



Established in 1905. The City of London's premier amateur theatre company



Audition for the Sedos production of David Harrower's  
adaptation of Gogol's

## ~ Government Inspector ~

*"Don't blame the mirror if your face is lopsided."*

This satire is a seedy, sexy, ridiculous farce. We want to create a crazy, hectic and amazing show for audiences in London and Edinburgh. We are looking for actors and actresses who enjoy being part of a company, working hard on verbal and physical comedy and having a giggle on and off stage.

This video of our journey in 2012 is the best way to describe what we want to create ([http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=8\\_WGARyqRsY](http://m.youtube.com/watch?v=8_WGARyqRsY)). So if you liked the look of that come along to our workshop on Wednesday 7th May. Better yet, book an audition slot for the 12th or 13th of May.

### **The Team**

Director: Zoe Thomas-Webb

Producer: Kaytie Lee

Assistant Producer: Steph Urquhart

Production Design/Costumes: Edith Webb

Set Design: Crispin Thomas

Stage Manager: Laura Graham-Matheson

Sedos.co.uk



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## **Performances**

London

15 – 18 July

The Bridewell Theatre

Edinburgh

17 – 25 August (1 preview, 8 performances)

ZOO Venues, The Monkey House

Email Steph at [sedosfringe@gmail.com](mailto:sedosfringe@gmail.com) to sign up for the workshop and to book an audition slot.

## **Audition Details**

### **Workshop**

Wednesday, 7th May, 7.30pm - 9pm

Venue TBC

Meet the production team, hear about the concept of the show, learn about the Fringe and play some games to get a feel for how rehearsals would be!

### **First Audition**

Monday 12th and Tuesday 13th of May

Venue TBC

We will see people in groups (Group 1: 7 - 7.45pm, Group 2: 8 - 8.45pm or Group 3: 8.45 - 9.30pm) so when emailing Steph, please state which day and which time you would prefer and we will try to accommodate.

We will send you scenes to look at when you sign up for the audition. Please familiarise yourselves with them, although there is no need to memorize.

We will make every effort to notify you of results as soon as possible after your audition. If you cannot make the auditions dates, we will try to arrange an alternative time after the workshop on the 7th, if possible.

### **Audition Fee**

There is a £5 audition fee, waived for current Sedos members. If you are cast, your audition fee will be deducted from your participation fee.



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## **Recalls**

Saturday, 17th May (2-5pm)

Venue TBC

The recalls will involve group games and working on scenes from the play. Although we will attempt to take up as little of your time as we can, there will be some waiting.

## **Summer Festival Audition Restriction**

Government Inspector is the third show of the Sedos Summer Festival. Because of rehearsal times it is only possible to appear in one Festival show. Consequently, we will be unable to cast you if you have accepted a role in either *Eurosedos* or *In Cahoots*. (However, we will look forward to your performances there!)

More about the Summer Festival here: [sedos.org.uk](http://sedos.org.uk)

## **Rehearsals**

The first read-through will be held 25th May.

A formal schedule will be sent to the cast, but generally rehearsals will take place:

Tue & Thur, 7:00pm – 9:30pm

Sunday, 12:00pm – 5pm

There will be rehearsals between the London preview performances and the Edinburgh performances, the dates of which are TBC.



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## Edinburgh Performances

Performing at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival is more than a show week—it's also a fantastic holiday, a whirlwind of theatrical spectacle, and the chance to test your performance mettle in renowned venue, The Monkey House at Zoo Venues. It's a great location, right next to the Pleasance, a leading comedy/theatre venue. The Monkey House is a 90-seater thrust stage, and ZOO are a friendly and helpful company who really get on board with every show they produce. We have previously worked with them during *As You Like It* and we are very excited to be returning.

As we realize most of our cast will have to take time from work to participate, we will obviously ensure you have plenty of free time to see shows, explore the city and soak up the vibe.

That said, joining the *Government Inspector* cast will require commitment. In addition to performances, you will have allotted flyering time and marketing participation.

## London Performances

In addition to our exciting run at the Monkey House, *Government Inspector* will have a London run, perfect for inviting your friends and family.

### Preview Performances at The Bridewell Theatre

We will be taking part in Sedos' Summer Festival at the Bridewell Theatre and performing 4 preview performances.



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## Participation Costs

We have tried to keep the costs associated with going to Fringe as low as possible. Please note you will be responsible for your own food and drink during the run.

### **Accommodation:**

We have booked one four-bedroom and one five-bedroom flat to share, which means doubling up in double bedrooms for ten nights, you can choose to check in on Friday 15th AUG or Saturday 16th AUG and checking out Monday 25th AUG (this is a bank holiday and our last Fringe performance date). Cost is **£270 per person**.

### **Travel:**

The easiest and cheapest way to travel is by train. As soon as train tickets become available we shall make a block booking. Cost for a return ticket is around **£50 per person**. However if you choose you can also fly or drive.

### **Sedos Membership Fee:**

Everyone cast in GI who is not already a member will be required to join Sedos. Membership includes insurance in case of emergency. The **£30 membership fee** is good for a year—benefits include free auditions and discounted ticket rates for Sedos shows.

### **Sedos Participation Fee:**

Everyone cast in GI must pay a **£30 participation fee**. (If you were not a member at auditions and paid the £5.00 audition fee, this amount will be credited towards your participation fee.)

