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WHERE & WHEN TO AUDITION

Information Session: Monday, August 29th at 1:00 PM in WLH 119.

Auditions and callbacks: August 29-September 7

- August 29th - September 1st
  - Music Calls
    - Where WLH 209 or Broadway Rehearsal Lofts 205
    - When: 6:00 - 8:15 PM (each group will take 30 minutes)
      - Exact slots and location details on sign up sheet
    - Movement Workshops
      - Where: Broadway Rehearsal Lofts Room 303
      - When: 6:00 - 8:00 PM (each group will take 1 hour)
  - September 2nd - September 5th: Callbacks
  - September 6th - 7th: Makeup auditions and callbacks
  - September 11th: Casting Call

Note: If you are submitting a self-tape (more information in the music and movement sections of this packet), we strongly recommend that you submit them by the evening of Friday, September 2nd. We will not be accepting tapes sent to us after Wednesday, September 7th.
There's only us
There's only this
Forget regret-- or life is yours to miss.
No other road
No other way
No day but today

Synopsis:

As it’s traditionally told, RENT is a rock musical by Jonathan Larson loosely based on Giacomo Puccini’s 1896 opera *La Bohème*. RENT tells the story of a group of young artists struggling to survive, thrive, and create community in Lower Manhattan’s Alphabet City, under the shadow of devastation of HIV/AIDS.

Summary of our interpretation:

Our retelling of RENT focuses on the ritual of memorializing Angel’s life and teachings, which we know to be queer, radical, and delightfully messy. Using the theatrical framing device of a play-within-a-play, our ensemble performs the reenactment of the Passion of Angel Schunard: a religious pageant that speaks to the story of Angel’s life, love, death, and to the world-altering message Angel was desperate to pass forward.

Content Warnings:

RENT has depictions of unsheltered and housing insecure communities. We have partnered with YHHAP and will be working with unsheltered members of the New Haven community throughout the process to ensure that all our team members—cast, crew, and production team—are donating what time and resources they are able to the unsheltered and housing insecure communities in New Haven. This is a cornerstone of our work on this project and will be an additional time commitment for the semester. We understand that housing insecurity takes many forms and that our team members will have their own relationships with housing insecurity. As such, while we expect our cast and crew members to commit to donating time and resources to the various communities, we understand that this creates an unequal burden for some individuals who have had personal experiences with housing insecurity and will provide a variety of ways to get involved.

This play contains instances of:

- Anti-Indigenous racism
- Anti-Black racism
- Antisemitism
- Homophobia
- Transphobia
- Police violence
- Violence against the homeless
- Graphic drug use
- Sexism
- Misogyny
- Self-harm
- Suicide
Character Descriptions:

On your audition form, it’ll ask you to select which roles you’d be interested in. There’s no penalty or preference based on which names you select, we just want to make sure we’re considering you for roles that are affirming and comfortable for you!

*All character races and gender identities will be representative of the actors portraying them. To this end, we are willing to transpose music into accessible keys so that vocal range is not a barrier for any actors.

All actors will be, first and foremost, members of the ensemble. In our re-telling of the story, all characters begin as members of one ensemble, and will end the musical as members of one ensemble. All characters will spend most of the show onstage, so rehearsal time commitment expectations are similar for all characters. Go to page 9 for more detailed rehearsal regulations.

These numbers do not include our expected time commitment for group community service, which we expect to be 1-2 hours a week. These are some of the roles that will be played by our ensemble:

Roger Davis
A struggling musician on the verge of greatness. Has a tumultuous friendship with Mark, his roommate. Mourning the loss of his ex-girlfriend.

As we are hoping to have Roger play guitar live on stage in a few numbers, a working knowledge of guitar playing (or other string instruments), the ability to read music for guitar or the willingness to learn is preferred but not required.

Mark Cohen
Filmmaker and video artist, documents the other members of the group. Knee deep in his own soul-searching, Mark is the typical young artist. He and Roger are roommates in the loft. Mourning his breakup with Maureen.

Tom Collins
A computer genius, professor and anarchist. He is a nurturer with a smooth and relaxed disposition. Used to be a roommate in the loft. Partners with Angel.
**Benjamin Coffin III**

The landlord of Mark and Roger’s apartment building. After getting married, Benny left the loft and neglected his friendship with Mark and Roger.

**Joanne Jefferson**

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

**Angel Dumott Schunard**

A street drummer and performer with an incredible gift of dance and a magnetic personality. She becomes Tom’s lover.

While Angel’s gender identity is not explicit in the musical, Angel's character uses both he/him and she/her pronouns, and has been labeled outside the libretto as a Drag Queen, a Transgender Woman, a Genderfluid individual, among other gender expansive identities. Our Angel will celebrate the gender expansive identity of Angel’s actor.

As with Roger, we also hope to have Angel drum live on stage. Similarly, a working knowledge of drumming, a strong sense of rhythm, or the willingness to learn is preferred but not required.

