



ENTERTAINMENT

Welcome back to Avenue Q!

By Chari Arespacochaga (The Philippine Star) Updated February 22, 2010 12:00 AM



The Broadway musical returns to Manila with a host of zany human and puppet characters

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MANILA, Philippines - It was election year in America when I first saw Avenue Q on Broadway. The theater was packed. And laughter filled the hall. And when the show got to the point towards the end of the evening where the cast says, "George Bush! Is only for now," I will never forget how the audience rose up from their seats and began clapping and hooting so loud the show had to momentarily stop.

I saw Avenue Q again recently. America is way past election year now. There is a new president. And for the show, Avenue Q, there is even a new theater. This time it has returned to its roots Off-roadway. But the theater was still packed. And everyone was still having a great time! The laughter and the fun and the celebration will always seem to follow this show no matter how long it runs and no matter where it goes.... even here in Manila!

We had no clue three years ago when we first opened Avenue Q in Manila how well it would be received by everyone and how it would hold a special place in everyone's hearts. Now, three highly successful runs later and a month-long sold-out run at the Esplanade Theater in Singapore, Avenue Q is back!

A host of zany characters - human and puppet - live on Avenue Q, a street not unlike the one named Sesame, except a little more rundown. Princeton, a bright-eyed college graduate, decides to call this neighborhood home after finally finding an apartment he can afford after a search that began on Avenue A. Here begins his hilarious story of self-discovery as he tries to find his purpose while living on a desperately shrinking bank balance, falling in love, falling in lust, and making friends with his wacky neighbors. Life may suck on Avenue Q but being jobless, homeless, politically incorrect, dating, growing up to find your purpose (or not!) are just some of the topics featured in the terrific songs of this show. It was the winner of three 2004 Tony Awards including Best Musical.

Our street started out with Rachel Alejandro, Felix Rivera, Aiza Seguerra, Frenchie Dy, Joel Trinidad, Rycharde Everley and Teene Chan. Over the different runs, the street welcomed new neighbors - Carla Guevara Laforteza who took over Kate Monster and Lucy The Slut duties, and Thea Tadiar Everley who very quickly studied how to be Joel Trinidad's right hand, among other things. For this run, Rachel is back as Kate and Lucy and the street welcomes yet another wacky neighbor in the person of Calvin Millado who will be taking on the role of not-quite-funny-comedian, Brian.

And our course, the street will not be complete without all of you! Whether you've watched the show once or whether you were the ones who returned many times over in the past, your enthusiastic support and overwhelming requests to bring the show back is really why we are here again. The joy on stage is only multiplied and made magical by yours. It has been amazing to see how you all have embraced the show as one of your favorites. We can also say thank you.

Special thanks also must go to our generous partners in bringing Avenue Q back to the stage led by The Philippine STAR, Portfolio, CPR Auditorium RCB Plaza, Lifestyle Network, Manila Broadcasting Corp., Crossover 105.1, Mellow 94.7, Digipost, Flippish.com, Business World, Red Crab Group of Restaurants, Congo Grille, Yoshinoya, The Bar and The City of Makati have all helped us bring this funny and heart-warming musical back to Manila.

Three years after Manila first got to Avenue Q the love and the laughter continues. And we couldn't be more delighted

to say.... "Welcome BACK to Avenue Q!"

Avenue Q runs from March 12 to 27 at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium, RCBC Plaza, Makati City. It has music and lyrics by Jeff Marx and Robert Lopez and a book by Jeff Whitty, directed by Bobby Garcia and Chari Arespacochaga. Set design is by Mio Infante, lighting design is by Johnsy Reyes, and puppet design is by Sam Fuentes based on the original Broadway puppet designs by Rick Lyons. Tickets are available.... but only for now.... so get yours quick!

For details, call Atlantis Productions at 892-7078 or 840-1187.

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