



Ana Gasteyer: Comedy's Queen of Christmas

[MUSIC: "Sugar and Booze" by Ana Gasteyer] ([00:03](#)):

I love Snowmen and turtle doves in twos....

MADDIE ORTON ([00:08](#)):

I'm Maddie Orton and you are listening to the Jersey Arts podcast. Ana Gasteyer is headed to Kean Stage on December 17th with a concert tour in support of her 2019 holiday album, *Sugar and Booze*. The *Saturday Night Live* alum has numerous Broadway shows, films and TV credits under her belt--most recently NBC's *American Auto*--and she's a fabulously talented, classically trained singer. So if *Sugar and Booze* is not already on your holiday playlist, it absolutely should be. *SNL* fans, no doubt remember her characters that I've long been obsessed with: Margaret Jo McCullin on "Delicious Dish" with Molly Shannon, music teacher Bobbi Mohan-Culp with Will Ferrell, and of course Martha Stewart. We chatted about her upcoming concert, Broadway, *Saturday Night Live*, even her high school musical, and what's still ahead on her "to do" list. Here's my interview with the awesome Ana Gasteyer.

Thank you so much for joining me. I've been a fan of yours for so long, so it's a pleasure to talk with you.

[MUSIC: "Sugar and Booze" by Ana Gasteyer]

ANA GASTEYER ([01:12](#)):

Of course. It's so nice to be here.

MADDIE ORTON ([01:14](#)):

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So you're currently on tour performing music from your 2019 holiday album, *Sugar and Booze*, which is just fabulous. Some classics—

ANA GASTEYER
Thank you.

MADDIE ORTON
--Some original songs. Where did the idea for the album come from?

ANA GASTEYER ([01:26](#)):

Well, so I have a bifurcated career. I started out as a music major at Northwestern. I was a voice major, like a real square, old fashioned voice major, and that's how I got into college. I could sing classically, and that was how I trained in high school. And so I got there and I absolutely hated it and hated--I loved college, but I hated being a voice major and it really hated being a music major. So I left the music school and went over to theater where I really wanted to be all along. Chicago's the birthplace of improv comedy, so I met all the improvisers. I was in the improv group on campus. I'd met all the people who wrote, and that's where I started writing and making comedy basically.

MADDIE ORTON

Nice.

ANA GASTEYER
Yeah. So then the rest of that story, I went to the Groundlings in LA from the Groundlings.

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[\(02:14\):](#)

I mean, took more time than I'm explaining, but yeah. And then I got that *Saturday Night Live* and you become known as a comedian. Well, I always sang comedically as a joke. I used--all improvisers, used the tools that their disposal. And so, I don't know, just slowly while I was in New York, I'm huge fan of musical theater and I just started getting phone calls to go to workshops and hear new musicals and things like that. And so I ended up, when I left the show, when I left *SNL* in 2002, kind of doubling back and doubling down on my life as a singer, and especially, I really wanted to work in New York theater. So I ended up working really hard and I got *Wicked*, and I originated the role of Elphaba in Chicago. So I did that for a year, and then I played Elphaba on Broadway.

[\(03:03\):](#)

And then once you've played, I mean I played a number of roles on the way there, but once you've played Elphaba the doors open for you in a different way or you're perceived differently. It was a very uphill battle. It still kind of is. Frankly, this is very long-winded answer, but...

MADDIE ORTON
No, this is great!

ANA GASTEYER
I'll get to the album. I know the start of what I want to say. So it was incredible, incredible training. I mean, singing eight days a week, there's just no-- it's like if you're an Olympic athlete, it's a muscular phenomenon that starts to happen to your ability to sing and to develop a voice...

MADDIE ORTON
Especially that part. I mean, that part, I don't know how you...

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ANA GASTEYER

That part is devastating. It's almost a voice ruiner if you're not doing it right. But I worked really hard. I had great coaches, and I lived a nun, so I definitely--and then I sang the *Threepenny Opera* on Broadway, and I sang Fosca in Sondheim's *Passion*, and all these great roles that I got to do for several years.

