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Monday, June 17, 2013



Did Kevin Spacey just hustle out the door of the Maryland State House?

Netflix series 'House of Cards' takes over in Annapolis for a few days

By Daniel Leaderman Staff Writer

It may be hard to believe, but a scheming, amoral, power-hungry politician was roaming the halls of the Maryland State House on Monday, doing his work behind closed doors and well out of public view.

The second season of Netflix's political drama "House of Cards" took over the building, remaking the House of Delegates chamber to look like the U.S. Senate.

And, yes, that was really Academy Award-winning actor Kevin Spacey, who plays the diabolical, soliloquizing Congressman Frank Underwood — think Richard III with better posture — darting out the State House's west exit and into a large, black SUV around lunchtime.

Usually, it's Lt. Gov. Anthony Brown (D) darting out of that exit into a large, black SUV.

Filming is scheduled for Monday and Tuesday, during which time the State House is closed to the public, but open to employees — and a few intrepid reporters lucky enough to have state ID cards — said Sam Cook, Annapolis region director of the state's Department of General Services, which manages state buildings.

As of Monday afternoon, things were going smoothly, Cook said.



Daniel Leaderman/The Gazette
 The film crew for Netflix's "House of Cards" took over the first floor of the State House Monday, using the House chamber to double as the U.S. Senate.

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It was tough to get a look at filming for most of the day: A team of production assistants was politely guarding the doors and staircases and was outside the second-floor House gallery. But a brief, self-guided tour while the crew was eating lunch showed a redecorated House rostrum and an array of camera and lighting equipment spread around the State House lobby.

Gov. Martin O'Malley (D), who is no stranger to show business — he appeared in the film “Ladder 49” as, get this, the mayor of Baltimore, and has his own rock band — was out of the country and unable to appear in “House of

Cards.”

Neither House Speaker Michael E. Busch (D-Dist. 30) of Annapolis nor Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller Jr. (D-Dist. 27) of Chesapeake Beach was planning to make an appearance, although Busch was initially interested before it became clear his schedule couldn't accommodate the shoot, according to his staff.

Cook said the set would be broken down and carted off later in the week, and that by Friday, there would be no way to tell the show had ever been there. We'll see.

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