

THIS IS B.S.

DRAMA. THEY'RE FULL OF IT.



GREETINGS FROM...

THE BRISTLE SHORES PLAYHOUSE



THIS IS B.S.

Filmed on location at the beautiful Winnipiesaukee Playhouse in New Hampshire, “This Is B.S.” is a 7-episode series and love letter to the non-union summer stock theatre experience. With its behind-the-scenes mockumentary style and colorful cast of creative characters, “This Is B.S.” captures *the real show* - all of the offstage drama that audiences never get to see.

A man with a beard and a woman are sitting in theater seats. The man is on the left, wearing a dark sweater and shorts, looking off to the side. The woman is on the right, wearing a dark t-shirt and leggings, looking upwards. They are surrounded by rows of blue and red theater seats. The background is a blue wall with some windows.

LOG LINE:

An eclectic ensemble of actors descend on a sleepy New England town for a season of summer theatre where drama ensues, on and off the stage.

SYNOPSIS:

Creative Director of the Bristle Shores Playhouse Ted Lohman hires an eclectic ensemble of non-union actors to perform pop musical sensation *Mamma Mia* and classic Greek drama *Medea* in what he hopes will be a groundbreaking summer stock season. However, when the overworked (and clearly underpaid) Technical Director finds a “Cease and Desist” order from a major musical licensing company, the dramatic band of misfits has to decide whether to pack up their character shoes and catch a bus back to their catering gigs or come together to create a little theatre magic. Will they be able to completely recreate a major pop musical in time for Opening Night or will it be a true Greek tragedy? That’s Show Business. And this is B.S.





EPISODE OUTLINE-

Episode 1: “First Day of School”

After a successful round of auditions, the ensemble for the summer season moves in to cast housing. Linda refuses to be seen as the “cast mom” and takes the overcrowding problem into her own hands.

Episode 2: “There’s Method in the Madness

The cast welcomes their mysterious new choreographer while Daniel and Baccara introduce the acting intern to “The Method” with a late night discovery session.

Episode 3: “Hot Potato”

The air conditioning is out in the theatre and emotions are running as high as the temperature outside.

Episode 4: “Technical Difficulties”

It’s tech week at Bristle Shores but when an unexpected letter brings the production to a screeching halt, the ensemble has to get creative to make sure the show does, indeed, go on.

Episode 5: “Show Stopper”

A successful opening night of the world premier production of “Daddy Daddy- Tell Me Who’s My Daddy” is cause for celebration, and these actors know how to party.

Episode 6: “What’s Done Cannot Be Undone”

When a fire alarm interrupts a performance of “Medea” mid-show, the company members scramble to create an outdoor experience that pays homage to the theatrical festivities of the ancient greeks.

Episode 7: “Curtain Call”

As the curtain falls on the final performance, the company reminisces on a successful summer season before packing their bags and heading back to the Big Apple.

KEY CHARACTERS



A.J. DITTY as

TED
THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

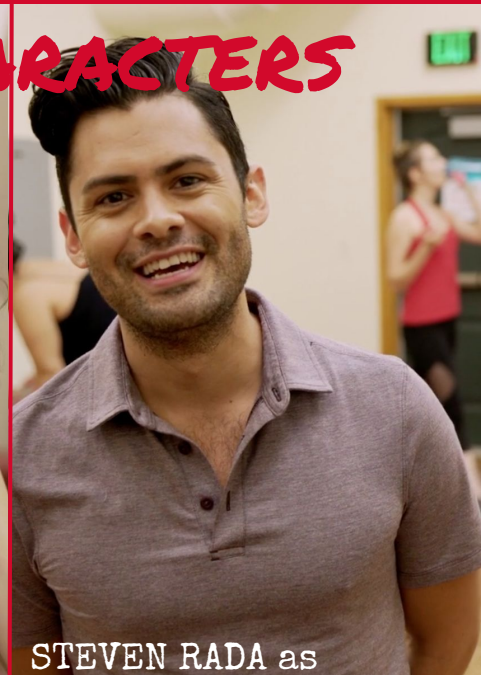
Self proclaimed creative visionary and true creature of the stage, Ted is prone to extensive metaphor and superfluous monologuing. Details and reality take a back seat to his perception of The Art, but his intentions are pure and his passion is undeniable.



