

# ***The Government Inspector***

Written by Nikolai Godol  
Adapted by Jeffrey Hatcher

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## **Act One: 1836, Russian Provincial Town**

Scene One: Mayor's Sitting Room

Scene Two: Room at the Inn

Scene Three: Mayor's Sitting Room

## **Act Two: The Next Morning**

Scene One: Mayor's Sitting Room

### **Cast**

Ivan Alexandreyevich Hlestekov	John King (10)*
Osip, His Servant	Spencer Spotts (09)
Anton Antonovich, The Mayor	Brandon Lopez (11)*
Anna Andreyevna, His wife	Nicole Campbell (11)*
Marya Antonovna, Their daughter	Nikki Romero (12)*
Grusha, Their maid	Marissa Keeran (12)
The Judge	Riley Radeke (11)
The School Principal	Chris Rittenhouse (11)
The Hospital Director	Austin Roger (09)
Dobchinsky	Hailey Otis (10)
Bobchinsky	Kalin Robbins (11)
Postmaster	Kaige Sellers (11)
The Doctor	Trevor Mares (09)
The Inn Keeper's Wife	Emily Gould (11)
The Waitress	Ally Daubenspeck (12)
Svetsunov, The police chief	Drew Meile (10)*
Constable 1/Abdullin	Cody Behrens (11)
Constable 2/ Penelaeyev	Vanessa Wynne (12)
Constable 3/ The Corporal's Widow	Kristen Kingham (12)
The Locksmith's Wife	Elena Macias (10)
An Imperial Messenger	Trenton Spillman (09)

## Crew

Director	Mr. Jay Seller*
Technical Director	Mr. Glenn Ashley
House Manager	Mrs. Brittany Wallis*
Light & Sound Design	Mr. Matt Henderson*
Tech Crew	Mr. Corey Willis*, Tim Mack

(09), Izabeau Hunt (09), Katlyn Nail (11), Josie Hohorf (09), Kate Beckett (12), Hannah Richa (09), Gabbi Smathers (09), Anthony Smith (09), Connor Pearce (10), Branson Gonzales (10), Chelbi Faucz (10), Briaunna Ellington (11), Taylor Kidder (11)

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*Special thanks to the Denver Center Theatre Company's technical division for their contributions to the Horizon theatre program, without their help the staging platforms and visual presentation for this production would not have been possible.*

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**About the author: Nikolai Vasilyevich Gogol**, named after Saint Nikolai, was born in 1809, in the small town of Velikie Sorochintsy, in the Ukraine, then part of Russia. His parents, Maria Ivanovna and Vasily Afanasevich Gogol-Yanovsky, were landowners. Gogol enrolled in the High School for Advanced Study in Nezhin, in 1821, where his classmates, observing his various physical and social peculiarities, nicknamed him “the mysterious dwarf.” In school, he developed an interest in literature and acting. In 1825, when Gogol was sixteen years old, his father died. In 1828, Gogol arrived in Saint Petersburg, intent on becoming a civil servant. Obtaining a disappointingly low-level, low-paying post in the government bureaucracy, Gogol focused his ambitions on

writing. His very first publication, in 1829, was mostly ignored; it was given scathing reviews by the critics who did, however, make note of it. Humiliated and discouraged by this reception, Gogol purchased all the remaining copies of his work and burned them.

After an equally unrewarding stint at a second government post, Gogol began teaching history at a girl's boarding school in 1831. *Evenings on a Farm near Dikanka*, Gogol's two-volume collection of stories derived from Ukrainian folklore, was published in 1831 and 1832. The collection was instantly well received. Gogol soon gained the attention of Aleksandr Pushkin, Russia's leading literary figure, who provided him with ideas for two of his most important works.

In 1834, he began a position as assistant professor of medieval history at Saint Petersburg University. Gogol quickly proved himself a resounding failure as a professor, in part because he was not sufficiently knowledgeable in his subject, and left this post after only one year. During that year, Gogol, while generally neglecting his teaching duties, published two books of short stories, *Mirgorod* and *Arabesques*; a collection of essays; as well as two plays, *Marriage* and *The Government Inspector* (also translated variously as *The Inspector General*, and *The Inspector*). *The Government Inspector* was brought to the attention of the tsar, who liked it so much that he requested the first theatrical production, which was performed in 1836.

