



MOORE VISION ENTERTAINMENT

RENT THE MUSICAL

SHOW CONTENT & CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

Rent Quick Synopsis:

Rent is a [rock musical](#) with music, lyrics, and book by [Jonathan Larson](#), loosely based on [Giacomo Puccini's](#) 1896 [opera *La Bohème*](#). Set in the East Village of New York City, *Rent* is about falling in love, finding your voice and living for today. Winner of the Tony Award for Best Musical and the Pulitzer Prize for Drama, *Rent* has become a pop cultural phenomenon. with songs that rock and a story that resonates with audiences of all ages. Based loosely on Puccini's *La Bohème*, Jonathan Larson's *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. How these young bohemians negotiate their dreams, loves and conflicts provides the narrative thread to this groundbreaking musical.

Rent Wikipedia Site (for full detailed synopsis and more): [Rent \(musical\) - Wikipedia](#)

Character Descriptions:

MARK COHEN

Stage age: early to late twenties

Vocal Range: Tenor (C#3-G4)

Mark is an aspiring filmmaker who narrates the show as he films the lives of his friends. Mark never leaves home without a camera. He is Roger's best friend and caregiver, and he was once Maureen's boyfriend (who left him for Joanne). Mark is a little nerdy and quirky. He insists that he can survive the bleakness of his environment through his art. It soon becomes apparent, though, that he is more comfortable viewing the world through his lens than in actively engaging in it. He feels guilty that unlike his friends, he does not have HIV/AIDS. The actor playing this role must be a strong singer and actor. He dances the Tango with Joanne, so good movement skills are also required.

ROGER DAVIS

Stage Age: mid twenties to early thirties

Vocal Range: Rock Tenor (B2-A4)

Roger is a once successful, now struggling musician who discovered he had HIV/AIDS in a note his girlfriend left him before she took her own life. His main goal in life is to write one great song before he dies, but he has not been able to play his guitar in a year, fearing that he has lost his creative energy. He falls in love with Mimi but is too afraid to commit to her, knowing that she also is infected with HIV/AIDS. He is also the roommate and best friend of Mark. He is often depressed and sullen, but he can be expressive and

passionate at times. The actor playing this role must be a good actor and an excellent singer with a rock edge. Guitar skills are desired, but are not required.

MIMI MARQUEZ

Stage Age: late teens to early twenties

Vocal Range: Alto (F#3-E5)

Mimi Marquez works in a strip club and struggles with her addiction to heroin, which has resulted in her contraction of HIV/AIDS. She falls in love with Roger, who is unable to commit to a relationship with her. She is also Benny's ex-girlfriend. She is extremely sexy, optimistic, and likeable but with dark secrets. Though Mimi has "lived a lot of life," she still sees the world through the eyes of a young woman. She intends to make the most of every day, as she earnestly expresses in the song "No Day but Today." The actress playing this role must be a strong singer, dancer, and exceptional actress. She must be able to convincingly portray the struggles of heroin addiction, sexual promiscuity, and HIV/AIDS, while still maintaining the optimism of youth.

BENNY COFFIN III

Stage Age: twenties to thirties

Vocal Range: Tenor (Eb3-F4)

Benny used to be Mark and Roger's roommate, but he married Alison Grey, a rich family involved with real estate, and he is now their landlord. He had been letting Roger and Mark live in the apartment for free, but he is now forcing them to pay rent or be evicted. Roger and Mark consider him a yuppie sell-out. He also had an affair with Mimi before she started to date Roger. While in the beginning he is caught up in the lifestyle of wealth and affluence, he ultimately realizes his friends are more important than what money can buy. The actor playing this role must be a good singer and actor.

MAUREEN JOHNSON

Stage Age: twenties to thirties

Vocal Range: Soprano Belt (C4-F5)

Maureen is a bisexual performing artist and Mark's ex-girlfriend. She left Mark to be with her new girlfriend, Joanne. She is sexy, flirtatious, sassy, and funny. She is bold and speaks her mind, and she is not afraid to take on the establishment and fight for what she believes in. The actress playing this role must be an excellent singer and actress. She must be comfortable with same-sex physical intimacy.

