

**My name is Kelechi Imoh and I will be playing Deirdre.**

**What are the challenges to the actor that a staged reading presents?**

This is my first staged reading, so a challenge that I faced was learning how to play out to the audience, so it doesn't feel that I'm only reading the script. I also have to focus on the reading to stay with the story, so I don't lose where I am. My lines are powerful, so I needed to figure out a balance of when to keep it casual versus when to turn up my volume and emotion. I have to trust myself in how I'm bringing the character to life. I have Dr. Greer to thank for that.

**The Maverick Theatre Company is dedicated to presenting socially relevant and timely material for our audiences. How does this production reflect those values?**

I believe this is especially relevant with the times that we live in today. You can access more than you know with social media playing a factor in multiple people's lives. Sexual assault and victim-blaming happen more than we see, and it's still a hard subject matter for people to talk about. I'm glad that UTA is able to shine a light on an important message that makes you take a minute to let everything sink in and realize that maybe a similar situation has happened to you or anyone that you know.

**What is the most important thing that audiences should know about this production?**

We're telling a story that's a tasteful piece regarding graphic language and imagery. I hope that the audience will hear our message when it comes to a subject so heavy, but that they zone in

on what we're specifically saying. At times the audience may hope that this will all go away, but hopefully they stay to hear the story because of how it makes them feel. We're trying to drive this play in the idea of "yes, it's a staged reading", but to make it clear, because the moments that we're describing are all we have.

**What is the most important thing that you have learned from this production?**

With this being one of the more serious plays I've done, what I've learned from this experience is how to truly make the audience listen to what I'm saying. I think my eyes have been opened to what can be tackled and how far I'm willing to push myself to potentially go further. I've also realized I'm okay with talking about more serious topics, and I hope I will bring that off-stage as well. I have more growing to do as a performer, but I believe I will have a deep connection with this play and character long after the play has ended its run.