**Introductory Notes for Avenue Q**

**The Puppets**

**All the puppets only have a torso, their bodies end in loose fabric, into which the puppeteers insert their arms and hands, manipulating them. Sometimes the puppets are operated by one puppeteer and sometimes by 2, as in the case of the Trekkie Monster. The puppeteers are dressed in black, either trousers and shirt or dress. They move in the mood of the puppet, so if a puppet is angry the puppeteer’s walk is an indignant one!**

Princeton: He’s a fresh-faced kid, just out of college. His skin is yellow in colour, and felted in texture. He has large eyes outlined thinly in black, with clear whites and black pupils under lids a slightly darker yellow than his skin. His eyebrows are raised, giving him a surprised look. His nose is hardly noticeable as it is the same colour as his skin and inoffensive. He has no lips but the inside of his mouth is black and he has a bright pink tongue. His hair sits on his head like a black cap. When we first see him he is wearing a black college gown, he ahs a mortar board on his head and carries a diploma scroll, tied with a red ribbon. Later he wears a patterned v neck jumper. His hands are also yellow.

Kate Monster: She’s a kindergarten teaching assistant a bit older than Princeton. She has a white furry face, large blue eyes, outlined in black, with small black eyebrows above. Her eyelids are pink and her round ball of a nose is blue. Her lips are black and a pink tongue is glimpsed inside her mouth. She has shoulder-length black hair, cut in a bob. Her paws are white and furry and she wears a lilac cardigan and t shirt.

Nicky: He’s a bit of a slacker who lives with Rod. Nicky is a colourful character with bright lime-green felted skin large round eyes, outlined in black, with black pupils and blue eyelids. Thick black eyebrows sit high on his forehead. His round ball of a nose is orange and his mouth, without lips, clearly shows his pink tongue. A bush of black hair stands upright on his head. He wears a red fleece with a yellow t shirt beneath and his hands are the same colour as his face, lime-green. He appears in checked pyjamas at on point.

Rod: is a Republican investment banker with a secret. Rod has blue feted skin and an oval face. He has round eyes and black pupils with no eyebrows, and wears steel rimmed spectacles on his egg-shaped light brown nose. The inside of his open mouth is dark red, revealing his pink tongue and he has a mop of wavy black hair. He is dressed in a smart pin striped business suit of dark grey with a white shirt and his tie is striped in tow shades of grey. His blue hands emerging form the suit are quite a shock. Rod can also be seen in loud-checked pjs.

Trekkie Monster is a reclusive creature obsessed with the internet. He’s covered all over in light brown fur and his body-shape is formless. His black-pupilled eyes are outlined in pink. He has a flat, curved red nose, a small pink tongue can be glimpsed inside his open mouth and two teeth are widely spaced on either side of the tongue. His head is surmounted with a mass of purple straw-like hair on what appears to be a black cap. He has furry paws.

Lucy the Slut: Lucy is a vixenish vamp with a dangerous edge. Lucy is pale pink in colour with large eyes, outlined in black and black pupils. He eyelids are white. Her nose is pale pink, too, and small and round. She wears bright red lipstick painted round her open mouth in a cupid’s bow and her white, top teeth show beneath the red of the lipstick. The inside of her mouth is black, with a neat pink tongue on view. Her hair is drawn back from her face and hangs down to her waist in abundant blonde ringlets. She is well endowed and her blue bodice- top, laced with red, reveals an ample cleavage. Beneath this top she wears a leopard skin dress? Her pink arms are bare and her fingernails are painted red.

The Bad Idea Bears: These are two snuggly, cute teddy bear types. One has bright blue long fur and a smart bow tie in red and white satin stripes. The other is covered in bright yellow long fur and a pink satin bow with blue spots surmounts her head. They both have large, bright eyes and open mouths with their tongues showing in the black interiors.

Mrs T: She is ancient and Kate’ s boss. She has purple felted skin, small black eyes and high black eyebrows. Her nose is a round purple ball and her mouth is firmly closed, with no sign of lips. Her short, wavy, black hair is tinged with grey and she wears red framed spectacles perched on her nose. Her hands are purple. Her old-fashioned dress is beige with a small print, in pinks and greens with a large white collar and cuffs and inserts of lace panels down both side of the front and 3 pearl buttons down the centre. She wears a small cameo brooch above these buttons.

At one point the boxes come on. They have opening mouths with pink tongues showing as they sing.

Ricky appears near the end of the show, as does a new kid who has just graduated from college.

For the wedding all the male puppets wear suits and bow ties with white skull caps. With white skull caps on the back of their heads. Kate is in a pink dress.

