

Rent Star, Anthony Rapp, Speaks at FSU

On April 3, Rent star Anthony Rapp shared with a packed crowd at Florida State University's Ruby Diamond Auditorium stories about his newest book, the Rent movie, and his experiences acting in the Broadway musical.

According to Rapp, "Rent has been my favorite role because it has spoken to young people and has served as a voice for progressive thought in an often conservative country." Critics have considered Rent to be highly controversial because of its subject matter concerning AIDS, drugs, homosexuality, and transsexual lifestyles.

Rapp, 35, has been acting since he was 10. He is most famous for his Broadway performances in *Rent* and *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*. He has acted in movies, including *Dazed and Confused*, *Road Trip*, *Twister*, *a Beautiful Mind* and *Cruise Control*. He's also appeared on *Law & Order* and *the X-files*.

By far, Rapp considers his part as Mark Cohen in Rent to also be his most famous role. "I love playing parts. To get to do something like Rent that puts together everything I believe in is very invigorating and incredible to be a part of," said Rapp.

When Rapp came onstage, the audience broke into applause since many 'Rentheads', as Rent fans are often called, came to hear him speak. "Each time I listen to Rent, I take in more and more from the songs and they mean more to me each time I hear them played," said 'Renthead' fan, Amy Purifoy.

The three main people who hosted this event were Griffith, Allison Segal, Manager of Student Life Cinema, and Allison Parkin, volunteer at Student Life Cinema.

“The FSU student government decided to hold a lecture series this year. Two weeks ago Ambassador Joe Wilson came to speak and now to diversify we brought Anthony Rapp to speak about his book, music, movie, life, etc,” said Patrick Griffith, Director of Marketing and Promotion of FSU Student Life Cinema.

Rapp says he’s been extremely busy since mid-January when both his book and the Rent DVD were released. Rapp knew the Rent Broadway show would someday become a movie because the rights to the movie had been sold in 1996 but the movie didn’t become a reality until 2005. Rapp considers the day he received the phone call he was going to finally film Rent was one of the happiest phone calls of his life. He also said “The movie should have been rated R for certain scenes but NPAA gave us a break and rated it PG-13.”

Rapp shared that on April 24 in NYC the original 14-member cast of Rent will reunite to raise \$500,000 each for Jonathan Larson’s Performing Arts Foundation. Jonathan Larson was the composer and author of the Broadway musical ‘Rent’ and ‘Tick..tick...BOOM!’.

Larson wrote Rent about his life and his friends who had passed away. Rapp said, “By Larson writing Rent he felt he was bringing his friends to life. Larson knew he was going to be a success because he told me one day, ‘I’m the future of musical theatre.’”

Rapp considers it tragic that Larson never got to see Rent on Broadway.

“Larson experienced the success of the dress rehearsal and that night gave his first and only interview with the NY Times, which was a big deal since it was considered a composer’s moment of arrival,” said Rapp. Larson died at age 35 on the night of the play’s final dress rehearsal from an aortic dissection. Rapp said, “Larson’s vision was to introduce the power of live musical theatre to the people and he would be proud of the great success his play has achieved.”

Article References

- **Anthony Rapp**
 - *Author of “Without You” Song from Rent Soundtrack*
 - *Actor of Rent the Movie and Broadway Musical*
 - Contact information Not Available.

- **Patrick Griffith**
 - *FSU Marketing and Advertising Student*
 - *Student Life Cinema, Director of Marketing and Promotions*
 - ✉ Pdg04@fsu.edu

- **Amy Purifoy**
 - *FSU Business Student*
 - Rent fan
 - ✉ amp03j@fsu.edu