[\(03:58\)](#):

And so what happens when you do those things is that people start asking you to sing places in the Broadway community. And I was trying to put an act together for myself essentially. But the truth of the matter is, I am not quite as buttoned-up as a musical theater performer all the time. I mean, not all musical theater is, but the happy medium that I started to really fall into was what I call 'happy jazz'. I tended to just keep finding my way towards The Great American songbook, and they're very lyrically-driven songs, and really fun songs. They tell a story, you can act them kind of Rosemary Clooney is like your beacon in the sky. And I worked with my producer Julian Fleischer, who's a downtown nightclub singer, and really a student of Sinatra, and Mel Torme, and throwback music. And we just, as we put the acts together over the years, this is now 15 years, I just was drawn in a really simple way to, like I said, to happy jazz, to ridiculous jazz, to there's a lot of give and take.

[\(05:00\)](#):

I like having a band on stage with me, I'm an ensemble performer. I like this kind of supper club era vibe where it's not weird for a lady to tell a joke and also really be able to sing her face off. So there's this kind of entertainers era in the late fifties and sixties that I was just really drawn to. So the first album that we made was called *I'm Hip*, and it kind of pulled that into focus a little bit, and we toured with that for a while. And then the idea to make a holiday record just kept coming up because it's such a traditional time of year and it's a time of year that a little throwback is a little less jarring. It's less of a shtick and more of just an expectation. I feel like you go into the Banana Republic and you hear kind of old timey music in a fun way. And I wasn't looking--it's not fake.

[\(05:52\)](#):

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It's not like I'm doing a character who's in an old time. It's just me. It's a more kind, fun aunt version of myself maybe. But that's really where it just kept resonating. And so there's so many great songs from, I mean, all the great American Jewish songwriters wrote all the great Christmas songs, and we can really borrow from that songbook with so many favorite traditional songs. So like "Sleigh Ride", and "I've got my Love to keep me Warm" and "Let it Snow". And so those are all songs that I really wanted to have. And so we call it a collection of seasonal secular favorites. And then when we set out to write some original material to live in that area, the title "Sugar and Booze" came to me, and so we wanted to write just a fun old fashioned "Sugar and Booze" swingin' song.

[\(06:40\)](#):

And so we did, and we wrote four originals on the album. The goal was an album to wrap presents to and to make cocktails to and have in your annual seasonal mix that it's not like, "what's this year's Christmas pop song?" But rather, "Let's put on Ella, Sinatra, and *Sugar and Booze*, and maybe Elvis if we're really feeling radical." So I think what we got as close as I can imagine getting at least in the first album, and what's really wonderful about it is I have this kind of thing at Christmas, this--I'm not quite Mariah, Queen of Christmas, but I have a lot, I've always had a lot happening career-wise at Christmas. I think I love tradition and it kind of brings together a lot of the things that I love. So all my best sketches on *SNL*—best-known sketches were Christmas sketches: "Martha Stewart's Topless Christmas", I have "Schweddy Balls".

[\(07:33\)](#):

And then I did the Audible book a couple of years ago with my friend Mona Mansour, the playwright. It's about holiday greetings. We kind of did it just to use some of the music from the record, but we ended up going in a totally fun direction, kind of like a female friendship story sort of told through Christmas cards. And then I did *A Christmas story Live*, which was one of those live television events.

MADDIE ORTON

That was so fun.

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ANA GASTEYER

It was so much fun, and with my friend Maya Rudolph. And then last year, Rachel Dratch and I wrote our Hallmark parody that we set out to write the ultimate Christmas Hallmark parody. And we wrote *A Clüsterfünke Christmas*, and we've already written the second movie. I don't know if it'll get made, but they ordered it, so we wrote the script. So it's always this busy time of year for me, and there's honestly just nothing more fun. I took my kids traditionally every year to *The Nutcracker*. So I like the idea of being so somebody's holiday event. As a performer, there's no better feeling than showing up in a house of people that are there to celebrate with you. And since it is the holidays, it's sort of throwing my own little Christmas party with a band--with a really good band I might add, and horns.

MADDIE ORTON ([08:42](#)):

It does have that vibe too. I mean, you feel like you're even just listening to the album, you feel like you're sort of at a 1940s, 1950s Christmas cocktail party. And it does feel like it fits in seamlessly with whatever that Spotify playlist would be of Sinatra...

ANA GASTEYER ([08:59](#)):

That was the goal. That was the goal.

MADDIE ORTON ([09:02](#)):

With a little bit of a new sensibility to it without being overt. It's just lovely.

ANA GASTEYER ([09:06](#)):

Thank you. Yeah. Well, I mean, we worked hard to kind of strike that balance of just letting it roll and letting it be an old time. And I look forward to making more music like that. I get to sing with the Boston Pops this year for the first time, which has been on my dream board forever. Honestly, my heart starts fluttering just saying this. The fact that there's an orchestral arrangement of the song "Sugar and Booze" is like the greatest feeling ever.

