

The SUN STAR

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by Chris Hawk

Theatre UAF presents 'An Inspector Calls'

UAF Theatre is kicking off its fall production with actors speaking in British accents and an intimate set where audience members are close enough to reach out and touch performers.

Theatre UAF is presenting the play "An Inspector Calls" in the Lee H. Salisbury Theatre in the Fine Arts Complex Nov. 7-16. The play is a three-act drama, taking place over one night in 1912, centered on the well-to-do middle-class Birling family. The family is visited by a man calling himself Inspector Goole, who questions the family about the suicide of a young working-class woman. The family is interrogated and revealed to have been responsible for the young woman's exploitation, abandonment and social ruin, effectively leading to her death.

"I think it's always fun to work on a mystery play where the audience pieces together the puzzle alongside the characters," Director Brian Cook said. He loves crime dramas, and thinks An Inspector Calls is a perfect fit. "The story unravels as characters reveal their darkest secrets."

Cook is also interested in the message J.B. Priestley, writer of the play, intended. "The play was written in 1947, but is set in 1912, and thus we are looking back over the last 100 years as we listen to the characters talk about war, joblessness, love, and theft, we are bound to think about all of the events that they have not yet witnessed."

Carrie Baker, associate professor of performance, served as dialect coach for the production and taught the cast Standard British and Cockney dialects. "Acting with a dialect is a significant challenge for an actor and a great opportunity for

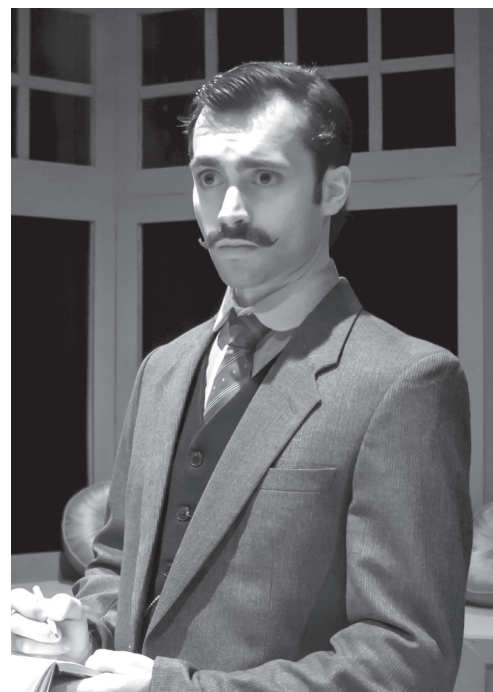
our actors to be having as part of their undergraduate education." Professional actors often use different voices, so giving students the chance to incorporate dialect into their character work is an invaluable experience, according to Baker.

Cook is also excited play about the dialectic aspect of the play, "How often, in Fairbanks, do you see actors talking with good British accents?"

Marley Horner, graduating theatre student and actors, plays Inspector Goole. Horner is also doing his thesis based on this production. Horner's research was centered on the period of the play, written after World War II and set right before World War I, which he feels, "Really gives an idea of the class struggle that was going on at that time."

Katrina Kuharich, sophomore theatre student, who plays the female lead Sheila Biding, added, "I'm really excited for 'An Inspector Calls;' and I think it's going to be a completely different show than we've done before. It's in the round too, which is a different stage set-up where the audience is on every side of the stage, and it's very personal and intimate, and they're looking in on everything that's going on, and so I think it will be really great for the audience."

Performances for the play are Nov. 7, 8, 14, 15 at 7:30 p.m. and Nov. 15 & 16 at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$16 for adults, \$12 for seniors or military and \$8 for students, if purchased ahead of time online at www.uaf.edu/theatrefilm, or by calling the Box Office at 474-7751. At the door, tickets will be an additional \$2.



Theatre student Marley Horner will play the lead character, Inspector Goole, in Theatre UAF's production of An Inspector Calls. Photo courtesy of UAF Theatre.

Cast:

- **Mrs. Birling** - Theatre UAF alum Rachel Blackwell
- **Gerald Croft** - Economics student Ian Hendren
- **Inspector Goole** - Senior theatre student Marley Horner (in his thesis role)
- **Sheila Birling** - Sophomore theatre student Katrina Kuharich
- **Edna** - UAF student Nancy Nguyen
- **Mr. Birling** - UAF student Nolan Raapana
- **Eric Birling** - UAF student Mallory Smith
- Production team:
- **Director:** Brian Cook, UAF Assistant Professor Theatre
- **Costume & Scenic Designer** — Bethany Marx UAF Assistant Professor Theatre
- **Lighting Designer** — Adam Gillette, UAF Scene Shop Manager
- **Assistant Director:** Ian Buoncore
- **Stage Manager:** Kellie Bernstein UAF student
- **British Dialect Coach** — Carrie Baker UAF Associate Professor of Theatre