

AU to present 'Cloud Nine'

11/01/04

Alfred University's Division of Performing Arts will stage *Cloud Nine* in the C.D. Smith Theatre of the Miller Performing Arts building Nov. 10-13. All performances will be at 8 pm. *Cloud Nine* by British playwright Caryl Churchill, is a comedy about race, gender, and oppression throughout a century. The first act, set in 1880 in some corner of the African portion of the British Empire, portrays the trials and tribulations of a Victorian family fighting hard to maintain the veneer of their civilization in isolation, loneliness, and boredom. Dominated by patriarchal Clive, the characters wrestle with desire, strict social standards, and sometimes each other. In Act II--set in a park in London a century later, but only 25 years later for the characters, Churchill tells us--some of the same characters and certainly many parallel characters wrestle with some of the same issues (and, yes, one another) to come to terms with greater freedom but limited prospects. The actors each play a role in each century, bringing even more energy to the examination of two diverse social situations. Junior theatre major Carlos Bido from New York City portrays Clive and four-year-old Cathy. Jared Hilliker, a sophomore from Greenfield, MA, plays Betty and her son Edward. Megan Birchfield a first-year student from Portland, OR, plays the son Edward and later the daughter Victoria. Anneke Dunnington of Middlebury, VT creates Ellen, the governess and Lin, Victoria's lover and mother of Cathy. Megan Shove, a junior from Coxsackie, NY, plays Betty's mother and Betty. Harry, the great white hunter, and Gerry, the promiscuous gay philanderer, are both played by Logan Kjep, a first-year art student from Sherman, CT. Jaimie Pinkham, a sophomore from Ellsworth, ME, plays the independent and ribald Mrs. Saunders and Betty's mother. Matt Mingle from Turbotville, PA, plays the African servant Joshua and Martin, the liberated husband of Victoria. Dr. Becky Prophet, professor of theater, is directing the production. Betsy Van Deusen, a senior in the School of Art & Design, is in charge of designing the costumes. Sean O'Skea, assistant professor of theater design, designed the scenery, lighting and sound. Tickets are required and reservations are recommended for *Cloud Nine*. Ticket orders may be placed by calling 607-871-2828 or connecting to the Performing Arts Box Office website at <<http://www.alfred.edu/per...>>. General admission is \$4; AU students with a valid ID are admitted free.