

# In The Next Room or The Vibrator Play Audition Packet

Pit & Balcony Theatre

May 11th & 12th, 6:00-9:00 PM

Directed by Quinn Nichols

## **A Note From The Director**

Thank you for considering auditioning for *In The Next Room or The Vibrator Play* by Sarah Ruhl. I'm Quinn, and I'm so excited to be directing this show about motherhood and womanhood, intimacy, sexuality, and connection in the late 19th century. I fell in love with this play the first time I read it and am a huge fan of Sarah Ruhl's other works. I feel beyond honored to be responsible for telling this story, and I'm so excited to put together a cast and crew to bring it to life.

You may have seen me elsewhere around Pit, like managing the technical fellowship, designing lights, stage managing, and being an extra pair of hands when someone needs help. I have my BA in theatre from Saginaw Valley State University, and I love experimenting and trying new things. While I've directed staged readings, ten minute plays, and assistant directed this will be my Pit & Balcony directorial debut!

Some things you may want to know before auditioning: there are intimate scenes involving certain characters, which will be noted in the character breakdown below. We will also have an intimacy director to coordinate intimacy safely and comfortably. The show will perform June 25-27, 2026, and the entire audience will be seated on stage. The set will not be finalized before auditions, but the audience will be surrounding the actors in some configuration, likely on all four sides for a more intimate setting.

I'm excited to see you at auditions and to bring this show to Pit's stage! If you have any questions or concerns please email me at [qknichols@gmail.com](mailto:qknichols@gmail.com).

## **Show Summary**

In a seemingly perfect, well-to-do Victorian home, proper gentleman and scientist Dr. Givings has innocently invented an extraordinary new device for treating “hysteria” in women (and occasionally men): the vibrator. Adjacent to the doctor’s laboratory, his young and energetic wife tries to tend to their newborn daughter – and wonders exactly what is going on in the next room. When a new “hysterical” patient and her husband bring a wet nurse and their own complicated relationship into the doctor’s home, Dr. and Mrs. Givings must examine the nature of their own marriage, and what it truly means to love someone.

## **Audition Form**

Please be sure to fill out [this audition form](#) prior to auditioning! There will also be physical audition forms you can fill out at the theater, but you only need to fill out one.

## **Audition Process**

The audition process will have two sections: monologue readings and group readings. There are monologues provided later in this packet, and the group readings will be provided at auditions and you will be given time to prepare as a group before reading. You are welcome to bring your own one-minute monologue of your choosing, but you don’t have to! You also do not need to be memorized for the audition.

The monologue readings will be solo—it will be just you on stage reading. The director, stage manager, and assistant stage manager will be in the room. After everyone at the audition reads their monologue of choice, we will hand out group sides and give groups time to read the materials and rehearse briefly with each other. This is a time to experiment with character choices and play!

After all nights of auditions, those cast will be notified via phone call and everyone who is not cast will receive an email by May 13th. If you are cast, we ask that you refrain from posting on social media about it until Pit & Balcony announces the cast on Facebook and Instagram.

## Character Descriptions

There are more details listed for each specific character below. All intimacy will be in full view of the audience. If you have further questions and want to clarify certain moments of intimacy, please feel free to email me at [qknichols@gmail.com](mailto:qknichols@gmail.com) and I'd be happy to give you more information.

**Catherine Givings** — Female, 20s-30s, white. She is a new mother, the wife of Dr. Givings, and struggles with breastfeeding. Catherine looks for human connection in everyone and sometimes says the wrong thing, though she means well.

*\*Uses offensive language regarding race once; engages in simulated intercourse and witnesses a character breastfeeding.*

**Dr. Givings** — Male, 30-40s, white. He is a new father, the husband of Catherine Givings, and a doctor of gynecologic and hysteric disorders. Dr. Givings is a polite liberal gentleman who is also an early adopter and fanatic of electricity.

*\*Uses offensive/derogatory language regarding race once; engages in simulated intercourse and sexual acts as medical treatments with multiple characters.*

**Sabrina Daldry** — Female, 20s-30s, white. She is the wife of Mr. Daldry, has no children but would like to. She is one of Dr. Givings' hysteria patients and struggles with infertility. Sabrina is a polite upper-class woman who plays piano.

*\*Engages in simulated sexual acts for medical purposes and has multiple moments where she undresses to her underthings.*

**Annie** — Female, 30s, non-black. She is the midwife of Dr. Givings, is unmarried, and has no children. She is a working-class woman who comforts and helps treat Dr. Givings' patients and has knowledge of Greek philosophy.

*\*Engages in simulated sexual acts for medical purposes.*

**Leo Irving** — Male, 20s-30s, non-black. He is an English artist and hysteria patient of Dr. Givings, is unmarried, and has no children. He has traveled Europe and is generally seeking connection with others.