JESSIE GILL as

"TECHIE"
THE TECHNICAL DIRECTOR

Hired as the season's Technical Director, this overworked stage hand finds herself wearing a multitude of hats. With an unparalleled work ethic and a touch of unchecked anxiety, she is the glue that holds the theatre together, literally and metaphorically.



STEVEN RADA as

NATHAN
THE CHOREOGRAPHER

Introducing himself as an illustrious seasoned choreographer, this rookie must maintain the charade of experience and wisdom as he navigates his first professional gig. His choreo is fierce, but his confidence is waning as his secret is on the verge of discovery.



ELLA SMITH as

MARGOT
THE ACTING INTERN

Fresh out of school, Margot is ready and eager to make her professional stage debut. She's done her homework, and she's hungry to learn from the more seasoned actors. While she may be adorably naive, she is also the first to come up with a plan when the art she loves is threatened.

THE SCRIPT:

INT. REHEARSAL ROOM - DAY

Baccara, as Medea, stands in the middle of the room. The other actors surround her, writhing on the floor in grotesque positions, crawling, clawing. They strike a pose. Nathan watches unsure.

That's better . . .

NATHAN

Techie glances uncertainly at Ted.

TECHIE

I guess that's the end of rehearsal?

NATHAN

Great!

Actors begin packing up. Jessica lingers. She motions for Chrissy to head off without her then, approaches Nathan.

JESSICA

Great rehearsal today!

NATHAN

I appreciate that, er, Jessica.

JESSICA

I have to say, it's such an honor to be working with someone of your ilk. I've already learned so much.

NATHAN

That's very kind of you to say.

Jessica laughs loudly, startling Nathan.

JESSICA

Stop you're too much! Are you headed back to the cast house? I'd love to pick your brain about the prevailing presence of ritualistic dance in contemporary musical theater.

NATHAN

Oh...uh...yeah I'll be there in a few minutes.

With a wink she leaves. Nathan looks to camera with eyebrows raised.





ARTIST STATEMENT

“This is B.S.” is a love letter to all of the small regional theatres and non-equity actors who will do just about anything for the love of the show- whether that means lining up at 4 AM on the freezing NYC sidewalk just to sing 8 bars of music before a full day of waitressing, or walking down Main Street of a one-stoplight town in full costume passing out flyers for the next matinee performance. A life in the arts is full of uncertainty and insanity in the best of times, but we love it all- even the “bs.”



NOTE FROM THE CREATORS

Funny Girl Productions, LLC was founded by Ella Smith and Lindsey Bristol to highlight the voices and talent of funny female writers, creators, directors, and performers. As of 2018, women comprised only 27% of all creators, directors, writers, producers and editors working on network, cable and streaming programs. To combat the statistics and the stereotypes, our project is placing women at its helm! The creative team of “This Is B.S.” features fierce female-identifying professionals in roles of Director, Producer, Writers, Creators, Gaffer, Colorist, PA, Craft Services, and Performers.

Particularly in 2020, the label of “nonessential” has been thrown in the faces of performers and creators, but we at Funny Girl Productions believe that art and theatre are absolutely essential, and we want to highlight the creative individuals who keep that art alive, even when it’s difficult.

Combining an artsy ensemble driven storyline (think “Glee”) and a loose mockumentary style of filming (like “Parks and Rec”), “This is B.S.” is a bit of comedic escapism with a whole lot of heart.



VISUAL REFERENCE



The visual style of *This Is B.S.* was heavily influenced by mockumentary-style comedies of the past 30 years. *Waiting for Guffman* and *Parks and Recreation* were always major reference points for camera movement and how the characters interact with the camera, particularly in how those movements progress as the story unfolds.