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MADDIE ORTON ([09:32](#)):

That sounds so nice.

ANA GASTEYER ([09:33](#)):

I can't even...I'm so excited. Yeah. Yeah. And horns, horns, horns, horns. I have a big voice, so anytime I can sing around horns, I'm so excited.

[MUSIC: "Sugar and Booze" by Ana Gasteyer]

MADDIE ORTON

You are one of those people who, in my mind, is just so multi-talented that I genuinely cannot wrap my head around it.

ANA GASTEYER ([09:58](#)):

That's really sweet.

MADDIE ORTON ([09:58](#)):

It's true. I mean, you killed six seasons on *SNL*. You write, you do Broadway film, TV credits, and you were an Elphaba, which to me is just beyond superhuman. Can you tell me a little bit about your arts education growing up?

ANA GASTEYER ([10:13](#)):

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Yeah. I mean, it's equal credit my schooling and my parents. I was a violinist. My mom--it was kind of presented that we would play an instrument. And it's funny, you look back on your childhood and you're like, wow, there are certain non-negotiables. And that was one, and it's funny, I made that the case for my kids. I actually made my kids play piano because I felt like, as a violinist and a soprano, technically, I'm the laziest musician on planet Earth. I literally don't know any--I never know what key I'm in, which is embarrassing. I went to music school for a full year. Piano, I feel like you learn chords, you learn basic music theory, you learn--So for my kids, I told them they both wanted to--play one just because she wanted to play, and then the other, because his sister played.

[\(11:08\)](#):

And the rule was, you have to do it for five years. I've never met anyone who was like, "I'm so psyched. My mom let me quit piano." So the first two years are really brutal from the mom standpoint. My friend Susan actually gave me the best advice: you make the little ones do a review after their lessons. So they come home really jazzed up and pumped up from their new lesson and what they learned, but then the next day they don't practice maybe, and then it's another day, and then they've forgotten everything. And then it's just this mountain of frustration. So if they do a five-minute review of what they learned that day, then they tend to, it just gets in there a little bit deeper out of context, which I thought was such a good tip.

MADDIE ORTON [\(11:50\)](#):

Yeah, that's a great idea.

ANA GASTEYER [\(11:51\)](#):

And then I just have always been—I mean, now that they're older, they don't really do it, but every day, it doesn't matter if it's 10 minutes or 40, because what starts to happen is by year four or five, 10 accidentally becomes 40. You're just sit the timer for 10 minutes, just sit at the piano for 10 minutes, it doesn't matter. And then by high school, for my daughter particularly, it just became a meditation just to sit down. Their lives get so busy and everything just to sit and play. Anyway, that's about education my own. That's really nice. I was a little bit more old school '70s, set the timer and practice every day. And my whole life was violin, and I didn't really like violin. It's a pretty lonely instrument. I'm very social.

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So for me, it was kind of like isolating, but I'm so, so grateful that they made me do it because my ear is completely different.

[\(12:41\)](#):

My co-star actually in *Wicked*, Kate Reinders, was also a violinist, and violinists tune really naturally.

MADDIE ORTON

Interesting.

ANA GASTEYER

So you can harmonize to people even if they're off key. Yeah. So that was that. And then I played citywide orchestra and summer camps and all of it. I mean, that was my whole identity. And then I basically bargained out voice lessons for violin because I really just didn't want to play violin anymore at a competitive level. And I mean, I just didn't want to do it in the way that I was sort of heading. And so I asked my mom if I could take voice lessons instead, because in my family, it was just like, it just wasn't even an option not to do it, I think. And I knew I was a good singer. I think you're weird if you're born with a voice...

[\(13:32\)](#):

I was see kids who are super athletic, and I say to people, "how do you know your kid's good?" And how--I have a friend whose son played soccer in Europe, and I was like, "how did you know?" She was like, "Oh, people tell you." And it's true. That's what started happening with voice just early on. It was the first thing that I knew other people, not in a braggy way. I wasn't proud of it, but more like it was strange that I could do it and other people, it just was, this is odd, I didn't know this. I could just see music teachers light up and stuff, like in chorus and whatever. They would give me the solos. And then of course, I always had the lead and the musicals and things like that. So yeah, I asked for voice lessons. And so I started training.