*\*Engages in simulated sexual acts for medical purposes and witnesses another character breastfeeding.*

**Elizabeth** — Female, 20s-30s, black. She is a housekeeper for the Daldrys and becomes a wet nurse for the Givings. She is married, has children—at least one who is alive and one who has died. She deals with grief about the death of her son throughout the show.

*\*Engages in simulated breastfeeding and has a moment where she undresses to her underthings on stage.*

**Mr. Daldry** — Male, 30s-40s, white. He is the husband to Sabrina Daldry and does not have children, but would like to. He is an upper class man who is not quite as polite as Dr. Givings, but loves his wife.

## Monologues

Please feel free to use one of the following monologues for your audition. NOTE: not all characters have monologues in the show, so feel free to use any monologue regardless of what character(s) you're auditioning for.

### Mrs. Givings

Do you want children, Elizabeth? That is a tactless question, you don't need to answer, forgive me, sometimes I say whatever is in my head. I want more children and my husband desperately wants more children but I am afraid of another birth, aren't you? When I gave birth I remember so clearly, the moment her head was coming out of my body, I thought: Why would any rational creature do this twice, knowing what I know now? And then she came out and clambered right onto my breast and tried to eat me, she was so hungry, so hungry it terrified me—her hunger. And I thought: is that the first emotion? Hunger? And not hunger for *food* but wanting to eat other *people*? Specifically one's mother? And then I thought—isn't it strange, isn't it strange about Jesus? That is to say, about Jesus being a man? For it is women who are eaten—who turn their bodies into food—I gave up my blood—there was so much blood—and I gave up my body—but I couldn't feed her, could not turn my body into food, and she was *so hungry*. I supposed that makes me an inferior kind of woman and a very inferior kind of Jesus.

Dr. Givings

It is odd—for some husbands such things end in a screaming match or even in death, one hand on a cheek. It has come to mean an absolute thing: the end of a book, those dreadful Mrs. Bovary books—but how can it be absolute when there are so many shades and degrees of love? Lady novelists like for it to be a tragedy—because it means that the affair mattered, mattered terribly—but it doesn't. It needn't.

Most men would be pale with rage, exactly, in a sentimental novel. My point is: this is not the end of the book. You made a mistake, that is all. The treatment I gave you made you excitable. It is my fault. A hand on the cheek, these are muscles, skin, facts. It needn't mean that one is preferred absolutely, or that one isn't loved. So why then jealousy? My darling, I don't mind.

## Leo

I love this time of afternoon, when the world is becoming dark, and you can see outside your window—lights in the neighboring windows coming on. One yellow, one almost white—little squares of light, other people's lives—sheltered against the night, so hopeful. Ridiculous, isn't it, to have so much hope, to think a little square of light could blot out the darkness—and yet, another comes on—and see. Look there—another window lit—golden—the rest of the house dark—an incomplete painting. Why do painters always insist upon finishing paintings? It's unaccountable—life is not like that.

And the ones Michelangelo never finished—do you know them? Ghosts of lines hovering in the background. Have you ever seen *Virgin and Child with the Angels*? You must go, and upon arrival, you must go directly to see that painting—the incomplete lines of God, they cannot be filled in because they would be too beautiful, they would shock the senses, and so they are almost there—women or angels, exchanging confidences, coming into being. A woman who is two-thirds done is nearer to God. A young woman on the verge of knowing herself is the most attractive thing on this earth to a man for this very reason.

## Elizabeth

God must have this huge horrible cabinet—all the babies who get returned—and all those babies inside, they're all crying even with God Himself to rock them to sleep, still they want their mothers. So when I started to feel something for this baby, for your baby, I thought no, take her back God. When I first met her all I could think was: she is alive and Henry is not. I had all this milk—I wished it would dry up. Just get through the year, I thought. Your milk will dry up and you will forget. The more healthy your baby got, the more dead my baby became. I thought of her like a tic. I thought—fill her up and then pop! You will see the blood of my Henry underneath. But she seemed so grateful for the milk. Sometimes I hate her for it. But she would look at me, she would give me this look—I do not know what to call it if it is not called love. I hope every day you keep her—you keep her close to you and you remember the blood that her milk was made from.

# Tentative Rehearsal Calendar

Times/dates are subject to change based on actor availability. The last day for scheduling conflicts will be June 12th.

## May 2026

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT		
					1	2		
3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
10	11	12	13	14	15	16		
	AUDITIONS 6-9 PM	AUDITIONS 6-9 PM						
17	18	19	20	21	22	23		
	6-9 PM Read thru	6-9 PM REHEARSAL	VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION POTLUCK NO REHEARSAL	6-9PM REHEARSAL	6-9 PM REHEARSAL			
24	25	26	27	28	29	30		
		6-9 PM REHEARSAL	6-9 PM REHEARSAL	6-9 PM REHEARSAL	REHEARSAL 6-9PM			
	Memorial Day NO REHEARSAL							
31	1	2	3	4	5	6		
NOTES								

