

QUEENSLAND THEATRE

Media Release

Queensland Theatre's brash new play, *POTUS*, is a bold mirror to American politics

POTUS, Or Behind Every Great Dumbass Are Seven Women Trying To Keep Him Alive is the new femme-fuelled, political farce set to give a satirical, dramatic and enticing inside-look at American politics in its Australian premiere at Queensland Theatre's Bille Brown Theatre from 27 July.

Penned by up-and-coming playwright, Selina Fillinger, the three-time Tony award nominated play is centred around a fictitious President of the United States' (POTUS) foul-mouthed faux pas in front of the media and foreign dignitaries. It follows his team of seven powerhouse women as they navigate misplaced hallucinogenic drugs, a sex scandal and an assassination attempt — all within 24 hours and a nosey journalist looking for the inside scoop.

The story will be brought to life by a star-studded, all-female ensemble featuring **Amy Ingram** (*Family Values* and Netflix's *Boy Swallows Universe*) who plays Stephanie, alongside **Christen O'Leary** (*Ladies in Black, Triple X*), **Emily Burton** (*Othello, Storm Boy*), **Emily Liu** (*White China*), **Jodie Le Vesconte** (*Family Values*), **Wendy Mocke** (*Bernhardt/Hamlet, Taming of the Shrew*), **Paula Arundell** (*Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*), and led by acclaimed director, **Lee Lewis OAM**.

"Set in the White House, *POTUS* is a farce with seven women who are quite literally trying to piece back the American government after one swear word," said Lee Lewis OAM.

"This young playwright in Fillinger has managed to write some of the most extraordinary comic lines to get us through the most devastating truths about power."

While much has changed politically since Selina Fillinger first penned the satirical zingers that make *POTUS* so powerful, she feels that the lines find renewed meaning with each new political scandal.

"Unprecedented times require unprecedented courage. I started working on *POTUS* when I was a very scared, very sad 23-year-old woman who needed to laugh. I wrote this play to give myself joy, catharsis and courage. I hope it offers audiences the same," says Selina.

The new play comes with a label of 'not for the faint-hearted' which Queensland Theatre Executive Director, Criena Gehrke, said it is proud to wear.

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“**POTUS** is a satire about the hypocrisy of American politics and the people that work furiously behind the scenes to hold chaos together. It’s bold and brash but makes for an incredibly timely, and equally powerful story to bring to the stage,” said Gehrke.

“It’s written by a woman, directed by a woman and features a fierce all-female cast making it another outstanding piece of diverse storytelling that we’re excited to bring to the Queensland stage.”

After its smash-hit run on Broadway in 2022 featuring a mix of *SNL* and *Veep* alum, Queensland Theatre and production partners BDO and Board Matters proudly presents the Australian premiere of **POTUS, Or Behind Every Great Dumbass Are Seven Women Trying To Keep Him Alive** at Bille Brown Theatre, running from 27 July to 24 August. Tickets are available now at queenslandtheatre.com.au/plays/potus.

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Production Partners



Queensland Theatre acknowledges the Jagera and Turrbal people who are the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work, and their unique relationship with the lands, seas and waterways. We pay our respects to their Elders both past and present, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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POTUS, Or Behind Every Great Dumbass Are Seven Women Trying To Keep Him Alive

By Selina Fillinger

Directed by Lee Lewis

27 Jul — 24 Aug 2024

Bille Brown Theatre

Creatives

Writer Selina Fillinger

Director Lee Lewis

Set and Costume Designer Christina Smith

Associate Costume Designer Nathalie Ryner

Lighting Designer John Rayment

Composer and Sound Designer Brady Watkins

Choreography and Movement Direction Kate Harman and Gavin Webber

Stage Manager Maddison Penglis

Assistant Stage Manager Tia-Hanee Cleary

Cast

Margaret (wife: The First Lady) Paula Arundell

Jean (Press secretary) Emily Burton

Stephanie (Secretary) Amy Ingram

Dusty (Dalliance) Emily Liu

Chris (Journalist) Wendy Mocke

Harriet (Chief of Staff) Christen O'Leary

Bernadette (Sister) Jodie Le Vesconte