

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT NEW PALTZ  
**DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ARTS PRESENTS**



**SPIES ARE FOREVER**

A Staged Reading

Book by Corey Lubowich, Joey Richter & Brian Rosenthal  
Music & Lyrics by Clark Baxtresser & Pierce Siebers  
Directed by Barclay Travis '25 (Theatre Arts)  
Music Direction by Katie Gudzik '22 (Theatre Arts)

**Friday, February 14, 2025 at 8:00 p.m.**  
**Saturday, February 15, 2025 at 2:00 p.m.\***

***Parker Theatre***

*Parker Theatre is situated on the ancestral land of the Esopus, Lenape, and Munsee people.*

**\*Talkback to follow performance on February 15**

*This production utilizes sound and light cues to represent alarm systems and explosive detonation. It also includes strong language and deals with sensitive themes and contentious parts of history including the Nazi party and fascist ideology. We acknowledge that the ideology, characters, and themes presented are fraught.*

*Spies Are Forever" is presented through special arrangement with Tin Can Bros ([www.tincanbros.com](http://www.tincanbros.com)).*



## DRAMATURG NOTE



**Dramaturg** Aditri Khadilkar

“As the Cold War progresses, all spies proved to be, in some degree, a bit queer.” - Allan Hepburn, Ph.D.

In 1953, President Eisenhower signed Executive Order 104050 which barred homosexuals from working in the federal government. Under the guise of national security, heads of different government departments and agencies could investigate and fire any civilian officer if they believed their behavior contained any “sexual perversion,” or homosexuality. The Lavender Scare, as we now know it, began at the end of World War II as homosexuals were lumped in with the congressional witch hunt against Communists, or The Red Scare. *Spies Are Forever* takes place in 1961, a decade after the start of the Lavender Scare. The musical follows Agent Curt Mega as he struggles to cope with his past and redeem himself on what it takes to be the spy he once was. Before he realizes, he gets thrown into the undergoings of Cold War politics, a villain’s ploy to rebuild the Nazi empire, and a complicated relationship with a Russian femme fatale. As Curt tries to rebuild himself, he grapples with an important part of his identity, the fact that he’s queer and mourning the loss of his partner, Owen, and is keeping it to himself.

*Spies Are Forever* is a satire of spy fiction and the tropes we see in James Bond, riffing off of the smooth, suave hero who drinks martinis, drives an Aston Martin, and can charm any woman. In 1962, the first James Bond film was released, starring Sean Connery as the iconic character. The novels the films are adapted from are part of the genre of spy fiction, a genre that uses spying and intelligence gathering as the primary plot point. The genre gained new momentum during the transition from World War II to the Cold War as Western nations became paranoid about Communism.

Spy fiction is able to relieve the public’s anxieties about a perceived “threat.” During the Cold War, it was the looming threat of communism making films like *James Bond* and *The Spy Who Came In From Cold* popular. People were able to watch these films and see the heroes triumph over evil and save their country. For queer people, *Spies Are Forever* is a reminder that queer people have always existed and are not going anywhere.

Which brings us back to now and putting on *Spies Are Forever* on while in the beginning of the second Trump administration. Since his first day in office, Trump has signed 53 executive orders, many of which target LGBTQIA+ communities. This includes attempting to dictate to students, their parents, and educators what can be read, taught, and said, placing restrictions on federal gender markers like passports, and targeting research containing words like gender, women, and marginalized. We’re witnessing

## DRAMATURG NOTE (CONTINUED)



something new as this administration tests the balance of power all in the name of protecting its freedom. But what threat are they fighting?

As we ask questions about the future of Curt's career and the future of being queer in the United States, we can resist and continue to fight back by preserving memory, truth, and justice. Through continuing to tell stories like *Spies Are Forever* is all three.

**If you want to help, please consider donating to the following organizations:**

### **American Civil Liberties Union**



<https://www.aclu.org>

### **Matthew Shepard Foundation**



<https://www.transclosethv.org>

### **Trans Closet of the Hudson Valley**



<https://www.matthewshepard.org>

## DIRECTOR'S NOTE



**Director** Barclay Travis '25 (Theatre Arts)

While directing this show, I've been asked the same question a few times: "Is this your favorite musical?" It makes me laugh when I'm asked it, because it's a complicated answer. *Spies are Forever* is a weird musical. It flips between being high-camp satirical comedy and grounded drama. It includes crass, sexual jokes while also making pointed commentary on the treatment of marginalized groups by the ruling class. It is unapologetic in both its ridiculousness and its politics. I first found this musical when I was sixteen and teetering on the edge of the closet, contemplating what it would mean for me to be openly transgender. I saw a lot of myself in Agent Curt Mega: what does it mean to be a queer man in a world that will beat you down for it? How do you reconcile wanting to be perceived as "masculine" while also being a proud homosexual? Knowing that there's a disconnect between how you see yourself and how the world sees you is dehumanizing, especially when there's no simple way to resolve it. This show resonated with me so much that it has been a staple in my life since then. The online community surrounding this show led me to my long-term partner. At least once per year, I host watch-parties with friends, often showing it to them for the first time. On my birthday last year, we sat in my apartment with ice cream cake and watched this show. The moment that rights were released for it, I said to one of the theatre professors that I knew I wanted to produce it at New Paltz. *Spies are Forever* is not a perfect musical— you'd be hard-pressed to find one— but it holds such a special place in my heart that it'd be wrong to call any other show my favorite. I'm grateful to this entire cast and creative team for being even half as excited as I am about this show, and for being down for anything (including putting on a musical in three weeks). Special thanks to Dr. Isabel Smith-Bernstein for always advocating for their students, and for teaching me that I never have to settle for less than I deserve.

