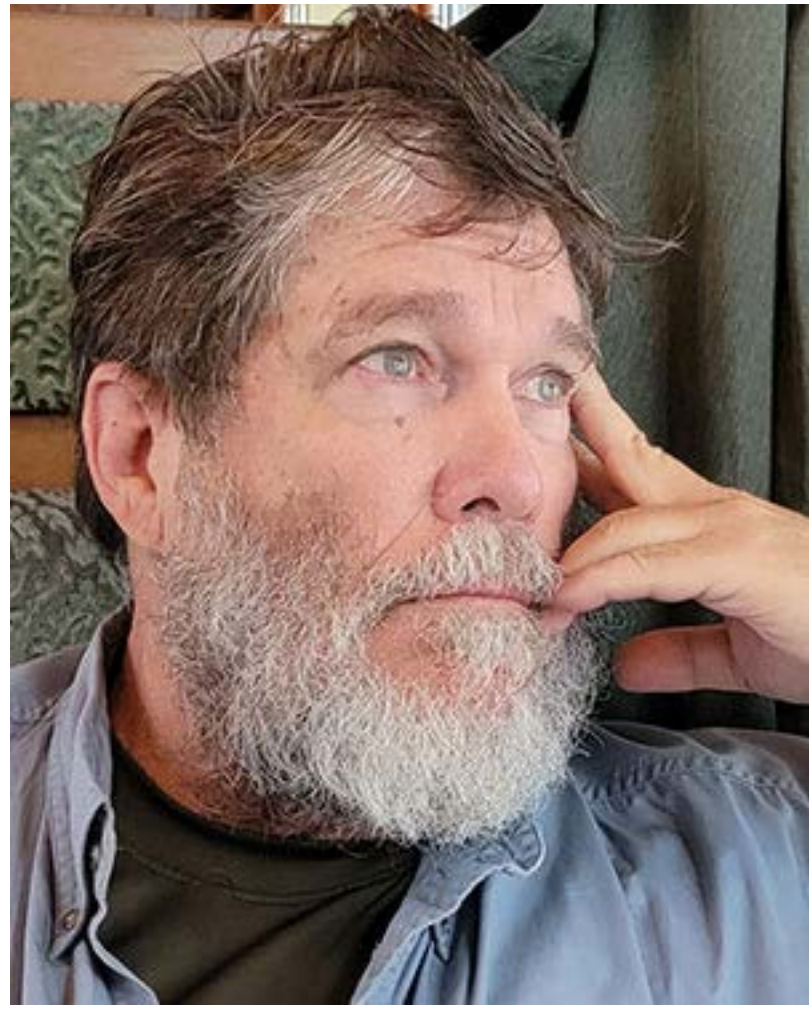
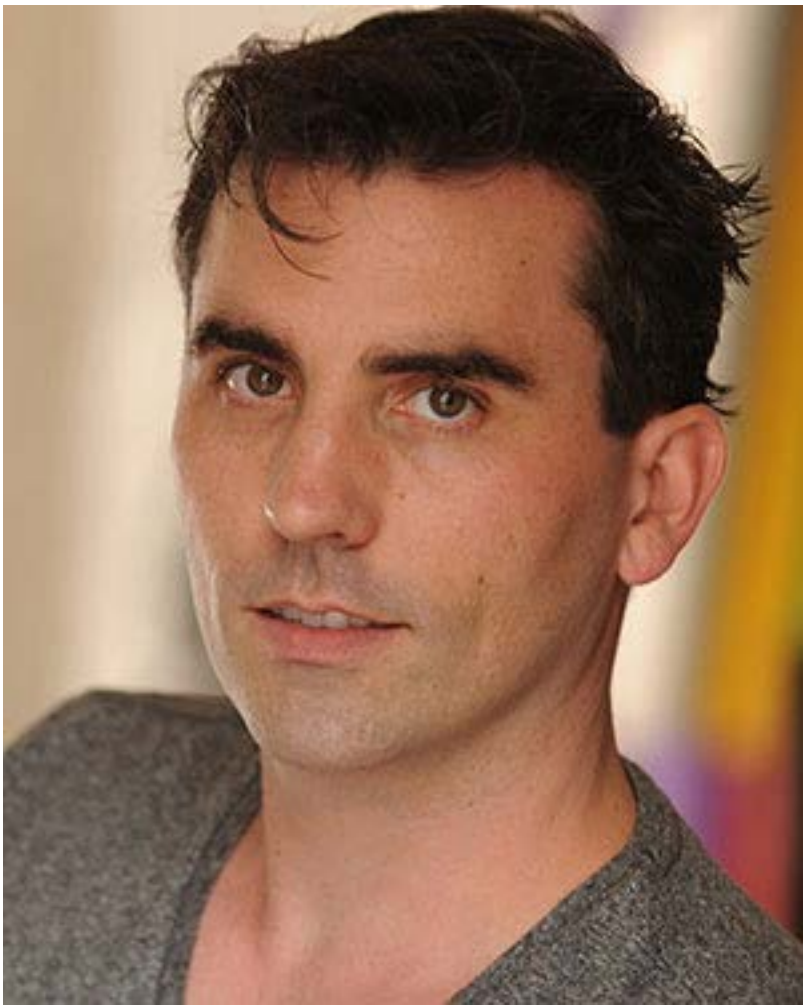
Chris Beer (*Technical Director*) is happy to return to the theatre. Previously, he has worked in a variety of roles for SBMT productions, including Tech Director (*Thoroughly Modern Millie*, *Big River*, *She Loves Me*, *Singin’ in the Rain*), Props Designer (*Peter and the Starcatcher*), and Sound Designer (*Shout! The Mod Musical*, *A Gentleman’s Guide to Love & Murder*, *Mame*, and *Peter and the Starcatcher*). By day, Chris is a Software Developer for the Stanford Libraries.

