

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Highlander Theatre Company Presents *RENT: School Edition*, December 6-8

Somerville, MA –The Highlander Theatre Company (HTC), the resident theatre company of Somerville High School, will present the hit musical *RENT: School Edition* on December 6th, 7th, and 8th at the Centennial Auditorium at Somerville High School (SHS). With book, music, and lyrics by Jonathan Larson, this Tony and Pulitzer winning musical follows a year in the life of friends in New York's Lower East Side during the HIV/AIDS crisis of the 1980s and 90s. Filled with laughter, tears, and a rock-infused score, *RENT* is a story about community, survival, and measuring life in love.

“*RENT* presents a unique and exciting challenge for theatre students at SHS,” says Charles Jabour, Director and Faculty Advisor of HTC. “This show really requires us to dig in to what it means to be a community. We’ve spent a lot of time exploring the topics that made *RENT* such a groundbreaking musical when it premiered, and the themes that continue to make *RENT* so relevant today.”

The students of the Highlander Theatre Company are excited to be taking on such an important story. “I’m happy that Somerville High is finally doing a musical that has topics that represent what is happening in America today,” says student Youdson Felix (class of 2020). Mr. Felix portrays the role of Benny, a landlord who threatens to evict the characters in *RENT* so that he can tear down their building and replace it with high-priced condos.

Students also embrace the opportunity to be a part of a supportive and diverse ensemble. “Everyone here is so nice!” says Ammie Siebler (class of 2021). “It’s really exciting to be a part of this amazingly talented and kind community, and I’m so glad that we’re performing a show such as *RENT* that reflects the diversity of this cast,” says Leah Ackland (class of 2022). “This cast is so talented and we have such a creative crew. I’m so excited to see how everything pulls together and the magic of theater come into play while performing *RENT*,” says Sandra Mood (class of 2022)

RENT contains strong language and subject matter that is not appropriate for all ages. A parent guide has been made available on the Highlander Theatre website (www.highlandertheatre.org), and an age-appropriate workshop is being offered during the December 8th 2pm performance for children in grades 3-6 who have families attending the performance.

Come see *RENT* on Thursday, Dec. 6th at 8pm (after the Somerville Tree Lighting), Friday, Dec. 7th at 7pm, and Saturday, Dec. 8th at 2pm and 7pm. All performances will take place in the Centennial Auditorium at Somerville High School. Visit www.highlandertheatre.org for ticket information, including multi-performance packages.

RENT is co-presented with the SHS Gender and Sexuality Alliance and with support from Somerville Arts for Youth. *RENT: School Edition* is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.MTIShows.com

The Highlander Theatre Company offers many ways to support theatre education at Somerville High School. For a complete list of sponsorship opportunities, season supporter levels, and advertisement opportunities for local businesses, visit www.highlandertheatre.org/support.