## CAST



**Agent Curt Mega:** Lennon Lotardo

**Tatiana Slozhno, et. al:** Naya Vulaj

**Agent Owen Carvour, et. al :** Liam Studer

**Cynthia Houston, et. al:** Nora Hamre

**Barbera Larvernor, et. al:** Kristen McQuaid

**Dr. Baron von Nazi, et. al:** Josef Winter

**The Deadliest Man Alive, et. al:** Donovan X. Guerin

**The Informant, et. al:** Sophia Rasic Stagnar

**Female Presenting Character's Swing:** Paige Mansfield

**Male Presenting Character's Swing:** James Bello

**Agent Curt Mega Understudy:** Donovan X. Guerin

## CREATIVE TEAM



**Director:** Barclay Travis '25 (Theatre Arts)

**Music Director:** Katie Gudzik '22 (Theatre Arts)

**Assistant Music Director:** Gab Salerno

**Production Stage Manager:** Kiersten DeLorey

**Assistant Stage Managers:** Jess Romanowski & Liam Gorelin

**Dramaturg:** Aditri Khadilkar

**Scenic Designers:** Kiersten DeLorey & Barclay Travis

**Technical Director:** Joel Sherry

**Costume Designer:** Dani Rosenfeld

**Sound Designer:** Oz Fen Wang

**Lighting Designer:** Theo Wright

**Keyboard Accompanist:** Nathan Perry

# PRODUCTION STAFF



## Costumes:

**Assistant Costume Designer:** Noah Cruz Hernandez  
**Wardrobe Supervisors:** Arianna Robinson and Lily Rutski

## Scenic & Carpentry:

**Lead Scenic:** Julia Wilson

## Production Crew:

Jack Barry  
Luiza Braga  
Ray Buchanan  
Kiersten DeLorey  
Raeanna Hoskinson  
Jabzy Kisob  
Heather Kuhn  
Olivia Riddle

## Sound:

**A1:** Phoebe Albro

## **A2s:**

Marcel Pugliese  
Ray Buchanan

## **Load In Crew:**

Rowan Forte  
Emma Holder-Young  
Ethan Maguire  
Miles North  
Jake Rizzo-Harrel  
Jayden Trim

## PRODUCTION STAFF (CONTINUED)



### Lighting:

**Assistant Lighting Designer/Programmer:** Maya Battistella

**Light Board Operator:** Rome Torres

**Followspot Operators:** Meg Hobson and Charlie Downey

### **Electricians:**

Max Auerbacher

Maya Battistella

Kiersten DeLorey

Meg Hobson

Elisa Rosario

Max Rosenfeld

Bradley Stanton

Rome Torres

### Social Media

**Social Media Coordinator:** Gab Salerno

### **Social Media Editors:**

Luke Anderson

Emilia Guzzetta

Joseph Basile-Faicco

Erin Quigley

Nora Hamre

### **Faculty Supervisors**

**Production Supervisor:** Isabel Smith-Bernstein

**Production Manager/Stage Management Supervisor:** Catherine Doherty

**Costume Design Supervisor:** Charlotte Palmer-Lane

**Costume Shop Supervisor:** Kaitlyn Kociela Taylor

**Sound Supervisor:** Dean Mahoney

**Lighting Supervisor:** Travis McHale

**Props Supervisor:** Dan Daly



## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**



The Department of Theatre Arts would like to thank:

School of Fine & Performing Arts, Dean's Office

Patricia Fitzpatrick, Chair of Theatre Arts Department

Avery Pulcher

## UPCOMING PRODUCTIONS



### **Shrek The Musical**

Book & Lyrics by David Lindsay-Abaire | Music by Jeanine Tesori

Original Production Directed by Jason Moore & Rob Ashford

Directed by Zach Gibson '19

Music Direction by Brittany Proia

Choreography by Hailey Cooknick

**April 17-27**

**Parker Theatre**



### **New Pages**

An undergraduate writing showcase co-presented with the Department of English

**April 29 & 30**

**Parker Theatre**

## TICKET OFFICE



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845-257-3880  
boxoffice@newpaltz.edu  
<https://www.newpaltz.edu/fpa/events/box-office/>

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<https://www.newpaltz.edu/fpa/theatre/ mailing-list/>\*\*

### PARTNERS



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[www.glitnir.com](http://www.glitnir.com)



The Box Office is a proud member of the International Ticketing Association.  
[www.intix.org](http://www.intix.org)

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Your contributions applies directly to the opportunities we can provide our students. Your support facilitates our programming and productions, our ability to engage with guest artists, our ongoing commitment to anti-racism, and the building of a truly diverse and inclusive community.



<https://www.newpaltz.edu/fpa/theatre/friends/>

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