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## 33rd Street Productions cast members finalize preparations for 'Avenue Q'

**Kayleigh Stevens**  
TECHNEWS WRITER

"Avenue Q" is a dirty-minded Sesame Street for adults that everyone should come and see," says Stage Manager, Aesha Jackson, about 33rd Street Production's upcoming performance. Hilarious, offensive, and disgusting were all words used to describe the show that the cast members have been rehearsing for seven weeks. All of the cast is extremely excited for the show and can't wait to perform for students and faculty alike.

The musical "Avenue Q," according to stageagent.com, is about the interaction of puppets and humans in New York City. A newly-graduated college alumnus tries to find his place among the rest of the community. Other puppets and humans roam the avenue, lending a hand and a helpful song to guide him through this rough patch. Lucy T. Slut, Kate Monster, and Nicky are just a few names of the different puppets in the show.

Danny Wittig, the cast member portraying Princeton, was excited to have finally received his puppet on October 27, and he was not alone. After practicing for weeks with bare hands and 5lb arm weights, many in the cast were excited to begin rehearsals with puppets. Wittig was also excited to perform the song "I Wish I Could Go Back to College,"

as he thought it was a cool reflection that he thinks may happen to many people in the years after their graduation.

Kate Monster is the female lead of the musical, played by Jessica Buehler. Buehler's favorite song in the musical is "There's a Fine, Fine Line," as it is the perfect climax to the show. It is a "seriously deep song," she says, and it really leads into the second act. Buehler was ecstatic upon receiving her puppet, as the entire cast had to work hard to get used to holding them and using them properly.

The Bad Idea Bears, depicted by Jenna Disandro and Gianni Carvajal, are "sweet, cuddly, malicious bears," according to Disandro. They both are enjoying finishing the blocking of the play, especially with the new puppets. The Bears, though cute and cuddly, voice the opinions you get in the back of your head of bad things to do.

A cast favorite, Kurt Olson, plays the puppet Trekkie Monster. Trekkie Monster is a loner on the avenue, and stays to himself mostly. He has only one interest—Lucy T. Slut. Olson's favorite characters (besides Trekkie, of course) are the Bad Idea Bears. He enjoys these characters because he thinks of them as the voice everyone has in their head, but never acts upon.

Lucy T. Slut, illustrated by Robbi Hicks, is a performer in the Avenue Q

world. Hicks' favorite song in the musical is "Schadenfreude." She thinks that it is a funny, true song that many can connect to. Hicks is struggling with her "sexy walk" in the show, and has been working on it the most throughout all of the rehearsals.

Sharing song favorites with Robbi Hicks is Kristal Copeland, who characterizes the superintendent of the apartment complex, Gary Coleman. This is Copeland's first time singing in a performance, and she feels terrified. She has been getting lessons from cast member Alex Hunt, on singing and performing. She may be terrified, but others are confident in her ability to pull through and perform what she needs.

Margaret Lee, the Artistic Director, warns you to "be prepared to be offended, touched, and rolling on the ground of laughter." She is also very happy that 33rd Street Productions is producing this play, as this is her last chance to direct any sort of art form here at IIT, and she looks forward to closing out her career on a good note. Lee also plays Christmas Eve, a human on Avenue Q.

