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**SOUTH BAY MUSICAL THEATRE ANNOUNCES
CAST AND CREATIVE TEAM FOR *RENT*
a Pulitzer Prize-winning musical by Jonathan Larson,
SEPTEMBER 30 - OCTOBER 21, 2023**

(Sept. 4, 2023 - Saratoga, CA) South Bay Musical Theatre is thrilled to announce its upcoming production of *RENT*, a revolutionary musical written by the legendary Jonathan Larson that is one of only 10 Broadway musicals in history to win the coveted Pulitzer Prize for Drama.

Based loosely on Puccini's *La Bohème*, about falling in love, finding your voice, and living for today, *RENT* has become a cultural phenomenon, with songs that rock and a story that resonates. It follows "525,600 minutes" (one year) in the life of a group of impoverished youths struggling to survive and create in New York's Lower East Side, under the shadow of AIDS. How they pursue their dreams provides a narrative thread that is at once exuberant, passionate, and joyous.

The 27-year-old musical, which is coming to the Saratoga stage for the first time, is being co-directed and choreographed by the team of Nicole Tung and Jennifer Cuevas (formerly Jennifer C. Maggio), both of whom have served on SBMT's Board of Directors.

Background

"*RENT* was a groundbreaking work that changed how people viewed musical theater when it debuted on Broadway," said Ms. Tung. "On its face, it's a story about artists surviving in New York during a crisis of housing instability exacerbated by a viral pandemic that shook the world. But it's also a timeless tale about love and hope. These are topics and emotions that still resonate in our community today."

"Our predominantly all-female creative staff is honored and excited to bring back this nostalgic production," added Ms. Cuevas, "not only to revisit it with those who experienced it the first time around, but also to introduce its powerful message to a new generation. We hope to bring the raw reality of New York's East Village in the early 90s to the South Bay audience, while highlighting this amazing score."

“Absolutely,” Ms. Tung agreed. “We invite our patrons to come for an *experience*, not just a show.”

The cast for this production boasts a lineup of extraordinary local talent, led by Tyler Savin as “Roger,” Lindsay Sporleder as “Mimi,” Justin Kerekes as “Mark,” Nicole Roca as “Maureen,” Adrien Gleason as “Collins,” Justin Sabino as “Angel,” Sydney Bamberg as “Joanne,” and James M. Jones as “Benny.” The ensemble cast members include Chris Fernandez, Juliet Green, Cleopatra Howell, Syeda Huq, Luna Lau, Steven McCloud, Jamari McGee, Lucy Nino, Rachel Rivera, and Victor Velasquez.

Dates and ticket info

RENT runs from September 30 to October 21, 2023 at the Saratoga Civic Theater (13777 Fruitvale Ave, Saratoga, CA 95070), with a press opening on Saturday, September 30, 2023 at 8:00 p.m. Those attending opening night are invited to a champagne reception following the performance. Evening performances start at 8 p.m. while matinees (Sundays and the closing Saturday) start at 2:30 p.m. Adult tickets are \$25 - \$55. There are \$2 discounts for seniors, 65 and older, and \$25 tickets for students and children. Tickets may be purchased online at SouthBayMT.com or by calling 408-266-4734.

Besides the co-directors Ms. Tung and Ms. Cuevas, others on the mostly female creative staff for *RENT* include: Christine Lovejoy (Music Director), Andrea Kline (Vocal Director), Cayleigh Coester (Stage Manager), Alanna Bardell and Gia Mirra (Assistant Stage Managers), Y. Sharon Peng (Costume, Hair & Makeup Designer), Angela Yeung (Sound Designer), Patricia Bilello (Props Designer), and Kalyn McKenzie (Production Manager). Men on the team working behind the scenes include Noah Price (Lighting Designer), Don Nguyen (Projections Designer), Brett Carlson (Set Designer), Richard Cartwright (Master Carpenter), Chris Beer (Technical Director), and Walter M. Mayes (Producer).

Other accolades

In addition to the Pulitzer Prize, *RENT* also garnered four Tony® Awards in 1996, including Best Musical, Best Book, and Best Original Score by Jonathan Larson. Larson’s collaborators included Steve Skinner (musical arrangements), Billy Aronson (concept & additional lyrics), Tim Weil (music supervision & arrangements), and Lynn Thompson (dramaturgy). The Broadway production ran for 12 years, until 2008, making it one of the longest-running shows on Broadway at the time.

About South Bay Musical Theatre

South Bay Musical Theatre (SBMT) was founded in 1963 and is now in its 61st year of providing Noteworthy Entertainment to Bay Area audiences as a non-profit organization. For more information or to obtain tickets online, visit their website at www.SouthBayMT.com.

Follow SBMT on social media for updates and behind-the-scenes glimpses:

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Twitter: @SouthBayMT
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TikTok: @southbaymusicaltheatre

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FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: South Bay Musical Theatre presents *RENT*, a musical by Jonathan Larson.

WHEN: Sept. 30 - Oct 21, 2023 (press opening on Sat. Sept. 30 at 8 p.m.)
Fridays and Saturdays (and Thursday, Oct. 19) at 8 pm.; Sundays (and closing
Saturday, Oct. 21) at 2:30 p.m.

WHERE: Saratoga Civic Theater, 13777 Fruitvale Ave, Saratoga, CA 95070

RUNNING TIME: *Rent* runs 2 hours and 30 minutes, including one 15-minute
intermission.

TICKETS: (\$25-\$55) may be purchased online at www.SouthBayMT.com or by calling
408-266-4734.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Downloadable high-resolution publicity photos, suitable for
publication, will be available on SBMT's "PRESS" page prior to opening night at
www.SouthBayMT.com/about-sbmt/press/. All photos are by Dave Lepori.

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