**Total amount due for those already members: £350**

**Total amount due for new members: £375**

A payment schedule will be discussed at the first rehearsal.



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## Our vision

Russia, 1970. Sex crazed, greedy and idiotic, the local government rules over a bleak isolated town with an iron fist. When they receive warning that an incognito government inspector is en route to investigate, panic duly ensues. This dandified stranger demands bribes, flirts with the mayor's wife and seduces his daughter. Everyone is riled up but relieved when he finally leaves. But then comes a dismaying letter...

Gogol's biting satire was first published in 1836 but still holds a very tarnished mirror up to our own "greed is good" culture. He presents a world where there is little justice or hope for the underdog. It is perhaps surprising then, that *Government Inspector* is one of finest comic plays of the 19th century. Gogol believed that his play should educate and entertain simultaneously and the best way to get a message across was through laughter. It is this ethos that we wish to carry out with our production.

We are working with a wonderfully dark and hilarious adaptation by David Harrower and it is his text that has inspired us to set our production in the 1970s, when the fashion and attitude reflect the absurdly normal bureaucracy of the piece. Inspiration comes from politicians of the era whose sweaty ambition embodies the creepy, pathetic civil servants of Gogol's work.

Whilst thinking about production design, we were reminded that the *Fawlty Towers* episode from 1975 titled "The Hotel Inspector" is based on Gogol's play. We loved that the look of the show remained quite realistic with hints of the ridiculous. We are very lucky that we have costume designer Edith Webb on our production team again and her work really cements our production in the environment of the time. Many productions feel compelled to present the play as a broad farce or as an exploration of the darker side of humanity. We are merging the two presentations to create a work we believe will resonate with Fringe audiences.

During our experience with *As You Like It* at Edinburgh Fringe, we learned that the attendees want to see well-known, fun and easy-going shows. However, no-one wants to compromise quality or Gogol's incredible writing. Rarely can one find a truly funny show that is also a scathing and accurate piece of satire. So in our production, the characterizations will stay grounded to the text to create an innovative, character-driven work.



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## Character Breakdown

**The Mayor, male, 30s-50s:** A paranoid dictator. So eager to climb the ranks of petty bureaucracy he has no qualms with who he destroys on the way. He has no desire to make his town better or life for his constituency any easier, all he wants is power and money. He is nasty but nervous of stepping too far out of line. A coward.

**Khlestakov, male, 20s:** A frivolous imposter. The supposed Government Inspector is a complete fraud and relishes in his deception of the country town. He has a voracious appetite for good clothes, women and most of all money. A liar.

**Osip, male, any age:** Khlestakov's put upon servant. Osip is a Khlestakov in the making, he has no scruples, however unlike his feckless boss he has the street smarts to know when it's time to call it quits and move onto the next scam. A Russian Del-Boy.

**Lyapkin-Tyapkin, male, any age:** A corrupt swindler. The local judge has no interest in justice and would rather spend his time hunting game and breeding borzoi puppies. He believes bribery and lying are the only way of getting on in life. A layabout.

**Zemlyanika, male, any age:** A eager to please civil servant. The trustee of charitable institutions is perhaps a little too eager, one might say a slimy creep. Sees something of himself in the young "Inspector" and acts as an equal causing some embarrassment to the others. A lick arse.

**Dobchinsky, male or female, any age:** A bumbling idiot. This landowner is desperate to be considered an important member of the local government, unfortunately s/he is a buffoon. Never seen without partner in crime, Bobchinsky. A fool.

Cont.



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**Bobchinsky, male or female, any age:** A bumbling idiot. This landowner is also desperate to be considered an important member of the local government, unfortunately s/he is even more of a buffoon, than Dobchinsky. The two are always in competition to be more helpful than the other, however they only succeed in outdoing each other in idiotic antics. Another fool.

**Anna, female, 30s/40s:** A social climber. The Mayor's glamorous but crass wife is determined that she deserves more. A better looking husband, a bigger house, a more beautiful wardrobe. When the "Inspector" arrives she believes all her prayers have been answered. A snob.

**Maria, female, 20s:** A vain air-head. The Mayor's daughter is desperate for a husband but she has no interest in falling in love, she wants a handsome face and a hefty wallet. So it becomes awkward when her main rival for the attention of the "Inspector" is her own mother. A flirt.

**Khlopov, female, any age:** A timid teacher's pet. The school's superintendent is scared witless of the Mayor, the "Inspector", the school, the teachers, the pupils, pretty much everything she comes across. Desperate not to be involved with the inspection she becomes the perfect scapegoat for the others. A nervous ninny.

**Postmistress, female, any age:** A nosey parker. The gossip of the group, she has no scruples with going through people's post in order to be the most up-to-date. She is eager to prove how integral she is to the running of the town and will take praise for actions that aren't even hers, which inevitably lands her in hot water. (*Actress will also play the Sergeant's Wife*)

**Avdotya, female, any age:** A grumpy housekeeper. Avdotya has no interest in the "Inspector", she has even less interest in her master and mistress. She knows her place and refuses to strive above it. She will not be brought or flirted with, unless you want a smack around the chops. (*Actress will also play the Locksmith's Wife & Waitress*)