Patricia Bilello (*Props Designer*) is a theatre mom of three performers, a wife of one husband, and artisan of thousands of props. She is also a costumes associate at Starting Arts in San Jose, and the creative designer at Props Out of the Blue Studio, where she offers classes to young people who want to learn about the art of



props making. In her free time, she designs props for various community theatres in the Bay Area.

Brett Carlson (*Set Designer*) is delighted to work on another set for SBMT, although you may be tired of seeing his work as he’s done the sets for *Company*, *Shout! The Mod Musical*, and *She Loves Me* immediately before the COVID shutdowns, and *The Spitfire Grill* earlier this year. Brett is also the Technical Director at Notre Dame High School.



Richard Cartwright (*Master Carpenter*) has performed, stage managed, and built sets for many shows at SBMT, and cites our 1994 *Anything Goes* as a favorite. He led set construction for shows like *Thoroughly Modern Millie*; *Mame*; *My Fair Lady*; *Gypsy* (which he also designed); *Kiss Me, Kate*; *Hairspray*; *Les Mis*; *Promises, Promises*; *42nd Street*; *Chicago* (Harriette Hill Award); and our 2007 production of *She Loves Me* (Producer’s Award). He has also stage managed and tech directed at SCP. Sincere thanks to all who have helped him build this set. Special thanks to his wife, Marilyn, for help, support, and understanding—and “letting me play with my friends.”

Cayleigh Coester (*Stage Manager*) is pleased to be a part of SBMT’s production of *RENT*. She was most recently seen stage managing for SVS’s *King Lear* and running the light board for their *Shakespeare in Love*. She has been part of productions put on by SJSC, including *The Toxic Avenger*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, and *Chicago*. She has also been part of the resident staff for TTC and worked on productions there including *Arsenic and Old Lace*, *Turn of the Screw*, *Swift Justice*, *The Odd Couple*, and *Wait Until Dark*. Most recently, Cayleigh has been backstage for PAP’s productions of *The Play That Goes Wrong* and *Spongebob: The Musical*. Cayleigh can also be seen around Red Barn Productions’ Dickens Fair as part of the audio team. Next, she will be stage managing at CLTC for their upcoming show *Nora’s A Doll’s House*. Cayleigh would like to thank her loving partner and supportive family.





Jennifer Cuevas (*Co-Director/Co-Choreographer*) is no stranger to the SBMT stage, having participated in many of its recent productions. She is happy to return to an offstage role, working with this wonderful cast, crew, and staff. Director credits include *A Chorus Line* and *Once On This Island*. Choreography credits include *A Chorus Line*, *Pippin*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Gentleman's Guide...*, and *Spring Awakening*. Producer credits include *RENT*, *Avenue Q*, *The Drowsy Chaperone*, and *Cabaret*. Costume Design credits include *The Mystery of Edwin Drood*, *Spring Awakening*, and *Urinetown*. Onstage credits include Regan in *King Lear* (SVS), Lola in *Damn Yankees* (TVRT), Annie in *The Play That Goes Wrong* (PAP), Esmeralda in *The Hunchback of Notre Dame* (SBMT), Morales in *A Chorus Line* (LASC), and Mei-li in *Flower Drum Song* (WVLO). Upcoming on the SBMT stage, she will take on the role of Désirée in *A Little Night Music*. When not on stage, Jennifer works as a proud bean-counter in the life science industry. Special thanks to Nicole for partnering up with her on this project. “I could have not done this without her! Working mamas unite!” Her love and appreciation reaches the depths of the universe for her treasured support system for allowing her to continue to participate in this beautiful thing called theatre.

