

ACADEMY THEATRE

To whom it may concern,

Kevin Noonchester was an asset to the successful production of "Avenue Q" at the Academy Theatre in Meadville, Pennsylvania. He prepared our actors and actresses in a way that no other local director could - given the challenges and expertise that a show such as "Avenue Q" requires. Although the cast had a short four week rehearsal schedule and overcame numerous obstacles (such as losing two cast members throughout the rehearsal process due to extenuating circumstances), the show persevered and became a proud production for our theatre.

Kevin's expertise for his art showed in every rehearsal. He encouraged our performers and helped them reach a level of puppetry that could be considered of professional standards. Many of our audience members expressed their surprise that our actors had no prior puppeteering experience.

Through Kevin Noonchester, The Academy Theatre put on a polished, professional production that captivated audiences and left them only wanting more.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Kuhn

Executive Director

MORGAN-WIXSON THEATER

2627 PICO BLVD. SANTA MONICA, CA 90405

Re: Kevin Noonchester &
Avenue Q Puppet Camp

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The Morgan-Wixson Theatre not only used Avenue Q Puppet Camp to train our actors, we hired Kevin Noonchester as our Director. We are so glad we did. As a puppeteer myself, I can tell you the quality of everything from the puppets he'll recommend, to the training your actors will receive, to his inside knowledge of the entire production from set to sound will make your production the highest quality. Jeff Marx, creator of Avenue Q even attended our performance and gave it very high praise. If he loves it and we love it, you will to. Avenue Q Puppet Camp is the way to go for anyone considering the show. The training can't be beat and the quality will be scores above the competition.

KRISTY PACE

MWT Board of Directors and Puppeteer

2627 PICO BLVD. SANTA MONICA, CA 90405

November 30 2013



Cardinal Newman Catholic High School

100 Brimley Road South, Scarborough, Ontario M1M 3X4

Telephone: (416) 393-5519 Fax: (416) 393-5110

To Whom It May Concern:

Don't even think about directing Avenue Q without Kevin Noonchester!

Kevin brought his three day *Avenue Q* Puppet Camp to our production of *Avenue Q: School Edition* in January 2013 and I am absolutely convinced it was the best decision I made as the director of the production. Kevin brought so much to our production: his exceptional skills as a puppeteer, his love of the show and its characters, his rare talents as a guide and teacher of young actors, and definitely his skills as a professional actor and director of *Avenue Q*. Our production of *Avenue Q School Edition* was a success **because of Kevin.** - I cannot stress this enough!

***Avenue Q* Puppet Camp is totally accessible for Canadians**

Bringing Kevin's *Avenue Q* puppet camp across the border to Canada was a breeze. All that's required is a simple letter (see the sample) and the workshop is good to go. Arranging travel and accommodation is also simple because Kevin works **with you**, as the director/educator to make Puppet Camp happen- he is willing to go anywhere and everywhere to make your production the best that it can be. He is very flexible and accommodating with the resources that you have.

Kevin is an invaluable collaborator and mentor

To have a professional of Kevin's talent, skill and particular experience with the creators of *Avenue Q* is a rare gift for a director and young actors. Throughout the process, Kevin is there to support, listen, and offer guidance to you as a director. He is a gifted educator; to watch him train the actors during puppet camp is to see a truly caring teacher at work. Kevin also knows the needs of *Avenue Q School Edition* and can adapt to your cast size easily. Need help with a particular scene? Kevin can work with you to build in coaching sessions at a very reasonable cost.

It's the best investment of time and money you will make

I urge you to consider that *Avenue Q* Puppet Camp can and will work within your show's budget. When you consider the costume budget of many shows and compare it to your investment in Kevin's workshop, the value is clear: in three days Kevin will transform your actors into confident and assured performers who are able to bring the characters of *Avenue Q* to life. Those three days are an invaluable asset to your production of *Avenue Q* – you won't regret it.

Sincerely,
Sheila Gatensby, Director





LONE STAR
COLLEGE
MONTGOMERY

July 22, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

I would like to recommend Kevin Noonchester's services for any sort of puppet training you may require. We hired Kevin to train our actors for a recent production of *Avenue Q*. Kevin's expertise and his ability to shape the work of our actors far exceeded my expectations. In fact, there is no way we could have produced the show without his instruction.

