



Almost Maine at Alton Little Theater

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The new play being produced at Alton Little Theater has been called quirky, charming, funny, whimsical, and yes, even that "dreaded" word - cute. Director, Lee Cox promises that audience will fall in love with the show that boasts twists of comedy so pure and heartfelt, you'll feel like you're re-connecting with an old friend. For on a clear, cold moonless night in the middle of winter, all is not quite what it seems in the mythical town of Almost, Maine.

As northern lights hover in the star-filled sky above, Almost residents find themselves falling in and out of love in unexpected and often hilarious ways. Knees are bruised. Hearts are broken. But the bruises heal, and then hearts mend - almost. Nine interwoven stories of love across three generations of lovers capture the uncertainties of the human heart. And for the folks in Almost a kiss is a life-changing big deal and usually has major consequences.

Cox says she fell in love with the simplicity of the concepts but also the enchantment aspects of the show. She says, "When I first saw the show I fell in love with the simple charm of two young hopeful people sitting and wishing on a star...and then I remembered that when you fall in love colors seem brighter, the world seems more magical, and you feel as if you could do anything with that power....so that is how ALT's production is staged."

Almost Maine is set in the remote, big-sky country and flat land of potato farms in a town with only 57 residents..But what if, one Friday night at exactly 9pm the residents encounter a cosmic circus of love by staring at the Aurora Borealis? This is the premise Cox created to look at the romances in playwright John Cariani's popular new play. And she made the decision to showcase nineteen actors to play the residents who create the magic with her. Kevin Frakes, Donna Minard, Dennis Franz, Claudia Herndon, Aaron Adams, Casey Turner, Audra Ray, Gary Wilson, Michael Heaton, Jean Heil, Patti Kruegel, Steven Harders, Toni Fry-Hilgert, Jim Lieber, Valerie Sprague, Debbie Maneke, Jeff Pruett, Lief Anderson and Will Lane portray the very lovable characters in the mid-winter night's dream. Cox also created a "soundtrack" of twenty-two of her

favorite love songs to guide the actors through their journey...there's a little singing...a little dancing....and a whole lot of falling in love.

Cox knows that it may sound corny to stage a "Valentine" of a production but feels sure that these actors will create something of a wonderful escape for audiences in January. The production runs January 18th through 27th with nine performances, including two matinees. Evening performances are at 7:30 pm and afternoons at 2pm. Tickets are available on line at www.altonlittletheater.org OR by reservations at 618-462-6562. Discounts are available for groups of twenty or more. Adult Tickets are \$15 and students (through college) are \$8.

The Cast and Director hope that ALMOST MAINE will become the "perfect date night" for theater-lovers of all ages. For interviews and photo opportunities please contact Lee Cox at 618-531-3777.