Doug Hughes (*Marketing Director*) has been SBMT's “graphics guy” since 2018. In that capacity, he has designed 20 programs, edited over 200 videos, and created countless logos, collateral items, and social media posts. Doug appeared in SBMT's production of *Big River*, as well as WVLO's *Sister Act*, *Fiddler on the Roof*, and *The Drowsy Chaperone*, BPP's *Little Shop of Horrors*, and SCP's *Once Upon a Mattress*. He and our box office manager, Diane Hughes, have been happily married for nearly 43 years.



Andy Kline (*Vocal Director*) (she/her) was last seen on stage as Hesione in WVLO's *Triumph of Love*. An experienced professional vocalist and choral conductor, she has the pleasure of serving as WVLO's Resident Vocal Director, and will be vd'ing for their upcoming fall show, *Young Frankenstein*. As a Gen-Xer, Andy is especially thrilled to be making her SBMT artistic

staff debut vocal directing the musical masterpiece rock operetta that is *RENT*. If you enjoy DIY trash-to-treasure furniture makeovers, you can catch Andy over on YouTube, in her one-woman show: Furniture Fables by Andy! @andy_kline_ @furniturefablesbyandy



Christine Lovejoy (*Music Director*) Usually seen behind a drum kit with energy drink in hand, Christine is adding Music Director to her résumé! She is beyond excited to be able to play *and* music direct one of the first shows that sparked her love for musical theatre. A lifelong musician, Christine got her start in the concert band world, but has since expanded her reach to include a variety of musical genres—musicals, rock bands, orchestras, choirs, wind bands, etc. After spending her days with middle school musicians, she is excited to share this experience with the talented cast and behind-the-scenes teams of *RENT*!

Kalyn McKenzie (*Production Manager*) (she/her) joined the SBMT staff last June and is excited to have her first show as PM under her belt. She has worked backstage as a crew member on SBMT's productions of *Company* and *Shout! The Mod Musical*. She stage managed *The Dreamer Project* and *Mayram, Woman of Bethlehem* through SJSU. She has also been Assistant Stage Manager in shows at both SJSU and WVC. Kalyn wants to thank all her co-workers here at SBMT for welcoming her in and helping her learn the ropes. She also wants to thank her family and partner for being so supportive. Now, onto the next show. @mckenzie.kalyn



Walter M. Mayes (*Producer*) has been an SBMT mainstay since his triumphant return to the stage (after a 20-year absence) in 2008's *Man of La Mancha*. He directed *A Gentleman's Guide to Love & Murder*; *The Producers*; *...Forum*; *Promises, Promises*; *Hairspray*; *The Genius of Leonard Bernstein*; *1776*; *Chess in Concert*; and *Peter & the Starcatcher*, and produced *Finian's Rainbow*; *Anything Goes*; *Kiss Me, Kate*; *My Fair Lady*; and *Mame*. He was last seen on this stage as The King in *Big River*. Walter has also worked with The

Pear, LTSJ, and SCP as a director; and CLTC, PAP, Cabrillo Stage, SVS, BBB, FMT, and the Redwood Symphony as an actor. Walter is the librarian at The Girls' Middle School in Palo Alto.

Gioconda “Gia” Mirra (*Assistant Stage Manager/Asst. to the Producer*) (she/her) is delighted to make her ASM debut with SBMT's *RENT*. She previously served as Stage Manager for SLP's *Blithe Spirit*. Other shows in which she's performed include LMT's *The Addams Family* (Lurch Addams/Lucas Beineke understudy), Inferno Theatre's *The Tempest* (Trinculo) and Chabot's new work *Dirty in Emotion* (Piper). Her unwavering passion for the arts takes her all over the Bay Area, whether on stage or behind the scenes. In December, look out for her in Coastal Rep's production of *White Christmas*, where she'll be portraying Rita! Follow Gia's journey at giocondamirra.com (Instagram:giamammamia).