In the earlier episodes of the series we stay at more of an arm's length as both the "documentarians" and the actors become comfortable around one another. Once we get to the midway point of the series, we move in to more narrative styles of coverage that are emblematic of *Schitt's Creek* and *Veep*. The handheld setups stay consistent, but our way of shooting the scenes becomes more intimate.



Having a lower budget for the series meant we would inevitably have to embrace the natural character and color of our shooting location. Luckily for us, The Winnepesaukee Playhouse is situated in a beautiful environment that allowed us to showcase the rich colors that come from sunny September days in New Hampshire. Vibrant greens, reds and blues are featured in our exterior shots, while the warm light of the practicals in the interiors helps to bring a level of softness.



We had a barebones lighting setup that our gaffer, Marine, was able to skillfully implement to help fill out and enhance sequences that required us to use mostly practical lighting. We wanted the series to feel like the fictional documentary crew was just as spontaneous as our characters, and keeping our lighting as natural as possible helped us to fulfill that element of the storytelling.



The entirety of the series was shot on a Sony A7III with Canon zoom lenses. The camera was never taken off a shoulder rig. Although this choice was a cost-effective one, we also believed it would be a realistic choice of camera for our fictional documentarians based on the context of the story.



As a full time photographer, I am most at home operating stills cameras. I have a shorthand with them that I knew would be essential for making the most of our time on set. With only 8 days to shoot over 70 pages and no additional camera crew, I knew I needed to work with a camera that I had not only worked with before, but that also felt like a natural extension of my arm. The A7III is a remarkably reliable and efficient camera that helped us to embrace low-light shooting as well as consistently handling the dynamic range of our brighter scenes with crisp detail.



This Is B.S. tells a joyful story. Despite the anticipated hangups of a low budget shoot with a tight schedule, the overwhelming feeling on set was one of plain fun. I believe that feeling immediately translated to how we shot the series, and hopefully will carry over to your experience of watching it. I spent a good chunk of my time shooting doing my absolute best to hold in my laughter during takes. As a cinematographer, that's about as much as I could have asked for. - Jake

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

There is a saying in the theater world, that it's "Broadway or Bust." In *This Is B.S.*, our cast of characters are far from the big time, but that doesn't make their story any less important. Growing up as a theater kid in Ohio, some of my most formative artistic experiences came from seeing small, local theater productions. Watching members of my own community telling stories and performing on stage inspired me to believe that I could do the same.

When Ella and Lindsey approached me about the series, I was excited by the prospect of being able to lend my background in theater to the direction of this project. Knowing this life and the people in the community, my main goal as director was to find joy in the circumstances in which our characters find themselves. Even as the characters are faced with seemingly insurmountable obstacles, they always persevere because they are doing something they love. I never wanted the tone of the piece to read as overtly sarcastic or satirical, but more as a comedic tribute to the incredible achievement of getting a show up on its feet in a week with complete strangers.

While I was at a theater camp in high school, the director asked us to get in a circle and look at each one of our peers. "After this week," he said, "this group of people will never be together again in the same place." I remember thinking this was sort of silly and morbid at the time, but he was making sure we appreciated the opportunity and the people in our lives in that brief moment. Our B.S. characters start off as strangers, but as the story unfolds, we see relationships form that will be remembered long after the summer has ended. Although the time span of the series is short, our actors did a wonderful job of creating specific relationships between each of their fellow B.S. castmates that grow and change as the season progresses.