Avenue Q is a deceptively complicated show. Kevin was an invaluable resource on multiple fronts. He offered advice without forcing preconceived notions of how the show should be directed or performed. He enabled us to avoid a number of pitfalls and tackle some problems specific to our circumstances.

As an acting and puppet coach, Kevin balances patience with a determination to draw the absolute best from every actor he contacts. He does not settle for mediocrity. He delivered an enormous amount of useful, vital information in just four days. Actors were able to apply that data and refine their work with the puppets all the way through the rehearsal process. Kevin's instruction built a firm foundation which resulted in a wildly successful run of *Avenue Q* for Lone Star College – Montgomery.

We also elected to hire Kevin to stage some of the more difficult puppet numbers in the show. This proved to be a very worthwhile investment. During those staging rehearsals, we were able to gain a clearer sense of how the puppetry and human interaction needed to work. Kevin's staging was inventive and was drawn from his own experience as a company member in the Las Vegas production and his work with members of the original Broadway cast. Those initial staging sessions greatly influenced the discoveries of the cast and crew in subsequent rehearsals.

If you are considering hiring Kevin, I urge you not to hesitate. You will not find a more capable or hard-working coach. We could not have survived and ultimately thrived without his guidance.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions. I am happy to supply any data you might find helpful.

All the best!

Tim Campbell
Associate Professor of Drama
(936) 271-6043

3200 College Park Drive
Conroe, TX 77384-4500
936.273.7000
LoneStar.edu/Montgomery

Julie M. Ryan
Kerr High School
8150 Howell Sugarland Road
Houston, TX 77083

Kevin Noonchester
Avenue Q Puppet Camp

Dear Kevin,

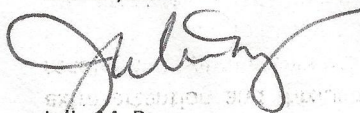
Thank you so much for coming to our school to teach our students. When we began the process of rehearsing for Avenue Q, The School Edition, I thought I had it under control having done some puppetry in college. I quickly realized that I only had a limited base of knowledge as most actors/directors do. There are not many puppet plays that we can perform giving us less experience than we need. I realized that I needed help to let my students understand how to truly bring these giant puppets to life. It is one thing to use little puppets and play with your kids or brothers and sisters. It is another to bring a large puppet to life, with emotion, charisma and with character.

From the moment that you arrived, the students were actively engaged. You gave them a set of puppet eyeballs as the first 'assignment'. They brought those puppet eyes to life and had a blast. Throughout the week and even still today, they walk around the building with the eyes on their hands and are practicing using their hands and their mouths together. It has really made all the difference for the kids to be able to connect at home as well as in the theatre. The handmade puppets that you offered for the kids to use were so expressive and were a great introduction. In Avenue Q, there are so many different character and puppet choices for the actor to make and through the workshop you were able to give strong ideas to the kids on how to define their characters and make them different and unique. It was incredible to watch. I also appreciated the fact that you spent some dedicated time to the two-handed (two person) puppets like Trekkie, Mrs. Butz and Nicky. These kids needed the extra attention and through rehearsals, I see them using all the idiosyncrasies of what you taught them. The second hand puppeteers are so strong and have added greatly to the entire character. We used to not have them mandated to come because we didn't have much for them to work on until the puppets came. Now I understand that mistake and the second handers are some of the strongest performers on stage. The Trekkie puppet you made was perfect and gave them so much understanding of what can be done.

You really gave each and every kid individual attention and allowed them to be the best that they can be. I know that it was worth every penny to bring you here. Our show will be so much stronger. The students were excited to do the show, but you have given them that extra spark that will make our show shine.

Thank you so much! I appreciate all your hardwork and dedication to your craft. It was a long, exciting and, in my mind, necessary week to make our show the best it can be.

Thank you!



Julie M. Ryan
Theatre Director
Kerr HS
Houston, TX



January 11, 2013

To whom it may concern,

On behalf of CDC's Board of Directors, our AVENUE Q cast and myself, I am so pleased that we chose to bring Avenue Q Puppet Camp to Cohasset. In a word, the experience was "performance-changing" – ok, two words. There isn't one word to describe the transformation that Kevin Noonchester's very organized and detailed curriculum brought to our actors.

I, like many other directors I am sure, always feels the need to work with producers to keep production budgets as lean as possible while still maintaining the highest production values for our shows, a slippery slope always. Initially I thought that puppetry training for my cast was an unnecessary expense; probably one that I could do without. Having been there and back, I couldn't have been more wrong.

