

POTUS: Or, Behind Every Great Dumba** Are Seven Women Trying to Keep Him Alive

by **Selina Fillinger**

POTUS:

Or, Behind Every Great Dumba** Are
Seven Women Trying to Keep Him Alive

Directed by: Dominique H. Eisengruber

Auditions:

**Sunday, September 15th and Monday, September 16th
6:30pm – 9:30pm**

**Pit & Balcony Community Theatre | 805 N. Hamilton St,
Saginaw, MI 48602**

Pit & Balcony Community Theatre is committed to providing a nurturing environment in which to share diverse experiences and ideas. In employment, volunteer recruitment, and casting we do not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, or military status. We are committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community.

WELCOME!

This vibrant, incredible farce is a delightful mix of catharsis, frustration, relatability and humor. It centers around a group of strong women working together to pick up after the President of the United States. For the seven actors working through this beast of a show, this process will consist of a couple months of unity, fun, laughter, teamwork, bonding, and straight up womanpower.

In a world that's dominated by the voice of men, this breath of fresh air gives voice to the women living through it and asks the eternal question: why aren't women in charge?

If you're a fellow (or aspiring) crusher of the patriarchy, this play is **definitely** for you.

– Dominique H. Eisengruber; *Director*

SYNOPSIS:

It's just another day at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. When a White House PR nightmare spins into a legit catastrophe, seven brilliant and beleaguered women must risk life, liberty, and the pursuit of sanity to keep the commander-in-chief out of trouble. *POTUS, or Behind Every Great Dumba** are Seven Women Trying to Keep Him Alive* is a bawdy and irreverent look at sex, politics, and the women in charge of the man in charge of the free world. Who knew that global crisis is always just a four-letter word away?

AUDITION EXPECTATIONS/SCHEDULE

Please complete the online audition form:

<https://forms.gle/XvWAeApDWwT5Bwjy8>

6:30 – 7:45

Monologue – 1 Comedic Monologue, 90 seconds or less.

There will be a monologue provided (attached), but you're welcome to bring your own, memorized or not! We just want to see you have fun on stage solo.

Joke – After your monologue, tell us your favorite joke!

Inappropriate jokes are definitely welcome.

7:45 – 8:00

Dance Party – *Think sleepover or girl's night at the club. No dance experience required*

8:00-8:10

Break

8:10-9:20

Warm-Reads – *Reading scenes from the script with other auditionees (scenes are attached to this packet).*

9:20-9:30

Review casting details/expectations.

CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

These women are not crass to be crass or funny to be funny. They're living and experiencing this shitstorm authentically and together as a unit. There are no secondary characters. Big feminist ensemble energy.

CHARACTERS

In order of their emotional proximity to POTUS (closest to furthest)

HARRIET – His Chief of Staff. Right-Hand Woman. Huge boss energy.

JEAN – His Press Secretary. Always cleaning up his messes. Love-hates Bernadette. *Scripted kiss with Bernadette.*

STEPHANIE – His secretary. Timorous; trying hard to be a fearless girl-boss but falling incredibly short. *Scripted to lick Harriet's cheek. Scripted to spend a chunk of the play in unflattering underwear and bra. Scripted vomit off stage (noise only).*

DUSTY – His dalliance. Daring and confident. Carrying POTUS' baby. *Scripted to "provocatively" dance and to wear revealing clothing during a scene. Scripted to vomit on stage.*

BERNADETTE – His sister. Masculine lesbian. A crass drug dealer trying to get a pardon from her brother. In love with Jean. *Scripted kiss with Jean and with Chris.*

CHRIS – A journalist. Single mom. Annoyed at being undermined by a new, young, male journalist. A strong, determined woman who doesn't let anything stand in her way. *Scripted to staged-breast pump on stage. Scripted kiss with Bernadette.*
****MUST BE PLAYED BY A BLACK ACTOR****

MARGARET – His wife. The First Lady. At her wits end with her husband and his antics. Trying her hardest to fight double-standards and to stay out of the shadow of her husband.
****MUST BE PLAYED BY A BLACK ACTOR****

Trigger Warning: This show is rated R and includes violence, stage combat, physical intimacy, crass language/swearing, vomiting, stage blood, and some drug use.