**Mimi Marquez**

A sex worker who dances at the Cat Scratch Club nearby. She lives in the same building as the loft. In a relationship with Roger.

**Maureen Johnson**

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

This musical features violence and intimacy, both emotional and physical, as integral parts of Storytelling. Our production will tell this aspect of the story according to the confidence of each actor. Whatever we come up with as a team and cast will involve a professional Intimacy Director and fight choreographer, cast-voted Fight Captain oversight, agreed upon choreography, and clear boundaries set by the entire team. Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns.*
**Who will be in the room:**

**Director: Andrew Watring**
- Hello! My name is Andrew Watring and I’ll be your director for RENT. My pronoun is Andrew, like, ‘Andrew went over there!’ or ‘There’s Andrew!’ I’m a Black Trans director, playwright, performer, and Anarkata-in-training from sweet home Huntsville, Alabama. I’m currently living and working in Providence, Rhode Island, as I finished up my MFA in Directing at Brown University. Excited to see you all at auditions!

**Stage Manager: Naomi Schwartzburt**
- Hey! My name is Naomi (any pronouns), and I will be stage managing RENT! I am a junior in Pauli Murray double majoring in Theater & Performance Studies and Astronomy with a strong passion for accessibility, spreadsheets, and being the fastest walker (but slowest runner) in any group. Looking forward to seeing you at auditions!

**Producer: Lily Pérez**
- My name is Lily (she/her) and I’m a junior in Branford from Washington, DC. I can be found performing and producing theater around campus, a lifestyle sustained by GCal culture and the Yale Hospitality Magic Bars.

**Associate Director: Abbie Thomas**
- Hi! My name is Abbie (they/them), and I am the Associate Director for RENT. I am a junior in Silliman double majoring in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations and African American Studies, but more importantly, I am on a quest to find the best bagel combination at Olmo. I can often be found in the Silliman courtyard taking pictures of my friends or running back and forth to the YUAG. Can’t wait to see you at auditions!

**Choreographer: Tadea Martin - Gonzalez**
- Hello! My name is Tadea (she/they) and I am the choreographer for RENT. I am junior in JE majoring in American Studies in the performance studies track! Outside of RENT, you can probably find me dancing, chatting up the Broad Recognition Broadcast, or making Spotify playlists to fit literally every vibe in existence. Can’t wait to see you all in auditions!

**Music Director: Lauren Lee**
- Hi! My name is Lauren (any/all), and I’ll be the musical director for RENT. I’m a senior in Pauli Murray majoring in ER&M and History of Art major and am excited to be writing an upcoming thesis on photography and diaspora theory. On campus, you can find me studying and taking classes in Loria, grabbing coffee at Koffee, or making art. I can’t wait to see y’all in the audition room!

**A Dramat Policy Representative**
- One member of Dramat Board (either Armanti Reed, Sophia Dopico, or Ryan Pascal) will be present at all auditions and callbacks to ensure that auditionees are treated fairly and that all participants follow Dramat Guidelines. They won’t be evaluating your audition!
What to expect in the audition room:

We know it’s many students’ first week on campus and some students’ first week at Yale! We want you to come to auditions confident and comfortable, so we will be teaching the music and dance combinations at the audition itself.

Auditions for RENT will be conducted in groups of around 5-7 auditionees. Each group will enter, warm up together, learn and perform a group number from RENT. Auditionees will be expected to perform some material solo, but there is no need to prepare music ahead of time. Sheet music will be provided.

Auditionees may also choose to participate in a completely optional movement workshop.

Callbacks will look a little different. We may ask you to prepare materials in advance (with sheet music and recordings being provided), and you will work through a scene with another person or two. Memorization is not expected.

Music Call:

The music call will focus on the group nature of the audition, with attention paid to auditionees’ ability to hold their own in a group number, perform within an ensemble, and learn music under the guidance of our musical director. As this call will be held in groups of around 5 auditionees at a time, we hope that the audition room will feel like a collaborative environment to learn in, especially as this production has a focus on ensemble training. There is no need to prepare any music ahead of time, and all sheet music necessary will be provided in the audition room. Just bring yourself and the willingness to learn!

There are twelve different time slots for music calls, each capped at seven people and are 30 minutes in length. Sign up here. If slots run out, please contact naomi.schwartzburt@yale.edu, and more may be added.

Auditionees should expect three different stages in the music call.
1. The group will warm down and warm up together.
2. The group will learn a short excerpt from the RENT number “Support Group” together, which contains a three-part harmony as well as a few short solo lines. Auditionees will learn one part of the three-part harmony, as well as the solo lines.
3. Once the group has learned the number, the group will perform the excerpt together with our musical director, switching out who sings the solo lines during each run until everyone has the chance to “solo.” Everyone who is not soloing during a run will be expected to sing their ensemble part.

