

# AUDITION & PRODUCTION INFORMATION



Book, Music and Lyrics by  
Jonathan Larsen

RENT The rock musical phenomenon that defined a generation and paved the way for all contemporary musicals that followed. Rent has book, music and lyrics by Jonathan Larson, whose talents you may recognise from the recent Oscar nominated Netflix film 'Tick, Tick... Boom!'

RENT was an overnight sensation on Broadway ultimately winning four Tony Awards, six Drama Desk Awards and the hugely prestigious Pulitzer Prize for Drama. It ran on Broadway for 12 years

## Introduction

Welcome to the Centre Stage Taupo's 'RENT' audition pack. Thank you for taking the time to read this information and considering being a part of this show. Please read all information carefully, particularly regarding rehearsals, show dates and character descriptions.

All roles available in RENT are limited to age 15 years and above. Diversity is encouraged and all groups are welcome to audition.

## Production Team

Director Sharon Shanks  
Musical Director Kaylene Carson  
Production Manager Tanya Durrant

## Dates

Information Evening: **Monday, 13 June 2022 7pm** at The Playhouse, 2 Matai St, Taupo.

Auditions: **23, 24, 25 June 2022** at The Playhouse, 2 Matai Street, Taupo. Call backs if required on Sunday 26 June 2022. If you cannot make these dates contact [rent@centrestagetaupo.co.nz](mailto:rent@centrestagetaupo.co.nz)

Rehearsals to start Tuesday **28 June 2022**

On Stage: **12 - 22 October 2022** (10 performances) at The Playhouse, 2 Matai Street, Taupo



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MAKE AUDITION APPOINTMENT ONLINE

[www.centrestagetaupo.co.nz](http://www.centrestagetaupo.co.nz)

COMPLETE AND SUBMIT YOUR AUDITION FORM

[www.centrestagetaupo.co.nz](http://www.centrestagetaupo.co.nz)

*Audition bookings and audition application form will be available on Monday, 30 May 2022*

### **Preparation for Audition**

- Bring a photograph of yourself – headshot printed on paper is suitable
- Please arrive early for your audition allowing time to sign-in and ensure you are vocally warmed up
- Bring fluids
- Prepare your audition to the best of your ability – this shows you are serious about being involved and that you have given considerable thought to your audition. Nothing will frustrate the creative team more than those people who come unprepared
- Have some understanding of the character(s) you are auditioning for
- Be professional and bring lots of energy to your performance

And enjoy yourself!

### **Song choice**

- Audition song (approximately two minutes or less) should show off your vocal range and be pop or rock style OR a song from the show.
- Please come prepared with a backing track (without vocals on it) on a USB or on your phone (but not part of a playlist please).

There are no choreographed dances in RENT.

You will be auditioning before a panel consisting of the director, musical director and a committee representative from Centre Stage Taupo.

Please be prepared for the possibility of a call back (on Sunday 26 June). Timing will be dictated by the total number of those auditioning. Getting a call back does not guarantee a role. Likewise, you may be cast even if you are not called back. Please ensure that you have entered a contact telephone number on your audition application form where we can easily reach you during the audition dates.

### **Rehearsals**

Rehearsals will be on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays. Not all cast will be required at all rehearsals until later in the schedule. Centre Stage reserve the right to change these days on occasion if required

A rehearsal schedule will be presented at the first cast meeting prior to rehearsals.

The show runs from 12th - 22nd October – ten shows. You must be available for all evenings and weekends during this time, including pack out on 23rd October 2022.

## CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

*Please note the ages indicated are stage age only, if you are older or younger STILL audition*

### **Roger Davis**

A struggling musician and former drug addict. He is reminiscent of Kurt Cobain. Room mates with Mark in the loft and battles with being HIV-positive.

Gender: Male

Age: 20 to 40

Vocal range top: A4

Vocal range bottom: F2

### **Mark Cohen**

Filmmaker and video artist. Knee deep in his own soul-searching, Mark is the typical young artist. He and Roger are roommates in the loft. A bit of a nerd.

Gender: Male

Age: 20 to 40

Vocal range top: G4

Vocal range bottom: A2

### **Tom Collins**

A computer genius and liberal professor. He is a nurturer with a smooth and relaxed disposition. Used to be a roommate in the loft and is HIV-positive.

