

AU student's play selected for regional theater festival

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A one-act play by Alfred University senior Jeremy Carey is among a select number of original works chosen to be performed at the Region II American College Theatre Festival (ACTF), to be held Jan. 6-10, 2004, at Muhlenberg College. Carey, who is majoring in performing arts and communications studies at AU, wrote and produced *It's Only a Test* on campus Dec. 5. He also submitted it to the Kennedy Center/American College Theatre Festival, Region II, for consideration, and learned this week that it had been selected for a staged reading at the festival. Carey's work will be directed at the festival by a faculty member from another college. Carey will be present at auditions and all rehearsals. At the end of the festival, with the performance of his play as a staged reading, he will receive a response from a playwright and/or critic. A total of nine plays - one full-length play; three one-act plays, including Carey's; and five 10-minute plays - all by college students were selected for presentation at the regional festival. "This is a fine achievement for Jeremy," said Dr. Becky Prophet, professor of theater in AU's Division of Performing Arts. "This experience will also help him continue to develop both this play and as a playwright. He did fine work, and now he has a chance to improve on it." According to Carey, *It's Only a Test* is about two estranged sisters, Cynthia and Tabitha, who are in a hospital waiting room while their mother has an unspecified test completed. As they try to reconnect with each other, the younger one, Tabitha, reveals that she's bisexual. After disclosing her secret, she pushes Cynthia to divulge a secret of her own. Cynthia, in a rush of emotion, reveals that she was raped at a college fraternity party she attended as a freshman more than nine years before. "The actual writing of the script took only a few days. I started and completed it during mid-semester break in October," admitted Carey. The play was in rehearsal for nearly three weeks before it was presented to the AU audience. Faculty members - Prophet, as well as J. Stephen Crosby, professor of theater, and Sean O'Skea, assistant professor of theater design - "were very supportive of my desire to direct this piece that I wrote," said Carey. "It's been really great to get as much help from them as I have on this project." The bulk of the work, however, was done by students and it wouldn't have been pulled off without them. Sara Schnick, stage manager; Betsy VanDusen, make-up designer; and Shaminda Amarakoon, house manager, all went above and beyond what they needed to do," said Carey. "Without their help and support I never would have been able to keep my sanity and watch this project come to life as it did." Vanessa Stipkovits, a senior with majors in theater and elementary education, portrayed Cynthia, and Beth Greenwood, a senior with a double major in comparative cultures and communication studies, played Tabitha. "It is because of them that this project even happened," said Carey. "They came in on their own time and really put a lot of work in to make this happen. Both of them dedicated themselves to this project as much as I did, and the characters they created were amazing!" Writing and directing his own work has made Carey reconsider what life after Alfred University may hold. Initially, he was planning on going to work as a stage manager, but now he's considering pursuing a Master of Fine Arts degree in directing. Short-term, his plans call for revising *It's Only a Test*, based on the comments he receives from the professionals at the regional festival, and making it into a full-length play he would like to produce next semester, along with another piece he's working on now. Region II of KC/ACTF covers all colleges and universities in New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and Maryland, as well as portions of West Virginia and Ohio. Carey is a graduate of Candor Central School. He is a son of Cheryl Carey of Candor, NY, and Ronald Carey of Endicott, NY. Greenwood, a graduate of Phillips Exeter Academy, is a daughter of Charles and Nancy Greenwood of Pelham, NH. Stipkovits is a daughter of Joni Stipkovits and Carl Stipkovits, both of Lockport, NY. She is a graduate of Starpoint Junior-Senior High School.