After some consideration and research, I realized that puppetry training was not a luxury for our actors; it was a necessity if I wanted to see the best work possible put onstage. Another lesson learned was that not just any training would suffice. I wanted our training to come from a source that understood the subtleties, innuendo and relationships between the characters in AVENUE Q. They are unique, and wouldn't necessarily be taught by just any puppeteer. My philosophy found a match with that of Avenue Q Puppet Camp. We weren't just doing *any* show. We were doing AVENUE Q, and I hoped AQPC would bring the focused training I was looking for. I was right.

I stand firm having been through Mr. Noonchester's training intensive personally, that there isn't a production of AVENUE Q at the school, community or regional theater level that wouldn't benefit from the talent and experience in puppetry brought to us by Avenue Q Puppet Camp. This is only exceeded by the value of Mr. Noonchester's experience working professionally in AVENUE Q. His teaching is based on hours of hands-on training and experience. The investment I made in Avenue Q Puppet Camp will be the hardest working production dollars I could spend.

Lisa Pratt
Director, AVENUE Q, March 2013
Vice President, Board of Directors
Cohasset Dramatic Club
Cohasset, Massachusetts



To Whom It May Concern:

Kevin Noonchester is our secret weapon. For ten years, live shows at libraries & other events has been the cornerstone of the business I built together with my brother, Sean. However, my brother and I don't perform the shows ourselves anymore and instead, have let Kevin Noonchester take over that aspect of our business. We have always told librarians who are concerned that we don't personally do our live shows anymore, that we would have to find someone better than us in order to take a step back from performing.

Kevin has worked for us for the past 4 years as our principal live performer. His beautiful singing voice, his talent as a puppeteer manipulating puppets both left handed and right handed (and often at the same time) as well as his understanding of storytelling & subtext has really elevated the quality of our shows. Before Kevin, our shows featured no original music. Now, we produce original puppet musicals with Kevin at the helm as lyricist, dramaturge, and even book writer.

We discovered Kevin in the Jim Henson Company's puppet improv troupe, "Puppet Up." After our first day seeing him in action, we approached him about working for us. What started out as a seasonal job has evolved into a strong, 4 year partnership with Kevin becoming an integral part of our company's future.

We had never seen Avenue Q before deciding to construct rental puppets for the show. Kevin was our advisor on the puppet build. Thanks to his intimate knowledge of the show, we were able to construct puppets that not only meet the demands of the show, but also mimic the ease of use of the puppets constructed by Rick Lyon for the original production. When Kevin was brought in as the puppet expert for the production at Calabasas High School, we were excited to see what our puppets would look like under his direction. When my brother and I saw the show on closing night, we couldn't believe those were "just high school kids" up there. Kevin brought this cast from no prior puppet experience to a level that impressed our "trained eye."

"Puppets are like people. What's important is on the inside." Kevin and his commitment to excellence would be an asset for any production looking to go above & beyond.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patrick Johnson", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Patrick Johnson
Swazzle Inc.
www.Swazzle.com



Tabb High School
4431 Big Bethel Road
Yorktown, Virginia 23693
(757) 867-7400 Fax (855) 369-2613

York County School Division

February 19, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

When we decided to do "Avenue Q-School Edition" for our spring musical, I was excited but also nervous about how I was going to handle teaching puppetry to my students, as I had no experience myself. Luckily, I was contacted by Kevin Noonchester, an experienced puppeteer and a veteran cast member of "Avenue Q", who made me aware of the puppet camp he was making available to schools interested in producing the show. We decided to take advantage of the camp and were extremely delighted we did.

Mr. Noonchester conducted a five day puppet camp for the leads of my show, starting them off with the basics of puppetry and gradually working to the more intricate details of handling the puppets. During each of the three hour daily sessions, Kevin gave each of my leads personal attention and helped cultivate the confidence they would need to perform successfully. He conducted himself as a professional at all times and earned the respect and admiration of all students involved.

I am very happy we were able to bring Kevin Noonchester's Puppet Camp to Tabb High School. It provided my students with the necessary skills required to successfully perform "Avenue Q-School Edition" and was a true learning experience not only for my students, but for myself as well. I highly recommend that if you are considering a production of "Avenue Q", you make puppet camp a priority in your rehearsal schedule.

Yours truly,

Jack Poland
Drama Director