Gogol, reacting to heavy criticism by the government officials his play lampooned, declared that “everyone is against me” and left Russia. He spent the next twelve years in self-imposed exile. During this time, Gogol traveled extensively throughout Europe, staying in Germany, Switzerland, and Paris, eventually settling primarily in Rome. After Pushkin died in 1837, Gogol inherited the mantle of the leading Russian writer of the day. Gogol’s literary masterpiece *Dead Souls* and the first edition of his collected works were published in 1842. In 1848, he returned to Russia, settling in Moscow. Gogol became increasingly preoccupied with religious concerns, eventually taking council from a fanatical priest who influenced him to burn his manuscript for the second volume of *Dead Souls*. Gogol died at the age of forty-two in 1852 as the result of a religious fast.



**About the translator: Jeffrey Hatcher** wrote the book for the Broadway musical *Never Gonna Dance*, and many of his plays have been produced off-Broadway, including *Scotland Road*, *Three Viewings*, *A Picasso*, *The Turn of the Screw* and *Tuesdays with Morrie*, which he wrote with Mitch Albom. His plays have premiered and been produced at theaters across America and the Twin Cities, including *To Fool the Eye*, *The Falls*, *The Boys* and *The Government Inspector* at the Guthrie. *The Monkey King*, *Korczak’s Children*, and *Miss Nelson is Missing!* at The Children’s Theater Company, *Good ‘n’ Plenty*, *Murderers*, *Mrs. Mannerly*, and *Three Viewings* at Illusion Theater, and *A Piece of the Rope* and *All the Way with LBJ* at the History Theater. Other plays and theaters include *Compleat Female Stage Beauty*, *Smash*, *Hanging Lord Haw-*

*Haw*, *Work Song* (with Eric Simonson), *Lucky Duck* (with Bill Russell and Henry Krieger), *Sockdology* and *What Corbin Knew* at Yale Rep, Old Globe, Seattle Rep, South Coast Rep, Intiman Theatre, Denver Center, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Alabama Shakespeare Festival, Milwaukee Rep and dozens more in the U.S., U.K., Germany, France, Japan, Chile, Belgium and other countries. He’s also written screenplays for *Stage Beauty* (2004), *Casanova* (2005), and the upcoming *The Duchess* (2008) starring Keira Knightley and Ralph Fiennes, as well as episodes for the television series *Columbo*.

Mr. Hatcher has received numerous awards for his playwriting, including the Rosenthal New Play Prize, Frankel Award, Charles MacArthur Fellowship Award, American Theatre Critics Association Citation and Barrymore Award for Best New Play in 2003 for *A Picasso*. He’s also received fellowships from the McKnight Foundation and Jerome Foundation, and grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, Theatre Communications Group and Lila Wallace Fund.

He is a member and/or alumnus of The Playwrights' Center, the Dramatists Guild, the Writers Guild and New Dramatists.

### **Russian Censorship**

Under the reign of Tsar Nicholas I, Russian writers suffered extremely strict censorship of all written material. In 1826, a statute on censorship prohibited the publication of any matter that was deemed to disparage the monarchy or the church or which criticized, even indirectly, the existing order of society. The years 1848–1855, particularly, were referred to as “the age of terror by censorship.” Penalties included warnings, rebukes, fines, confiscations of offending books or magazines, police supervision or detention in the guardroom of local military garrisons. It was a wonder that anything got into print at all. Genuine Russian masterpieces of dramatic writing were suppressed by a pathologically suspicious censor and were destined to wait over thirty years for their first public performances. Literary historians agree that, had it not been brought to the special attention of the Tsar himself, who whimsically approved it, *The Government Inspector* would certainly have been censored from any theatrical production until many years later.



### **Nineteenth-Century Russian Literature**

Despite, or perhaps in spite of, strict censorship under the reign of Tsar Nicholas I, Russian literature flourished in the nineteenth century. Unofficial manuscripts of literary and other written works could be obtained and dispersed among friends and acquaintances without knowledge of the censors.