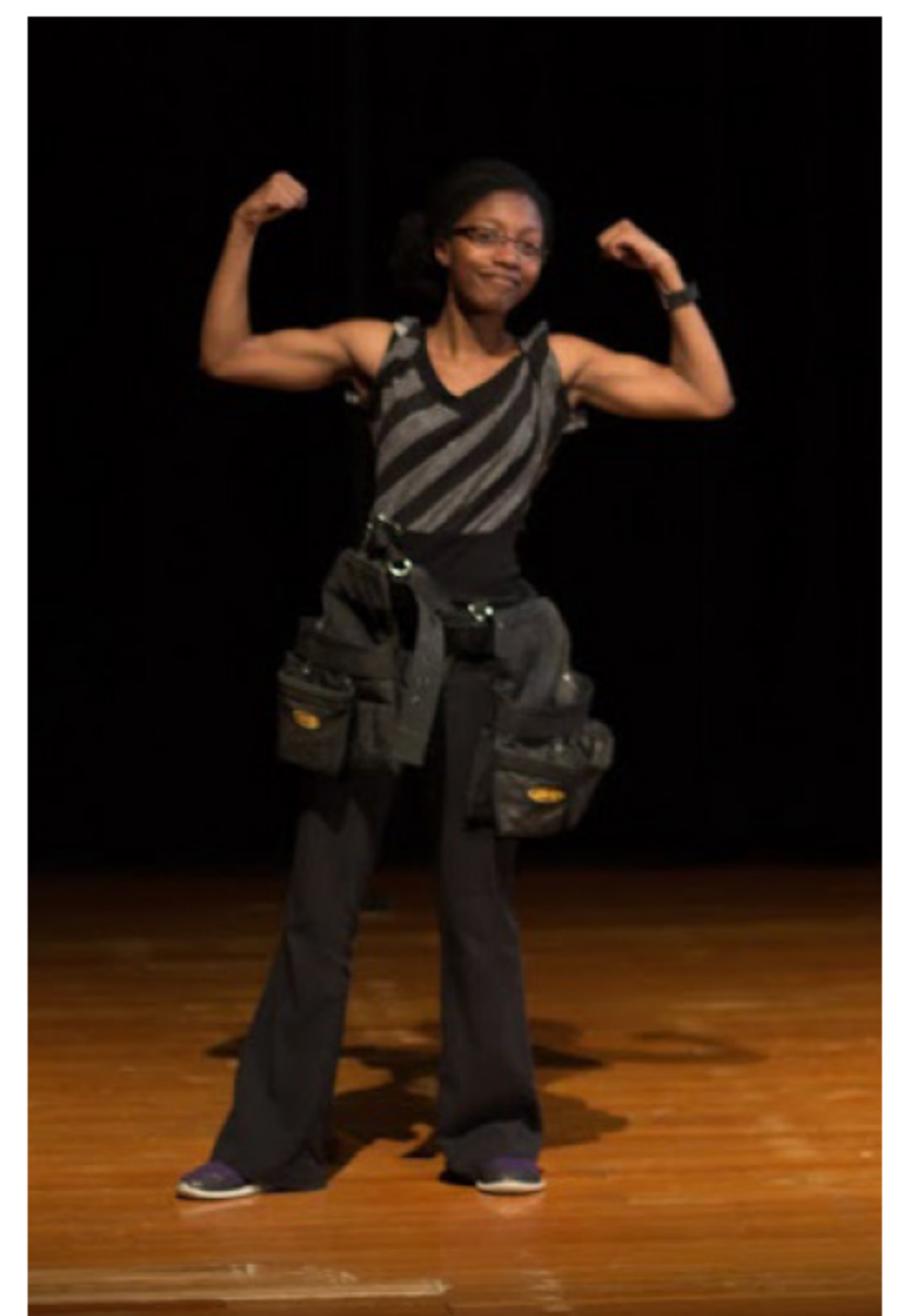
The Assistant Director, Dave Coxhead, is excited to perform the finished product. He also plays the part of Brian, a human on Avenue Q. His favorite song, "For Now" is the perfect message, says Coxhead, and warns that "happiness is fleeting." He is

excited for the show, and loves working with the other cast members to put together a great show.

The Music Director, Alex Hunt, is currently working on character development for his character, Rod. Rod is a puppet that is struggling with his identity. Hunt is excited for the harmonies to come together in the songs of the musical. As Hunt progressed through the rehearsals of the play, he has expressed a like towards the character Nicky, Rod's roommate.

Nicky is the lazy roommate to Rod's cleanliness and stress. Nicky helps Rod throughout the musical trying to find himself. Nicky is played by Brendan Kerrigan. Kerrigan is excited to sing "The Money Song" as he feels it sends a good message about giving to others. Kerrigan says that the song illustrates how it is "good to give to people, and that makes you feel good."

Avenue Q is set to be a funny, touching show that brings tears of understanding and laughter to everyone's eyes. There will be a donation hat going around, so, if you feel so inclined, bring your spare change to donate to IIT's student theatre group. The show is set to be performed on November 13, 14, 20 and 21, at 7 p.m. The show will go on in the Hermann Hall auditorium, and is approximated to be two hours long.



Photos by Kevin Zheng