MASTER SCHEDULE

****Schedule is Subject to Change****

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
15 6:30-9:30 Auditions Day 1	16 6:30-9:30 Auditions Day 2	17	18	19	20	21
22	23 6:30-10:00 Read- Through	24 6:30-10:00 Blocking Act I	25 6:30-10:00 Blocking Act I	26 7:30-9:45 Blocking Act I	27	28
29	30 6:30-10 Act I Work- Through	1 6:30-9:15 Blocking Act II	2 6:30-10:00 Blocking Act II	3 7:30-10:00 Blocking Act II	4	5

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
6	7 6:30-9:00 Act II Work- Through	8 6:30-9:30 Act I Work- Through	9 6:30-9:00 Act II Work- Through	10 7:30-10:00 Fight/Intim Choreo	11 7:30-10:00 Full Work- Through	12
13	14 NO REHEARSAL	15 6:30-10:00 Line- Through	16 6:30-10:00 Full Run- Through OFF-BOOK	17 7:30-10:00 Full Run- Through	18 7:30-10:00 Full Run- Through	19
20	21 6:30-10:00 Full Run- Through	22 6:30-10:00 Full Run- Through	23 6:30-10:00 Full Run- Through	24 6:30-10:00 Full Run- Through	25	26
27 12-8:00 Tech Sunday	28 6:30-10:30 Tech/Dress Run	29 6:30-10:30 Tech/Dress Run	30 6:30-10:30 Tech/Dress Run	31 REST DAY - Happy Halloween!	1 7-10:45 Show 1 8:30	2 7-10:45 Show 2 8:30

*****Tuesday, November 5th - Remember to Vote!*****

Special Dates:

October 14th : Miracle Auditions Day 1 - No Rehearsal

October 16th : Off-Book Deadline

October 31st : Rest Day - No Rehearsal

November 3rd : Strike (Mandatory for ALL Company Members)

COVID-19 POLICY

Pit & Balcony is committed to the health, safety, and privacy of all of its employees and volunteers. To this end we keep a close eye on all regulations and recommendations set forth by the Federal and State governments as well as local, state, and national health organizations.

At the time of compiling this packet, Pit & Balcony does not *require* masking or vaccination in order to take part in its productions and safety protocols may differ from person to person based on their vaccination status. Vaccination status may or may not impact castability. All volunteers and employees are encouraged to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and all booster shots as soon as they are able. All policies and protocols are subject to change without warning based on recommendations set forth by governing bodies and health agencies.

Sides

The first four pages below includes monologues that you are welcome to use at the audition if you don't already have one.

The following pages include sides that will be available at the auditions.

***NOTE:** You are welcome to read up to two of them, as long as the runtime of your monologues is 90 seconds or less.

****NOTE:** *Using any monologue, including the ones provided, will not affect your chances of being cast. Come as you are – no memorization required!*

Moment Before: Harriet is communicating with Jean about the happenings from earlier in the day when the POTUS (in front of a lot of press) referred to his wife as cunty.

The procedure that is referred to is to get an anal abscess removed.

HARRIET

He has to be at an eight p.m. gala honoring FML! (*Beat.*) FML! The Female Models of Leadership Council.

Literally, I've bullied 200 feminists into attending tonight's gala and written thirty-seven drafts of POTUS's speech so that our female base doesn't literally shrink smaller than a nutsack in the snow! It's final hour, we're headed into reelection: FML!

The point is he's booked, Jean! He's fucking booked, so they had to reschedule the procedure which is why Margaret entered the meeting late and POTUS didn't see her – bing, bang, boom: “cunty.”

Moment Before: Harriet and Jean are discussing how to handle the press in regard to POTUS' rude remarks, while also trying to figure out what to do about a severe health problem he's dealing with.

JEAN

I can't just go up to the First Lady and ask if her husband is getting into rough ass play. I don't WANT to know. In the last three years, I've had to bail on seven first dates and my sister's mastectomy just to spin shit I don't WANT TO KNOW.

And right now I'm trying to figure out if my biggest problem today will be explaining why the President of the United States used the word "cunty" to describe his wife to three diplomats – OR if there is still something MORE awful involving ASS PLAY that I need to know about!

IS there, Harriet? Is this day about to become an oozing pustule on the anus of my week?

Or is everything *fine*?

Moment Before: Margaret is trying to get in to see her husband POTUS and Stephanie is blocking the door. This adds to the aggravation of constant judgement from the public, no matter how qualified she is. Stephanie points out that she's wearing crocs.

MARGARET

Apparently these days it's not enough to be wildly accomplished and deeply effective. I've launched free lunch programs in 6,000 public schools but all Twitter can twat about are the stilettos I wore to *one* homeless shelter.

You think this was *my* idea? You think when I gave my speech as Valedictorian I said, "One day I will walk down the halls of the White House in shoes that can double as flotation devices"? No! But there are children to feed, funds to raise, and Time Magazine is interviewing me today for their Women of Excellence series so I will not allow anything to distract from my work – least of all YOU.

Moment Before: All seven women are in the room trying to figure out ways to cover for a missing, unconscious POTUS. Jean puts all blame directly onto Chris and she is NOT having it.