JOANNE JEFFERSON

Stage Age: mid twenties to early thirties

Vocal Range: Soprano Belt (Bb3-E5)

Maureen is a lesbian Ivy League educated lawyer and activist. She struggles to not be jealous of Maureen's flirtatious nature with others. Though she was raised in an affluent, political family, she is committed to helping those less fortunate. The actress playing this role must be an excellent singer and a good actress. She must be comfortable with same sex-physical intimacy. Since she dances the tango with Mark, good movement skills are also required.

TOM COLLINS

Stage Age: late twenties to late thirties

Vocal Range: Baritone/Tenor (F#2 – A4) One A4 for a short duration

Tom Collins is a gay computer genius, teacher, and anarchist who was recently expelled from MIT. In the opening scene he is mugged, reflecting the harsh reality of the world in which the characters live. He is

brave enough to allow himself to fall in love with Angel, knowing that since both of them are infected with HIV/AIDS, their relationship will not have much of a future. Tom and Angel's relationship is the heart of the show, as the genuine love and devotion they have for one another brings hope and inspiration to the entire group. They show the world how to truly live life and not be afraid. The actor playing this role must be an excellent singer and actor who is comfortable with same sex-physical intimacy. He must be able to portray great love and affection for Angel. He must especially be able to convey that love when Angel dies in his arms, and during his reprise of "I Will Cover You."

ANGEL SCHUNARD

Stage Age: early to late twenties

Vocal Range: Tenor with Falsetto (C3-A4)

Angel is a young drag queen and street percussionist. He meets and falls in love with Collins. He has HIV/AIDS and dies of the disease in Act II. As a person, Angel is the most generous and selfless character in the show. Angel hands out money to the neighborhood while dressed in Santa drag. Though he has HIV/AIDS, he embraces life and lives it to its fullest. People are naturally drawn to him, and his smile lights up the room. His death is mourned by all of the characters and eventually inspires them to live each day to the fullest. As mentioned in Tom's character description, Tom and Angel's relationship is the heart of the show, as the genuine love and devotion they have for one another brings hope and inspiration to the entire group. They show the world how to truly live life and not be afraid. The actor playing this role must be an excellent actor, singer, and mover. He must be able to comfortable with same-sex physical intimacy and a drag queen persona, including dancing in heels. Percussionist skills desired but not required.

OTHER CHARACTERS (many double in other scenes)

Stage ages: Early twenties to sixties

Vocal Ranges: all vocal ranges sought

- Carolers: There are homeless street men and women who appear throughout the show sarcastically singing Christmas carols.
- Mrs. Cohen: Mark's stereotypical Jewish mother. Her voicemail messages are the basis for the songs Voicemail #1, Voicemail #3, and Voicemail #5.
- Alexi Darling: The producer of Buzzline who tries to employ Mark after his footage of the riot makes primetime. Sings Voicemail #3 and Voicemail #4.
- Mr. and Mrs. Jefferson: The wealthy parents of Joanne Jefferson, they leave her Voicemail #2. Mr. Jefferson is also one of the a cappella singers in Voicemail #5. Mrs. Jefferson usually sings the female solo in Seasons of Love.
- Mrs. Davis: Roger's confused mother who calls in Voicemail #5, asking continuously, "Roger, where are you?"
- Mrs. Marquez: Mimi's Spanish-speaking mother who sings in Voicemail #5, wondering, in Spanish, where she is.
- Mr. Grey: Benny's father-in-law who wants to buy out the lot.
- The Man: The local drug dealer whom Mimi buys from and Roger used to buy from.
- Life Support Group: Paul (The man in charge of the Life Support group), Gordon, Steve, Ali, Pam, Sue As notated in the script by Larson, the roles of all of the Life Support members are encouraged to take on the name that someone in the cast (or production) knows or has known to have succumbed to AIDS or other disease.
- Squeegee Man: A homeless person who chants "Honest living!" over and over.
- Homeless Woman: She gets harassed by police and Mark films it. She first yells at Mark but then asks him for a dollar.

- Waiter: Waits on the cast and has solo lines in La Vie Bohème.

There are also many other non-named roles such as the Preacher, Seasons of Love soloists, Cops, Bohemians, Vendors, Homeless People. We would welcome a very diverse cast of ethnicities, shapes, and sizes.