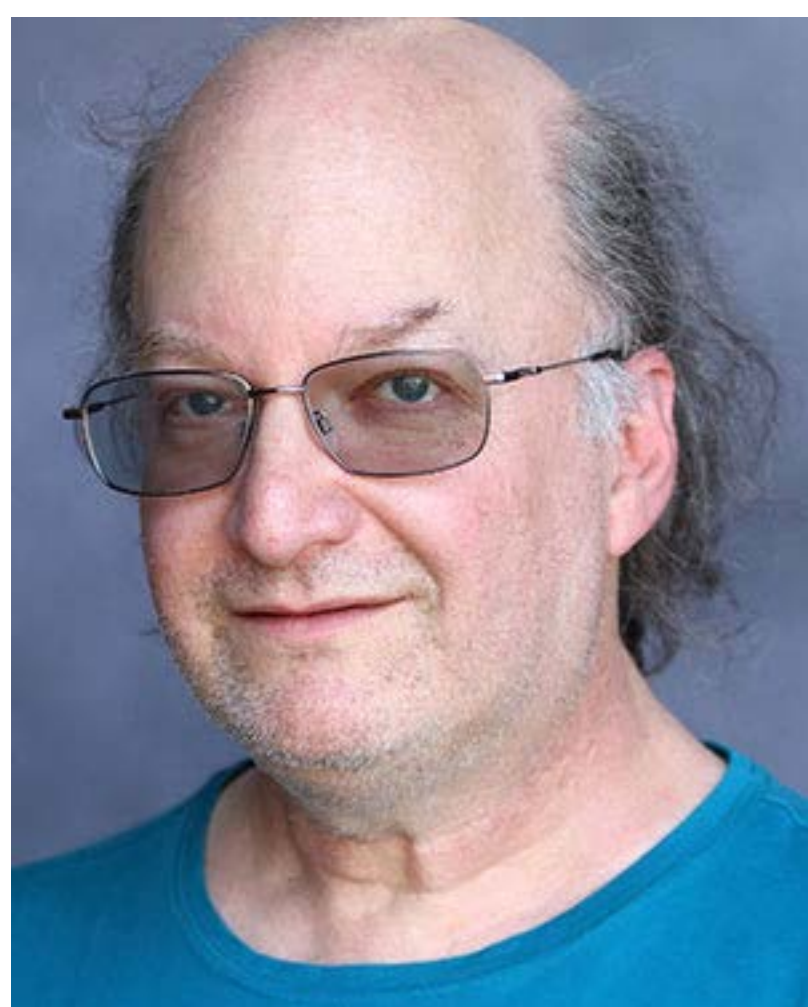


Don Nguyen (*Projections Designer*) Recent projections design credits: Opera Cultura's *Très Minutos*, SJSU Opera Theater's *Bernstein's Mass*, SJSU Choraliers and The Choral Project's *Considering Matthew Shepard*. Don's performing credits: *She Loves Me* (Maître d') with SBMT, OSJ's chorus member ('18-'19 season), *Urinetown* with SJSU and WVC. Don is beyond grateful to SBMT for giving him his first performing and designing opportunities outside of his collegiate environment, as well as a sense of community during the pandemic. IG: @mrdonnguyen

Y. Sharon Peng (*Costume, Hair & Make-up Designer*) is a guild member of IATSE Local 706 and an alum of FIDM. Recent stage costumes include *The Producers* (HBT), *Failure: A Love Story* (Castilleja School), *Into the Woods* (FMT), and *Chri-skirkpatrickmas* (Edinburgh Fringe Festival). Recent titles in Film & Television include *Ride* (Costume Supervisor), *Finger* (Costume Designer), *Anime Crimes Division Season 2* (Costume Designer), and *Stranger Things Season 4* (Makeup Artist). Sharon is a Wig & Makeup foreperson at SFO and also heads the Wigs & Makeup Departments of both OSJ and the Merola Opera Program. Recent Wig & Makeup design



in Opera include *The Rape of Lucretia* (Merola), *The Shining* (Opera Parallèle), and *Cinderella* (OSJ). Visit ysharonpeng.net for more work across two decades.