CHRIS

(CHRIS snaps. With the rousing fury of a mother unleashed)

DON'T. YOU. DARE. If he was doing his job he would be across the White House right now making peace treaties! Why was he even here? He should not have walked in this room, he should not be living in this house, he should not be running this nation, and YOU KNOW IT! He's the pyromaniac, but you gave him kindling, you gave him matches, you figured he'd burn his fingers and learn his lesson – Well he DIDN'T, and now the WHOLE FUCKING WORLD IS ON FIRE! So we will douse those flames, or we will burn in them together, but don't think for one second I am marching to that stake by myself!

SIDE 1 – HARRIET and JEAN

Moment Before: Harriet has just shared with Jean that POTUS used the word “cunt” referring to his wife at a press conference.

NOTE: The ; symbol indicates a beat. Slash indicates an interruption.

JEAN: Who exactly was there?

HARRIET: *Washington Post.*

JEAN: Well

HARRIET: *Huffington Post.*

JEAN: They’re hardly

HARRIET: *CNN.*

JEAN: Okay

HARRIET: *New York Times, BBC,* and three Chinese diplomats.

JEAN: The ones who speak English?

HARRIET: They all speak English.

JEAN: I think there was one last year who struggled with idioms, you know, like, slang, so it might have gone over / his head

HARRIET: Everyone heard it, everyone got it, two people *gasped.*

JEAN: He said the words, “My wife’s a cunt?”

;

HARRIET: HE said, “Please excuse my wife’s absence. She’s having a cunt morning.”

;

JEAN: Well that’s not so bad

HARRIET: Wow

JEAN: It’s not! We can contain that. We all have cunt morning sometimes. My son has them every week. You’re clearly having one today

HARRIET: She was in the room.

JEAN: What?

HARRIET: Margaret wasn't absent, she was in the room. She entered late but she had been there for ten minutes when he

JEAN: Called her absent

HARRIET: And a cunt.

JEAN: Cunt-y.

HARRIET: If this is you workshopping your response to the press right now

JEAN: I'm just processing!

SIDE 2 – MARGARET, STEPHANIE, HARRIET

Moment Before: Margaret is trying to get into POTUS' room to have a “marital discussion” with him, but Stephanie is blocking the door and not letting her in.

NOTE: *The ; symbol indicates a beat. Slash indicates an interruption.*

STEPHANIE: Ma'am – Margaret – Margie – I am the Presidential Secretary and nobody enters that door without my say-so!

(She hits a wide stance, arms above her head in a V, hands clenched into fists.)

MARGARET: What's happening?

STEPHANIE: Harriet gave me a book about women taking up space in the workplace and I've read it twice!

MARGARET: Are you have a stroke?

STEPHANIE: I'm power-stancing, I am decreasing my cortisol levels and increasing my testosterone, thus increasing my confidence!

(HARRIET enters)

HARRIET: Jesus. Stephanie, what the hell are you doing?

STEPHANIE *(Frantically to HARRIET.)*: She wanted to see the president and I said no! My spine was in alignment and I used declarative sentences!

HARRIET *(Soothing.)*: That's great – Have you been listening to that playlist I recommended?

STEPHANIE: BitchBeats, yes Ma'am, very empowering, I listen to it every morning while I eat my overnight oats.

HARRIET: Why don't you go practice your power stances in the bathroom.

(STEPHANIE scurries to the door, then turns back to say something.)

MARGARET: *That* trash fire *must* be extinguished.

HARRIET: She's still in the room, Margaret – Yes, Stephanie?

STEPHANIE (*A whimper.*): The merch for the Female Models of Leadership Council arrived.

HARRIET: Thank you.

(STEPHANIE flees.)

MARGARET: She's like a menopausal toddler.

HARRIET: Stephanie has a photographic memory and speaks five languages. To what do I owe the pleasure, Margaret?

SIDE 3 –STEPHANIE and DUSTY

Moment Before: Stephanie was just practicing power stances and listening to BitchBeats in the bathroom and Dusty bursts in and vomits into the trashcan next to her.

NOTE: The ; symbol indicates a beat. Slash indicates an interruption.

DUSTY: I didn't mean to interrupt your dance practice.

STEPHANIE: I / wasn't

DUSTY: Whatcha listening to? Oh my gosh – BitchBeats is my favorite playlist! You know they have a karaoke version?

STEPHANIE: Um, are you an intern?

DUSTY (*Delighted.*): Oh my gosh do I look like an intern?

STEPHANIE: Not at all.

DUSTY: I'm just visiting.

STEPHANIE: Are you important or are you lost? Did you get separated from a tour? Sorry, it's just you're not allowed to be in this wing unless you have the proper clearance.

(DUSTY holds up a pass.)

DUSTY: I thought that's what this is for.

STEPHANIE: How did you get that? Who are you?

DUSTY: I'm Dusty.

;

STEPHANIE: As in

DUSTY: Dusty.

STEPHANIE: Okay.

DUSTY: I'm here about the position.

(She winks.)

STEPHANIE: What position?

DUSTY: The position.

(She winks again.)

STEPHANIE: Why are you winking.

