

The Addams Family spooks audiences

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After practicing daily from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., junior high's take on "The Addams Family" ran from Oct. 25-27 in the main theater.

Following the journey of dark Wednesday Addams' (Sophie Simon) love of a normal boy (Julius Demosthenes), she must tell the rest of her family where her heart lies. With her brother Pugsley (Ruby Auerbach) continuously vying for her attention and her mother Morticia (Jessi Kaplan) feeling left out, Wednesday can only hope for the best for both her heart and her family.

The dry humor of the show proved a challenge for the actors. "[The musical has] jokes in a very different way. We think they are funny but we can't show it. We have to



SEEING STARS: Alex Strulovic Lord sings his song to the 'moon.' His character, Fester, is one of the most love-struck characters in the show. (Photo/Bella Ramirez)

say it like we really mean it," seventh grader Sophie Simon said.

Even though they face obstacles onstage, acting often gave more help than harm to the young actors.

"Before theater I used to go to a lot of therapy... the break from reality helps me get everything into sorts and to know what I should do next," seventh grader Alex Strulovic Lord said.

The cast also learned how to adapt to playing new gender roles. For example, seventh grader Ruby Auerbach plays Pugsley Addams, but she uses her past experience to build the role. "I have played a boy before, like last year I played Mushu in 'Mulan,' so it's not that peculiar to me. I enjoy it," she said.

Whether you like ghouls or songs, "The Addams Family" was a production for every member of the family. Before the show, eighth grader Laney

Rakofsky said, "I think it will be a very good show... I hope everyone gets a little time to shine."

AMERICA'S CONTROVERSIAL

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When you think of artists and their rise to fame, you might name their hit song blasting on Y100 or their newest album. However, their music alone probably does not speak for everything that comes to mind. Whether it be Lady Gaga's extravagant outfits or Kanye West's presidential campaign, artist's popularity rarely derives solely from their music anymore.

Following the death of rapper XXXTentacion, an outpour of heartbroken fans expressed their grief through social media. The tragic shooting occurred June 18, 2018 outside RIVA Motorsports during what appeared to be a robbery, resulting in the death of the 20-year-old singer.

His death created a further divide between his already controversial fanbase as the rising star had previous charges of aggravated battery of a pregnant victim and false imprisonment.

The public reaction quickly split between those who glorified XXXTentacion as a raw artist and those who could

not come to the terms with his questionable moral character.

XXXTentacion's murder became the gateway to a long disputed conversation: Should artists' personal lives affect their professional careers- a question that has lingered since Chris Brown's 2009 assault against Rihanna that left her with a bruised face and split lip, and R Kelly's numerous sexual abuse allegations, including the 27-year-old singer's marriage to a 15-year-old girl.

While one can argue that musicians serve to create powerful music, not to represent a moral code, it can also be argued that a celebrity who frequently walks in the public eye runs the risk of glorifying a dangerous set of habits.

Spotify's 2017 attempt to filter the amount of publicity that contentious artists receive resulted in a policy that would ban artists that participated in hate conduct from its promoted playlists. The company then proceeded to take R Kelly and XXXTentacion off its promoted playlists while still keeping their content available on the site.

However, the policy quickly received backlash from the music industry as many questioned Spotify's right to determine a moral policy. Spotify then revoked the policy stating, "Across all genres, our role is not to regulate artists. Therefore, we are moving

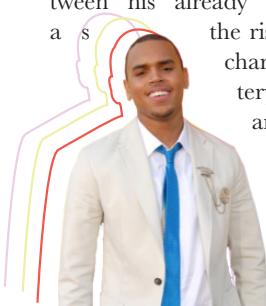
CREATORS



XXXTentacion

away from implementing a policy around artist conduct."

Spotify's intentions and resulting backlash created the perfect example of why controversial artists consistently create a dispute among their audiences. Nobody can tell you what to listen to or who to endorse, but it should be up to the fans to understand what they promote when buying tickets to a Chris Brown or R Kelly concert. Whether you believe that business and personal life don't mix or that personal values should consistently play a part in a super star's career, identifying the character of the artist you endorse is a crucial step in finding your new musical idol.



Chris Brown

(Photo/www.PlusPNG.com)