Noah Price (*Lighting Designer*) found his place backstage during junior high after missing the auditions for *Cheaper by the Dozen*. The shadows suited him, and he went on to design lighting for over a hundred musical, drama, and dance productions by the end of college. He has been designing stage lighting ever since, including shows around the Bay Area from San Francisco to Morgan Hill. *Rent* is Noah's first full musical with SBMT. Other recent lighting designs include *Cinderella* (WVLO), *Little Women* (TKA), *Freaky Friday* (TKA) and *Welcome to the Sixties* (SBMT).

Jay Steele (*Assistant Master Carpenter*) has produced numerous productions for SBMT, including *Big River*; *City of Angels*; *Hairspray*; *Promises, Promises*; *42nd Street*; and *The Producers*. He is a veteran SBMT performer, most recently seen as Archdeacon Frollo (*The Hunchback of Notre Dame*), Alfie Doolittle (*My Fair Lady*), and Gangster #1 (*Kiss Me, Kate*). Jay has appeared with many local companies, including SJS, CLTC, LTSJ, WVLO, and LLMT. He served on the SBMT board for 15 years, and was board chair for more than a decade. In our recent productions, Jay has been most involved in set construction and props design.



Nicole Tung (*Co-Director/Co-Choreographer*) (she/her) is an award-nominated actor, director, and choreographer. A Bay Area native and current SBMT Board Member, her recent stage credits include *Colonialism is Terrible but Pho is Delicious* at Aurora Theater (BATCC nomination - Thuy/ Mui/ Danielle), *Pajama Game* at 42nd St. Moon ("Steam Heat" cover), *Chinglish* at SF Playhouse (Xi Yan), and currently *Bald Sisters* at SJSC (Him). Commercial work includes Pager Duty, Stanford Children's Health, California Olive Oil, and Slack. Directing/Choreography credits: *Almost, Maine* (SBMT-online reading), *Vanya & Sonya & Masha & Spike*, *City of Angels* (SVCT), *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (SBMT). Favorite roles: Wife to Jason, and mama to their daughter, Kalana. IG: nicole__tung

Angela Yeung (*Sound Designer*) is delighted to rejoin SBMT as Sound Designer for *Rent*. Angela has sound designed and engineered over 20 musical productions across the Bay Area, including *Camelot*, *West Side Story*, and *Working* at SCP, *Mamma Mia!*, *42nd Street*, and *The Will Rogers Follies* at WVLO, *Company* and *Big River* at SBMT, *Ain't Misbehavin'* at HBT, *Beauty and the Beast* at PAP, and *The Revolutionists* at ACT. Angela dedicates this show to her loving boyfriend, David, who fills her life with laughter and light.



List of Abbreviations in this program

ACT = American Conservatory Theatre; BBB = Broadway by the Bay; BPP = Blue Plaid Players; CLTC = City Lights Theater Company; FIDM = Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising; FMT = Foothill Music Theatre; FUSD = Fremont Union School District; HBT = Hillbarn Theatre; LASC = Los Altos Stage Company; LLMT = Lamplighters Music Theater; LMT = Landmark Musical Theatre; LTSJ = Lyric Theatre of San Jose; MPC = Monterey Peninsula College; OSU = Opera San José; PAP = Palo Alto Players; PCT = Pintello Comedy Theatre; PSP = Pacifica Spindrift Players; RCCT = Redwood City Community Theatre; RWS = Redwood Symphony; SBMT = South Bay Musical Theatre; SCP = Sunnyvale Community Players; SCU = Santa Clara University; SFO = San Francisco Opera; SFSU = San Francisco State University; SJSC = San Jose Stage Company; SJSU = San Jose State University; SLP = San Leandro Players; SVCT = South Valley Civic Theatre; SVS = Silicon Valley Shakespeare; TTC = Tabard Theatre Company; TKA = The King's Academy; TVRT = Tri-Valley Repertory Theatre; WCT = Woodside Community Theatre; WVC = West Valley College; WSM = Woodminster Summer Musicals; WVLO = WVLO Musical Theatre Company.

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Singin' in the Rain photo by Dave Lepori.



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Multimedia links. Learn more about *RENT* from the team that created it. **Please note: these links contain audio, so please do not access them while seated inside the theater.**



[VIDEO](#): **Tyler Savin** (Roger) talks about *RENT*'s relevance today, and names the songs that he found most challenging and most rewarding. He also tells us what drew him to audition for this show.



[VIDEO](#): **Justin Kerekes** (Mark) talks about how the show evolved from Puccini's *La Bohème*, its appropriateness for younger patrons, and shares a clip from his Instagram takeover.