DUSTY: I was told to be *discreet*.

STEPHANIE: So why are you winking.

DUSTY: Do you mind just, like, pointing me towards the president?

STEPHANIE: *Point* you towards the *president*?

DUSTY: I feel dumb, this is all new to me. I'm supposed to tell the lady that I'm here about the position.

STEPHANIE: Which lady? What lady? The First Lady?

DUSTY: I can't remember her name, but she's, like, I don't know, she's like really intense?

STEPHANIE (Shrill.): They're *all* intense here, *everyone's intense here!*

SIDE 4 –JEAN and BERNADETTE

Moment Before: Jean has a LOT going on and, when it seems like another thing couldn't possibly go wrong, POTUS' sister (Jean's ex-girlfriend) shows up.

NOTE: *The ; symbol indicates a beat. Slash indicates an interruption.*

JEAN: Listen to me: I don't know what "sibling bond" bullshit you fed to POTUS to guilt him into this one but there is no way anyone her is letting him pardon an international drug mule

BERNADETTE (*winking*): I prefer "drug stallion."

JEAN: You're not seeing him.

BERNADETTE: That's not up to you.

JEAN: It's up to Harriet, which is why I know you're not seeing him.

BERNADETTE: Harriet works for my brother.

JEAN: Harriet works your brother. Harriet's the number one reason this country continues to function.

BERNADETTE: So why isn't she president?

JEAN: That's the eternal question, isn't it?

BERNADETTE: This is a bitter fucking welcome, you know that? You know how many favors I had to call in just so I could see you today on our anniversary?

JEAN: Ex-anniversary! And the only reason you ever do anything is for you and if you think I'm going to fall for your star-crossed lovers, Bonnie and Clyde bullshit

BERNADETTE: Come on, Jeanie. Those were some long, wet nights on the campaign trail. Don't tell me you've forgotten

JEAN (*struggling to stay strong*): I-I-I'm not saying I've forgotten, / I just

BERNADETTE: Prison changed me. I'm looking for commitment and intimacy, a second chance at life and love. I mean, think of what this pardon could mean for us.

JEAN (*melting*): Us?

BERNADETTE: I missed you.

JEAN: Did you?

BERNADETTE: You look great.

JEAN: Do I?

BERNADETTE: Love the suit.

JEAN: Do you?

BERNADETTE: Very Jackie O meets Carl Sagan.

JEAN (*Humbly*): Turtlenecks are universally flattering.

BERNADETTE: Let's get out of here

JEAN: Okay yes I mean yes I mean yes – NO! That's it.

SIDE 5 –CHRIS and JEAN

Moment Before: Jean comes into her office to find Chris at her desk hooked up to a breast pump. Jean is coming from the press conference where she spoke on/answered questions about POTUS' comment about his wife.

NOTE: The ; symbol indicates a beat. Slash indicates an interruption.

JEAN: *What do you want, Chris?*

CHRIS: A comment.

JEAN: You got my comment in the press room.

CHRIS: I want a better one.

JEAN: I thought you said I handled it well.

CHRIS (*Enjoying herself*): Yeah, so handle it poorly for me and I'll make it anonymous.

JEAN: Very cute.

CHRIS: Speaking of fucking adorable, can you please tell Luke to stop sharing his snacks with Kenny? We're trying to get him out of the habit of sharing good at school because of his canola allergy.

JEAN: I'm not going to tell my kid to be less generous because your kid has trouble saying no. I'm raising a feminist.

CHRIS: Yeah, foisting his agenda onto someone who is too polite to refuse sounds super feminist.

JEAN: *Sharing* is not *foisting*, *grapes* are not an agenda, and you're *not supposed to be here*.

CHRIS: I'm a White House reporter.

JEAN: Doing a fluff piece on the First Lady's excellence for Time. Sounds like someone's being phased out. Who are they replacing you with? Young Harvey? Younger Nate? That giggly boy from BuzzFeed?

CHRIS: Listen

JEAN: No, *you* listen: You are a newly divorced mother of three with vomit on your neck and tit juice on your shirt. These guys can out-tweet you, out-text you, chug a Red Bull and work three days straight. Is it fair? No. Am I sympathetic? Sure. But don't think that means I'm going to let you stir up shit just to save your job.

CHRIS: Honey, I don't need to stir shit up: we got a president throwing his feces at the wall.

JEAN: There isn't a story in Washington smutty enough to get you back in the game, Chris.

CHRIS: That a challenge?

JEAN: That's a warning.

CHRIS: First Lady still going to the gala tonight?

JEAN: Why wouldn't she?

CHRIS: Might be feeling a bit cunty.

JEAN: Don't use that language in my office, please

CHRIS: *Give it up, Jean*

JEAN: *Get off my dick, Chris.*

CHRIS: Is that your comment?

JEAN: Yes.