Gender: Male

Age: 25 to 45

Vocal range top: A4

Vocal range bottom: F#2

### **Benjamin Coffin**

The landlord of Mark and Roger's apartment building. A former room mate in the loft, Benny traded in his personal morals for power and wealth.

Gender: Male

Age: 25 to 45

Vocal range top: F#4

Vocal range bottom: Bb2

### **Joanne Jefferson**

A public interest lawyer and headstrong lesbian. She is smart and purposeful in all her decisions. Carries on a tumultuous relationship with Maureen.

Gender: Female

Age: 25 to 45

Vocal range top: E5

Vocal range bottom: G3

### **Angel Dumott Schunard**

The eccentric HIV-positive street drummer. A drag queen with a kind and magnetic personality. He becomes Tom's lover.

Gender: Male

Age: 20 to 40

Vocal range top: A4

Vocal range bottom: C3

### **Mimi Marquez**

An HIV-positive exotic dancer with drug addictions. She conceals it all at her job in the local strip club. She lives in the same building as the loft.

Gender: Female

Age: 18 to 35

Vocal range top: E5

Vocal range bottom: Eb3

### **Maureen Johnson**

An unpredictably zany performance artist. Maureen oozes sexuality and used to live in the loft. She has recently dumped Mark for Joanne.

Gender: Female

Age: 20 to 35

Vocal range top: F5

Vocal range bottom: C4

### **Ensemble**

Homeless Men & Women; Junkies, Parents (Mrs. Cohen, Mr. & Mrs. Jefferson); Support Group (Steve, Gordon)

Total cast required 20 people

## **SYNOPSIS**

Rent follows a year in the life of a group of impoverished young artists and musicians struggling to survive and create in New York's Lower East Side, under the shadow of HIV/AIDS.

### **Act One**

**Mark**, a filmmaker and the show's narrator, is spending a cold Christmas Eve in the industrial loft that he shares with his musician roommate, **Roger**. They receive several phone calls. The first is from Mark's mother, consoling him over the loss of his girlfriend, **Maureen**, a performance artist, to **Joanne**, a Harvard Law School graduate. The second is from their friend, **Tom Collins**, who is detained by muggers. The last is from their landlord, **Benny**, demanding the rent.



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Outside, Collins is reeling from the mugging. He is comforted by **Angel**, a street musician, who offers him a helping hand. Both HIV+, Angel and Collins head out for a night on the town and a life support meeting.

In response to a call for help, Mark sets out for the lot where Maureen is performing a protest against Benny's eviction of the homeless from a nearby lot. He urges Roger to come along but he refuses; **Mimi**, who lives below Mark and Roger, knocks with a request: "Light My Candle." The attraction between her and Roger is immediate, but Roger shies away.

Benny enters with a proposal: if Mark and Roger stop Maureen's protest, he will forgo the rent. He entices them with plans for Cyber Arts, a state-of-the-art, multimedia studio that will realize all of their dreams. Unsuccessful, Benny leaves. Mark, Collins and Angel try to coax Roger into coming to the life support meeting with them but he refuses.

Mark finally reaches the lot where Maureen will perform her protest. He encounters Joanne, struggling with the sound equipment and the many demands that Maureen makes upon her. Mark offers help. Although they dreaded meeting, they have a lot in common.

In her apartment, Mimi dresses and appeals to an imaginary Roger to take her out. She barges into his apartment but, after a passionate kiss, he vehemently rejects her. They fight, her words blending with the affirmation of the support group that emphasizes the importance of living the moment but the group members ask "Will I lose my dignity / Will someone care?"

After the meeting, Mark, Angel and Collins roam the lot. Discouraged by life in New York, the three dream of opening up a restaurant in "Santa Fe." The scene changes to St. Mark's Place, where vendors hawk their wares to the bohemians of the East Village.. Mark finds Roger, who spots Mimi looking for drugs. Roger apologizes and asks her to dinner. Just as the snow begins to fall, Maureen finally appears to perform her protest, "Over the Moon."

Following the protest, all convene at the Life Café, including Benny, who announces that Bohemia is dead. Thus ensues a makeshift mock-wake that quickly segues into a celebration of "La Vie Boheme." During the song, Benny confronts Mimi and threatens to reveal their past affair to Roger. Beepers go off to remind the revelers to take their AZT. Roger and Mimi each discover that the other is HIV+. Frightened and excited, they vow to be together. Joanne has been sent back to the lot by Maureen several times to check on the equipment. She finally rebels, telling Maureen that their relationship is over and announcing a riot in the lot: Benny has padlocked the building and called the cops, but the homeless are standing their ground. The artists rejoice.

