

Senior Spotlight: Erika Soukup

BY ALEXANDRIA GOSEN

ERIKA SOUKUP is a theater major and double artistic minor; those minors being dance and art. Soukup has been in theater since her highschool years. Her first show in high school was *The Little Mermaid*, where she was in the ensemble, and for her, this was THE show. Soukup was introduced into the world of theater by one of her friends, and little did that friend know that she was setting Erika up for her future.

Soukup started off doing a lot of musicals, and this helped her grow a lot, and of course it was very fun. From there, Soukup became interested in dance, and that same friend from before connected Soukup to a studio her senior year. After that, she ended up here at Concordia,

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where she has become a crowd favorite, and a class act. Erika has been in an abundance of shows in her time here both on stage and off.

From the classes and onstage experience, Soukup has really come into her own and her love for acting has grown, Soukup said, “I love the opportunity to actually become somebody else and come out with a new perspective.” She also

talked about how theater has crossed over into her family’s love for stories. “I am the only Soukup who does theater, but I have always loved reading. I come from a reading family. Stories, characters and other worlds have always been a part of me,” she continued to explain how acting is like reading the stories and being thrown into another world in a different way. She considers it to be a stroke of luck that she found something she is passionate about.

Along with acting, she fell in love with tech. She has been working in the scene shop since her sophomore year, where she learned about production, building, and all things backstage—especially painting. Soukup said, “taking something lifeless and making it beautiful and finishing a world started by the performers.” Erika will be gracing the stage before graduation yet again with *The Hypochondriac* where she will be acting and designing.

After graduation, Erika does not really have any set plans. She would love to continue performing and working with sets. She also dreams of being a playwright. The end goal for her is theater and film, as long as she can keep performing. She is also toying with the idea of starting an all female company in the twin cities. She makes the point that there’s a lot of sexism in the community, especially when you want to pursue leadership roles.

When asked what legacy she hopes to leave, this is what she had to say: “As much as I have learned and grown while here, there are many issues with



Erika Soukup. Photo Credit: Ally Gosen

Concordia as a whole and specifically in the arts. Because it is a more conservative environment and the message being shown to people. There is a habit of being unwelcoming and not treating everyone with respect. And this happens a lot everywhere. I would love to have left a legacy where minorities feel comfortable being able to speak up when they feel pushed down. These conversations need to be had across the board all the time. Not just in arts or in theater. We’re at such a moment in time where if you are not having those conversations you are not doing what you should be doing.”