**The Humans**

Brian: He’s a laid-back guy married to Christmas Eve. This part is played by Richard Morse. He is bulky with deep set, large eyes, under arching eyebrows and a high forehead, emphasised by his baldness. He has a broad nose, thin lips and a neat moustache and beard, light brown in colour and flecked with grey. He wears loose shirts over t shirts and cut off trousers, frayed at the edges. For the wedding he wears a tuxedo, a bright red cummerbund, red bow tie and red flower in his lapel. He wears a red Jewish skull cap on the back of his head.

Christmas Eve is a therapist, who moved over from Japan. Her part is played by Arina II. She has an abundance of black hair which is parted to one side hanging down in a plait and large, almond shaped dark brown eyes, under well marked arched eyebrows, a small exquisite nose, high cheek bones and a wide smile. She wears a bright red, flowered satin Japanese style tunic over green pedal pushers. Later she wears a pink tunic, similarly styled. For the wedding scene she enters carrying a bright red, Japanese parasol and wears a many layered white dress, knee length in the front, frothing to full length at the back. She has a broad red satin sash around her waist. She has a short veil on her head, kept in place with a headband with flowers. She also carries a small round bouquet of red and white flowers.

Gary Coleman lives on the Avenue, too. He’s the superintendent. His part is taken by Etisyai Philip. She is black, with short black hair and large dark eyes. She has a sculpted face, broad nose and full lips. Gary wears blue denim dungarees, a pink and blue t shirt and a baseball cap at a rakish angle on his head. He has a large tool belt fastened round his hips. For the wedding he wears a dark suit with a white skull cap and a white prayer shawl around his neck.

**The Puppeteers.**

Stephen Arden manipulates and is the voice of Nicky, Trekkie Monster and Bad Idea Bear.

Sarah Harlington is in charge of and talks and sings for Kate Monster and Lucy the Slut

Richard Lowe is the person behind Princeton and Rod.

Jessica Parker is Mrs T. Bad Ideas Bear and a 2nd Arm

The Ensembe is made up of Rhiane Drummond, Gracie Lai, Cameron Sharp and Josh Tevendale

The Set is a block of 3 houses in Avenue Q. All three are two storey high terraces. The left hand terrace, number 75, has 3 upstairs windows with decrepit looking curtains and one large window beneath. There’s a run-down looking window-box beneath this window and a dustbin stands in front of the house. Steps lead up to its front door. The middle terrace, 76, is smaller, with one window below and two windows above. All these windows are blacked out. A sign which reads “Apartment for Rent” is pasted over its door and it has a parapet running round its roof. The terrace on the far right, number 77, is taller than the others, with one window below and 2 above. All number 77’s windows are dressed with slatted wooden blinds. Its roof is more ornate than the others and it is embellished with light-coloured stone around the windows and a wavy stone detail. On the left of number 75, the far left of the set, is a wire mesh gate and some vegetation shows through the mesh. At the far right of the set is a tumbledown wall, with greenery peeking over. A fire hydrant stands in front of the wall and there’s a dustbin alongside it.

Some windows of the three houses are flaps. When they are dropped down they show a room in the interior of an apartment. The rooms look like dolls house interiors.

Kate’s apartment is in the left hand house and the bottom window, when flapped down, shows a wooden dining table and chair, a red rug and a line of flying ceramic ducks on the wall-papered wall with a ceiling light. Rod and Nicky’s apartment flaps down from the top window of the middle house. It has blue arms chairs and a rug. A light shines from the ceiling. Princeton’s apartment is revealed when the bottom window of the middle house flap down. It shows a simple bed, a shelf with miniature books and it also has an illuminated ceiling light. When the flaps are down it signifies that the characters are in their apartments, although they are not physically inside the rooms. The house furthest to the right opens to become a café at one stage. It has a chest-high counter and behind it a curtain hangs in sparkling silver strips to form an entrance for Lucy the Slut. There are two high round tables in the café. A number of beds feature in this production. There are two beds with tartan pillows and duvets, one in reds, one in blues, on the stage, when Rod and Nicky’s flap is open, and at another time there’s a bed in front of Kate’s open flap. Later still there’s a hospital bed.

Behind the row of houses above the level of their roofs the skyline of New York is visible in outline. On a couple of occasions this becomes the Empire State Building and Kate is looking down from it. There are small screens high above the set, one on the right and one on the left. These are illuminated from time to time and are used to show illustrative images or words.

The show was directed by Cressida Carre and music and lyrics are by Robert Lopez and Jeff Marx. The show is audio-described by Kate Ingram.