## Act Two

The second act begins with the company posing the question, "How do you measure a year in the life?" ("Seasons of Love"). It is one week later, New Year's Eve, and Mark, Roger, Mimi, Maureen, Joanne, Angel and Collins are having a breaking-back-into-the-building party. Mark gets a phone message from a tabloid TV producer who is salivating over his footage of the riot. Benny crashes the party, angering Roger and alienating Roger from Mimi. Dejected, Mimi wanders outside and into the welcoming arms of her drug dealer.

Mark fast forwards to Valentine's Day. Roger and Mimi are still together. Angel and Collins could be anywhere. Maureen and Joanne are still rehearsing another show.

The company reprises "Seasons of Love," and time marches forward again to the spring. Roger and Mimi have a fight and Roger walks out. Alone, Mimi reflects on what life would be like without Roger. At the same time, Collins nurses a sick Angel; Maureen and Joanne reconcile; as do Mimi and Roger.

At the end of the summer, Alexi is still courting Mark for her TV show. Roger and Mimi break up, as do Maureen and Joanne. Angel dies. At a memorial service, his friends remember his spirit. Collins remembers his love. Outside of the church, Mark phones Alexi to accept the job. Mark ponders how life has changed since last year, Roger has sold his guitar and is leaving town. Mimi is now with Benny. A fight erupts among Roger, Mimi, Maureen, Joanne and Benny. Collins interrupts them with the sorrowful reality that the family is breaking up. Joanne and Maureen reunite. Mimi and Benny leave.

Mark tries to convince Roger to stay in New York and face both his own pain and the fact that Mimi is very sick. Benny offers one helping hand to Mimi and extends the other to Collins to help him pay Angel's funeral expenses. Mimi refuses the help and flees.

Mark considers the events and faces the last year, as does Roger, who is on his way to Santa Fe. Roger begins to discover his own song, and Mark turns down the television job to finish his own film.

Roger's mom, Mark's mom, Mimi's mom and Joanne's father all wonder where their children are. Back at the loft, Mark tells us again that it's Christmas and he now has a rough version of his film, which he's going to show tonight. Roger has returned with his song written, but cannot find Mimi. Collins enters with money that he has gotten from an ATM, rewired to give money to anyone with a special password: A-N-G-E-L.

Maureen and Joanne suddenly arrive, holding Mimi, whom they found collapsed and near death in the park. Roger begs her not to die and sings for her the song it has taken him all year to write.

The company joins in a reprise of the affirmation that love is all and that there is "no day but today" ("Finale").

### **Production Expectations**

Your participation in this production requires your undivided commitment in order to ensure a production of the highest possible quality. If cast, you cannot commit to any other production during the rehearsal period and production season unless it is discussed with the Director. You should not audition if you are unable to commit to the rehearsal and production schedule. If you have any other commitments (personal or work) that may impact on your ability to attend 4 rehearsals, you must provide full details in your audition application form. Not all performers will be required at all rehearsals, and rehearsals will be scheduled as carefully as possible to make the best use of your time.

### **Casting Announcement**

Performers will be notified by email or phone of the outcome of their audition as soon as possible following casting. Feedback will not be given. A full cast announcement will be subsequently made via the Centre Stage media channels.

All cast and crew are considered to be goodwill ambassadors for Centre Stage Taupo and for the show and we expect all cast and crew to meet that responsibility both in person and online.

### **Other Information**

All cast involved in this production will need to become a financial member of Centre Stage Taupo, and are required to agree and adhere to a code of conduct that covers health and safety, personal wellbeing and responsibilities to fellow cast and crew members.

Membership rates are:-

Student	\$30	Adult	\$45
Senior	\$30	Family	\$65
Single Parent Family	\$55		

You must complete and submit the audition application form (obtained from our website). This form must be submitted by 9.00am Thursday, 23rd June 2022 at the latest.

Please direct any queries that you may have to [rent@centrestagetaupo.co.nz](mailto:rent@centrestagetaupo.co.nz) or phone our Director, Sharon Shanks on 027 742 1237

Centre Stage Taupo Inc  
May 2022