Among such talents were Pushkin, Gogol, and Dostoyevsky. Before Gogol, Aleksandr Pushkin (1799–1837) was the leading Russian writer of the early nineteenth century. Pushkin's masterpiece is the novel *Yevgeny Onegin* (1833), a realistic portrait of Russian life, at all social levels, in both the major cities and the provinces. Pushkin befriended the young Gogol in Saint Petersburg, and is said to have suggested the topic for *The Government Inspector* based on his own experience of being mistaken for a high ranking government official while staying at an inn in a remote town. Pushkin died from a fatal wound incurred during a duel to save his wife's honor. Gogol, while crushed by the loss of his friend's life, immediately inherited the mantle of leading Russian writer. Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821–1881), who is among Russia's greatest writers, was greatly influenced by Gogol. Critics often recount the now legendary comment attributed to Dostoyevsky that, as Amy Singleton Adams in the *Dictionary of Literary Biography* offers, all Russian realist writers had emerged “out from under Gogol's *Overcoat*.” Dostoyevsky's greatest works include the novella, *Notes from the Underground* (1864), and four novels: *Crime and Punishment* (1866), *The Idiot* (1868–9), *The Possessed* (1872), and *The Brothers Karamazov* (1879–80). Subsequent leading Russian writers of the nineteenth century include Leo Tolstoy and Anton Chekhov.

*I and the Village*, by Marc Chagall, Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY. Used with permission.

**Check out our website for show information and cast photos: [www.hhsdrama.com](http://www.hhsdrama.com)**

This program is presented for the purpose of helping students and the public become aware of, understand, and appreciate human culture, history, and religious diversity. As such, it is clearly educational in nature and is so defined and endorsed. Some material is not considered appropriate for young audiences.

## Previously On This Stage...

1988-89	Ten Little Indians, Grease
1989-90	The Matchmaker, South Pacific, The Good Doctor
1990-91	Children of a Lesser God, Fiddler on the Roof
1991-92	The Wizard of Oz, Gypsy, Brighton Beach Memoirs
1992-93	The Crucible, Mr. Scrooge, Bye, Bye, Birdie, Steel Magnolias
1993-94	Run For Your Wife, The Boys Next Door, Oklahoma!, Harvey
1994-95	Girl of the Frozen North, 100 Years of Broadway, Mousetrap, The Sound of Music
1995-96	Rumors, Wait Until Dark, Hello Dolly!, Christopher Durang One Acts
1996-97	It Runs in the Family, Picnic, The King and I, Stephen Gregg One Acts
1997-98	The Diviner's, Table Manners, Once On This Island, Five Ten Minute Plays
1998-99	The Children's Hour, The Most Happy Fella, A Midsummer Night's Dream, One Acts
1999-00	The Last Night of Ballyhoo, Marvin's Room, MAME!, Night Of One Acts
2000-01	Emma's Child, Selkie, The Witch of Blackbird Pond, How to Succeed in Business without Really Trying, Night of One Acts
2001-02	Secrets, Every Smart Traveler should Know, The Diary of Anne Frank, Little Shop of Horrors, Romeo and Juliet
2002-03	And They Dance Slow in Jackson, Winter Showcase, Oliver!, Biloxi Blues
2003-04	The Good Doctor, Winter Showcase 03, Camelot, The Miser
2004-05	Come Back Little Sheba, Lobby Hero, Winter Showcase, The Secret Garden
2005-06	See How They Run, Winter Showcase, Guys and Dolls, Fools
2006-07	Inherit the Wind, Winter Showcase/One Acts, Anything Goes, As Bees in Honey Drown
2007-08	To Kill a Mockingbird, Winter Showcase/One Acts, Little Women, A Piece of My Heart
2008-09	Don't Dress for Dinner, A Christmas Carol, Thoroughly Modern Millie, Spinning into Butter
2009-10	The Government Inspector, Dancing at Lughnasa, Sweet Charity, Almost Maine

## Be a part of the Horizon Drama Department Auditions coming up...

### Winter Play *Dancing at Lughnasa*

October 5, Monday, Audition Meeting, Auditorium 3-3:30 p.m.

October 6, Tuesday, Auditions, H0817, 3-5 p.m.

Everyone is welcome!

## Our 2009/2010 Season

<i>Dancing at Lughnasa</i> , Drama.....	Nov. 12-13, 2009
Colorado State Thespian Conference.....	Dec. 10-12, 2009
<i>Sweet Charity</i> , Spring Musical.....	Feb. 18-20, 2010
<i>Almost Maine</i> , Comedy.....	April 8-9, 2010