

Alfred University to stage performances of 'The Inspector General'

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ALFRED -- Alfred University will stage four nightly performances of Russian playwright Nicolai Gogol's "The Inspector General," Nov. 12-15 at 8 p.m. in the C.D. Smith Theatre of the Miller Performing Arts Center. The Inspector General, written by Gogol in 1836 and set in a small Russian community, "is a funny and fast-paced satire that examines graft and corruption in small-town government," said Dr. Becky Prophet, professor of theater at Alfred University, who will direct the performances. "Along with the politics of a small town, gossip, overarching assumptions and bureaucracy rule the day," Prophet said. Then the Inspector General is dispatched to the town from Moscow. His unflinching scrutiny sends the town's officials into disarray as they attempt to cover up their misdeeds. "Audiences may choose to have a simple and humorous look at the white collar crimes of the rich and powerful," said Prophet, "or they may choose to see the parallels in government corruption on any scale, anywhere in the world." Gogol's original play was set in 19th century Russia. The AU production of The Inspector General, using John Anderson's 1930 acting version, has been adapted by Prophet to reflect three time periods: the mid-19th century, the Great Depression; and the early 21st century. The cast is made up of 21 Alfred University students. Cast members include senior Shaminda Amarakoon as the mayor of the town; junior Christopher Simon Reid as the "inspector"; sophomore Hailley Field, juniors Lindsay Gilbert and Kara Dunne and senior Chris Quinn as town officials; senior Andrew Shaw and junior Michael Anderson as a goofy pair of landowners, senior Hannah Patterson as the mayor's wife; senior Laura Woods as the mayor's daughter, sophomore Megan Shove and freshman Kellie French as the mayor's housekeepers, freshmen Christopher Broderick and Amanda Kinney as members of the police department, and senior Vanessa Stipkovits as a maid who becomes the Inspector's companion. Playing the roles of various other townspeople are freshmen Jared Hilliker, Lacey Holmes, Jodi Anderson, Jaimie Pinkham, Dawn Knight and John Kalish. There will also be a cameo appearance by an AU personality. Scenery, lighting and sound for the production were created by Sean O'Skea. Julia Shapiro, a senior art student, designed the costumes. General admission to the performances is \$4. Area students will be admitted for \$2, while AU students with valid I.D. will be admitted free. Reservations are recommended and can be made by calling 607-871-2828.