Video/remote submissions:
Self-tapes are welcome as an alternative to the in-person music call for those who may feel uncomfortable with the in-person audition format due to COVID-19, or are otherwise unable to attend. If you would like to send in a self-tape, please submit a recording of 30 seconds to a minute of a song that you feel shows off your musical ability best. Songs from (or not from) RENT are welcome, but if you are looking for a place to start, a few suggestions from RENT include:
- Take Me or Leave Me (sheet music available here, example available here)
- I’ll Cover You (Reprise) (sheet music available here, example available here)
- Without You (sheet music available here, example available here)
- One Song Glory (sheet music available here, example available here)
Learn free to use the sheet music linked here!

If you are submitting a self-tape, we strongly recommend you submit it here by the evening of Friday, September 2nd (with a hard deadline of Wednesday, September 7th).
**Movement Call:**

*What is a Movement Call?*
In our production, the movement call will serve as a completely optional opportunity for auditionees to familiarize themselves with types of movement that may be in the production, as well as showcase possible movement abilities through a workshop. Because Rent does not contain many full dance numbers, and most movement performed by cast members outside of the dance ensemble is within a more pedestrian style, Performance/attendance in the movement call will only positively impact auditionees, and there will be no penalties for lack of familiarity with movement styles in the workshop.

There will be three options for movement calls, which will be held in Broadway Rehearsal Lofts Room 303.* Sign up [here](#).

Workshop 1: 8/31, 6:00 - 7:00 pm  
Workshop 2: 9/1, 6:00 - 7:00 pm  
Workshop 3: 9/1, 7:00 - 8:00pm

*Broadway Rehearsal Lofts (BRL) is located at 294 Elm Street. Room 303 is on the third floor. It is the large dance studio.*

*What should you expect?*
There will be two parts to the workshop: a guided improvisation section and a choreography section. The improvisation section is just for you to have an opportunity to showcase how you move! This does NOT mean we want to see technical dance skills in this section; the prompts will focus on honing comfortable and natural movements. Examples of prompts will include finding how to shift weight, as well as move through space changing levels. The choreography section will include teaching a 30-45 second section of choreography to a song from the musical.

*Video submissions*
There will be an option to submit a video supplement instead of attending the movement call. Those who opt into submitting a video submission can choose to record the combination taught in the workshop using (this) teaching video, or can submit any other video of movement that they feel adds to their profile as an auditionee. If you are submitting a self-tape, we strongly recommend you submit it here by the evening of Friday, September 2nd (with a hard deadline of Wednesday, September 7th).
Rehearsal Expectations:

Andrew and Abbie’s rehearsal techniques will focus on ensemble training, in the tradition of interdisciplinary, improvisational performance. We will use devising exercises as a function of writing our staging, to support the process of group collaboration and consent amongst all. These exercises are at each participant’s own physical comfort level.

Scheduling/Specific Time Commitments:

We will aim to schedule up to four to five rehearsals a week before tech, with weekday rehearsals being three hours, and weekend rehearsals being four to five hours. Andrew and Abbie believe in efficient, effective use of rehearsal time, prioritizing student work schedules, classwork, extracurricular activities, and the like. If you work with us, we will work with you.

• Team Rehearsal should be given two days off per week.
• No actor should be called before 5:00pm on workdays and 10am on weekends or kept after 10:30 pm without the explicit consent of the Actor.
• No Actor should be called for more than 5 hours on a weekday and 6 hours on either Saturday or Sunday. These numbers are absolute maximums and the Actor should never be called this many hours more than twice a week without the Actor’s consent.
• Based on calculations from previous rehearsal schedules, the Actor can expect to be called on average for 3 hours a day for an Ex and 3.5 hours a day for a Mainstage. However, based on the combined cast members’ schedules, this may mean that there are some days where the Actor has little to no rehearsal and other days where the Actor has a rehearsal close to the daily maximum of 5 or 6 hours.
• Prior to tech week(s), the total work week for any actor shouldn’t exceed 30 hours, although it should, on average, be closer to 18 hours for Exes and 21 hours for Mainstages.
• We will do our best to allow for no less than an hour of time during dining hall hours, ample breaks of ten or more minutes, and communicate with you about the time you need to commute to the space.

“In audition notices, auditions, offer discussions, agreements, understudy preparation, rehearsals, tech, and performances, we intend to create a safe and respectful atmosphere for all participants. We believe that communication, safety, respect, accountability, artistic freedom, collaborative integrity, and personal discipline are the cornerstones of this atmosphere.” - Chicago Theatre Standards
If you've made it this far... we look forward to seeing you at auditions!

If you’ve decided to audition, please follow the following steps:

1. Sign up for a music and movement call [here](#), or submit your self tape [here](#)!

2. Fill out our audition form [here](#)! This is required. If we don’t have this information, we can’t call you on Casting Day, and we won’t know who you’d like to be considered for!

3. Fill out [this](#) Dramat form. This is **not required**, but it helps the Dramat keep track of who they are reaching. This is 100% anonymous (and the rehearsal team cannot see it), so it won’t affect your audition or opportunity to be cast.

Please contact ms1@yaledramat.org with any questions or concerns!