[VIDEO](#): **Nicole Roca** (Maureen) talks about how she approached her character (and gives us a sneak peek), and explains how the cast learned about the 90s cultural references.



[VIDEO](#): **Lucy Nino** (Alexi Darling) tells us about her favorite song, her background in theatre, and compares *RENT* to SBMT's next show, *A Little Night Music*—which she will also appear in!



[VIDEO](#): **Justin Sabino** (Angel) discusses his role, the show, Jonathan Larson's music, and the joyful experience of working with so many like-minded actors.

looking ahead

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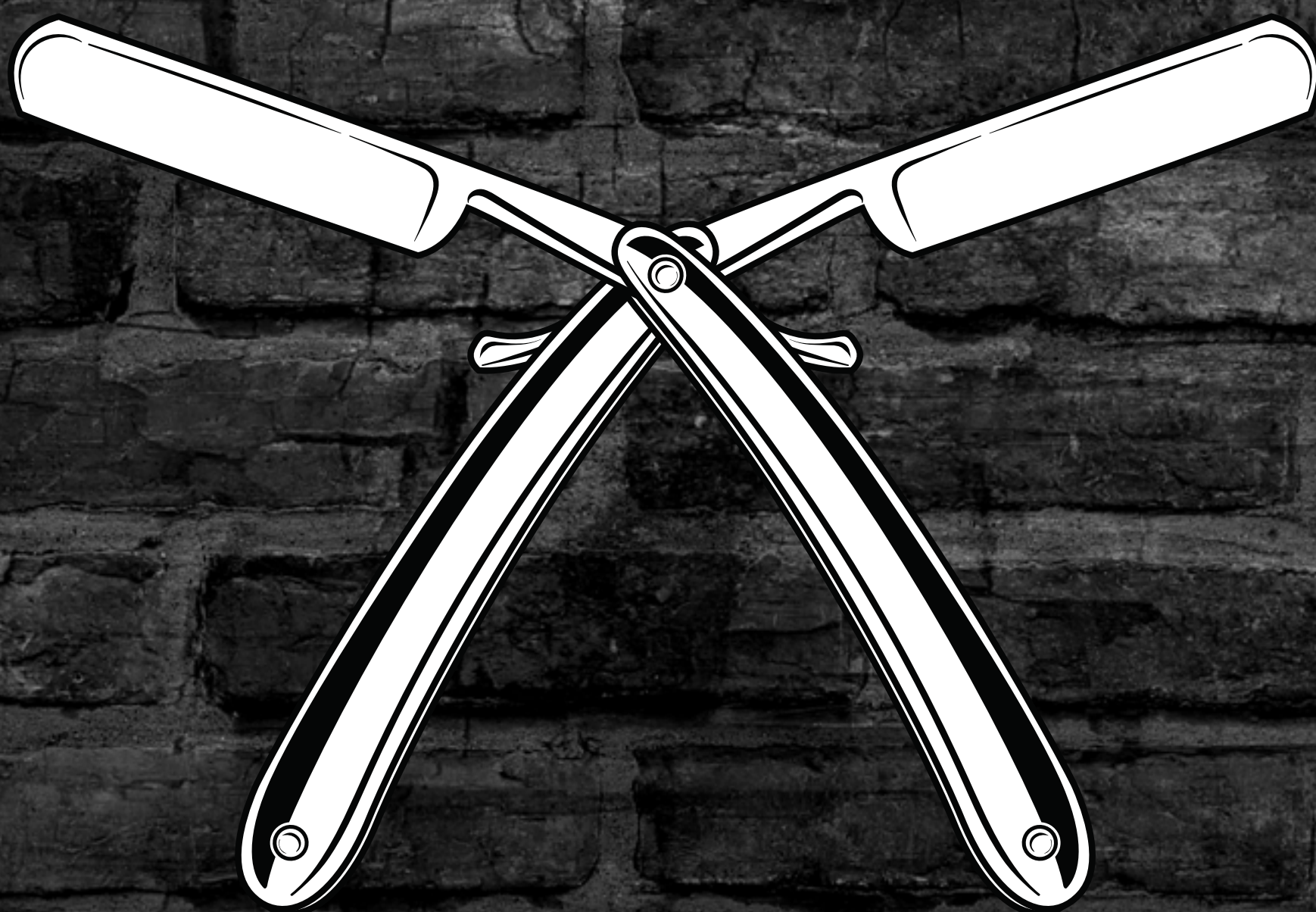
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