Although *This Is B.S.* is sure to cater to the theater crowd, I believe this show can reach a much wider audience because of its charming cast of characters you can't help but root for. Any theater fan will find the niche nods of the process that add an extra layer of humor to the story, but at the end of the day, *This Is B.S.* is about a group of passionate people working together to create something they believe in. - Amanda

MEET THE CREATORS



ELLA SMITH

CREATOR/WRITER/CO-PRODUCER

Ella Smith is a Brooklyn based actor/writer/producer with a BFA in Drama from New York University, Tisch School of the Arts. She has also studied at the Stella Adler Studio of Acting, The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London, and at The Upright Citizens Brigade for improv and sketch training. Favorite credits include Jackie Coryton (Hay Fever), Chicklet (Psycho Beach Party), and Juliet (Romeo and Juliet: Choose Your Own Ending). TV: Pose, The Deuce. When not acting, Ella can be found teaching acting classes at Rikers Island Correctional Facility, writing and performing with her sketch group, “Stupid Hot”, and encouraging others to be better at recycling.



LINDSEY BRISTOL

CREATOR/WRITER/CO-PRODUCER

Lindsey Bristol is a NYC based performer/writer/producer with a BFA in Musical Theatre from the University of Montevallo in Birmingham, Alabama. Since moving to the NYC, Lindsey has performed in a myriad of regional theatres, national tours, and developmental and Off-Broadway productions. She studied Improv at UCB and performed with indie teams around the city. She is also an avid puppeteer. On “the other side of the table” Lindsey is a Casting Associate at Mungioli Theatricals and a Teaching Artist at The Spence School. In addition to launching FGP and “This Is BS” with Ella, Lindsey has produced her own podcast (“Storm Stories-Hurricane Katrina”) and is currently developing her first song cycle and independent short. She has also worked as the Production Manager for a handful of virtual live-streaming productions, live events, and TV specials. SDG

CREATIVE TEAM

AMANDA PINTO- DIRECTOR/CO-PRODUCER

Born and raised in the great state of Ohio, Amanda likes to have many eggs in many baskets. Favorite performance credits include Katherine in *Love's Labour's Lost* (dir. Ian Belknap), Carla in *In The Heights* (dir. Catie Davis), and Stephanie in the world premiere of *Bigger Animals* (dir. Jeremy Landes). In 2016, she co-produced/directed *Raise Your Voice: A Cabaret for a Cure* benefiting The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society at The Skirball Center. Additional directorial experience includes *Están Mirando* (BAX) and *The Cave* (co-dir. Chris Betts, Access Theater). Her photography work with her partner, Jake, can be seen at www.sub-urbanphotography.com. Amanda has a BFA in Drama from NYU Tisch School of the Arts, having studied at the New Studio on Broadway and The International Theater Workshop.

JAKE NATHANSON- DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY/CO-PRODUCER

Jake is a photographer and filmmaker based out of NYC. Originally from Cleveland, OH, Jake moved to the city to attend NYU where he graduated with a degree in psychology and minors in film producing and creative writing (a true product of the liberal arts education wasteland). During his time at college, Jake co-founded the actor headshot team Sub/Urban Photography with his partner Amanda and has continued working as a cinematographer, writer, and director on short films, commercials, multimedia theater, and web content. If you were to ask him what his favorite movie was he'd try really hard to convince you (and himself) it was *Pulp Fiction*. If he's being totally honest, however, it's the 1996 classic *Twister* starring Helen Hunt and Bill Paxton. *Citizen Kane* might as well be *Gigli* in comparison to *Twister* and there's not a whole lot you could say to convince him otherwise.

SIMONE STADLER- PRODUCER

Simone is a New York based actor and producer originally from Portland, OR. Initially entering the industry with a focus only on acting, Simone discovered a love (and knack) for producing back in 2016 when she and a fellow actor, decided to produce the independent feature film *When We Grow Up*, starring Catherine Curtin, which has since appeared in 8 film festivals across the country. When not producing indie film projects, Simone can be found onstage performing around New York and the greater Northeast. Recent credits include a role-swapping production of *Macbeth* as both Macbeth and Lady Macbeth with the Adirondack Shakespeare Company, Noel Coward's *Hay Fever* with the Bagaduce Theater, and *Hamlet* with the Hudson Valley Shakespeare Festival. Simone earned a BA in Acting and Public Health from Beloit College and later studied at the Atlantic Acting School in New York City.

EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS

FUNNY GIRL
PRODUCTIONS

TERRY CREWS

**ROCK
RISING**

Funny Girl Productions seeks to amplify women's voices through independent film, tv, and theatrical productions. In addition to "This Is B.S." FGP is developing educational programming that provides engaging, entertaining, and interactive storytelling to inspire laughter and learning in young audiences.

Terry Crews is an American actor, comedian, activist, artist, bodybuilder, and former professional football player. Crews played Julius Rock on the UPN/CW sitcom *Everybody Hates Chris*. He hosted the U.S. version of the game show *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire* and starred in the BET reality series *The Family Crews*. He appeared in films such as *Friday After Next* (2002), *White Chicks* (2004), *Idiocracy* (2006), *Blended* (2014), and the *Expendables* series. Since 2013, he has played NYPD Lieutenant Terry Jeffords in the sitcom *Brooklyn Nine-Nine*. He began hosting *America's Got Talent* in 2019, following his involvement in the same role for the program's spin-off series *America's Got Talent: The Champions*.

Rock Rising is an artist collective that connects artists, amplifies them in practical ways, makes connections between philanthropists and artists, and sparks collaboration among artists in New York City. Our goal is to create fantastic content across multiple platforms, which respects both the integrity of the artist and the audience. We seek to learn, listen, and collaborate. For more information visit www.rockrising.org



DISTRIBUTION PLAN AND GOALS:

- **Donor Preview**
 - Share a sneak-peak with our donors to generate audience excitement
- **Festival Circuit**
 - Target web series festivals for networking, laurels, and audience expansion
- **Network Pitch**
 - Meet with industry connections to pitch development of extended series or Season 2
 - Submit press release to target-audience web platforms for write ups
 - Partner with streaming service to host series for optimal audience viewing experience
- **Social Media Release**
 - Utilize personal networks to build following, leading up to public release of episodes

UP NEXT AT THE BRISTLE SHORES PLAYHOUSE:

Season 2

In an effort to showcase female voices, Ted plans a summer season which includes a self-written suffragette play which he'll produce in rep with a female-focused musical. Little does he know, his rival theater company is taking a similar approach.

Episode 1

- The Poop Monitor. Techie is once again running the NY auditions. Meanwhile, a surprise shows up in the middle of the holding room. Next door, Ted's rival Suspension Theater and Artistic Director Monique, holds auditions for a similar season.

Episode 2

- The cast settles into rehearsals. When Margot learns that Ted is both playwright and director of the Suffragette play, she goes on a silent strike (amenable Oscar joins in). Bryce starts freaking Techie out and Peter gets nostalgic with Linda.

Episode 3

- The cast promotes the shows at a weekend fair. Suspension Theater is there too - and they just got a big donor. Peter and Linda have date night. Ted secures a big donor too - on one condition: he wants to be in the show.

Episode 4

- The actors work to fit Guy into the show. Overwhelmed, Ted caves to Margot's strike and lets her direct. She gets experimental. Meanwhile, Bryce gets the actors drunk on prop liquor in rehearsal.

Episode 5

- Opening Night! Hardly anyone comes (which is for the best because Chrissy accidentally took Nyquil). Unbeknownst to Ted, the actors, disheartened and depressed, sneak over to Suspension Theater for a little sabotage. Chrissy and Margot learn why Peter and Linda didn't last.

Episode 6

- Monique files charges against Ted. A bewildered Ted gets taken away in handcuffs. The cast has to come clean to get Monique to drop charges. She does so on one condition: The actors have to promote her show. Fanny turns 21 and we learn Bryce has been undercover the whole time.

Episode 7

- Closing Night. Suspension Theater actors come to support Bristle Shores. Margot gets a directing award and Ted makes a heartfelt plea for unity. At last, we learn who dropped a dookie at auditions.

DON'T MISS ANY OF THE B.S.

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TikTok: Coming Soon!