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[\(14:18\)](#):

And that's actually how I got into college as a vocalist, like I said. So that was all outside of school, but then chorus, chamber chorus, were in school and great, and a huge part of my high school identity. All my friends did choir, all my friends did chamber choir. And again, back to the meditation thing, the thing about music, I mean besides just waking you up and dialing you into the rest of humanity, singing with other people is just incomparable in its connective tissue. And actually, that's what I sort of tripped into in musical theater workshops when I was saying that. It's so fun. I mean, I almost would rather do musical theater workshops than musicals.

MADDIE ORTON
I think I get that.

ANA GASTEYER

Because learning music together, and you're learning the harmonies together, and you're sitting in little chairs, and there's a music instructor and they're telling you what to do, and it feels like choir. And if you're not--I don't go to church. If you're a secular person, there's not a lot of places to do that to sing together. My *Saturday Night Live* girlfriends and I sing together all the time because we're all well, because all singers kind of organically, and it's just a natural thing that we do just for fun. Not we set out to be like, "Let's sing The Carpenters." It just happens. It's not like anyone's planning it. Yeah, it's like karaoke or drunkards, you know?

MADDIE ORTON ([15:43](#)):

It warms my heart so much to think about that. When I did high school choir, I remember when you hear that overtone happen...

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ANA GASTEYER

Mm-hmm!

MADDIE ORTON

And it's like there's nothing more, I don't know if it's spiritual or communitarian, this feeling that we made this together and it somehow is bigger than all of us.

ANA GASTEYER ([16:01](#)):

And I think it's 100%. That is beautifully put. And it's neurological. I mean, I've read studies that say that people that sing every day are happier, and it has to do with the kind of wave, sound wave that happens inside the skull.

MADDIE ORTON

Oh, wow.

ANA GASTEYER

It's like, isn't that wild? It makes perfect sense to me. And I do this every now and again. One of my dream board things I get to do--Walt Disney World does this huge Christmas concert. Basically it's like the candlelight processional, and they bring in two high school choirs, and then they have their Disney Cast choir, which is made of people who work at Disney. So it's like five or 600 voices. And then there's a full orchestra. I just do the narration. They bring in different people who do the narration.

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MADDIE ORTON
Oh, that's so cool.

ANA GASTEYER ([16:55](#)):

It's unreal. And you just read this story of Christmas while they're singing behind you, but your spine, my spine shakes with the music. It is taking a bath in sound. And afterwards, I'm always, I mean, it's Disney. It's the most ADD place on planet earth. And my kids have been running around all day at the park and whatever, and I come out and I'm like, "Hey guys," because I've done three shows or whatever. I know what you're saying. There's just something enormously peaceful and I haven't been able to recapture it. I would be really at a loss, I think, if I wasn't doing this more or less for a living.

[MUSIC: "Sugar and Booze" by Ana Gasteyer]

MADDIE ORTON ([17:35](#)):

Did you do your high school musicals too?

ANA GASTEYER ([17:37](#)):

Oh yeah. Oh yeah. Oh yeah. We had a really great--it's a more musical school than it was, but it was very traditional. I went to a Quaker high school, but we had the musical, you couldn't be the lead until the senior year. So that was sort of sad. But yes, I loved it. I loved doing high school musicals. I did middle school musicals. I played Annie Oakley, I played Golde. I mean, I'm a sucker for a high school musical. I think they're the funniest thing ever.

MADDIE ORTON ([18:04](#)):

It's the greatest thing in the whole world. What was your senior musical?

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ANA GASTEYER ([18:07](#)):

Well, my senior musical is a really sad story.

MADDIE ORTON

Oh, I hate when that happens.

ANA GASTEYER

It's not that sad, it's kind of funny. I mean, it's not that sad. It's such a burn on me because, okay, so you couldn't be the lead unless you were in Chamber Chorus, which I was. And you couldn't be the lead unless you were a senior, which I was.

MADDIE ORTON ([18:22](#)):

Can I just say, first of all, I love the fact that this is so present in fore part of your brain that you remember each reason why you could or couldn't--This is like...

ANA GASTEYER ([18:34](#)):

A hundred percent.

MADDIE ORTON ([18:35](#)):

There are casting decisions from when I was 15 that I still carry around in the back of my head--

ANA GASTEYER ([18:41](#)):

So funny.

MADDIE ORTON ([18:42](#)):

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--And weirdly form who I am as an adult, which is horrible.

ANA GASTEYER ([18:45](#)):

No, it's so funny. Well, no, it's just so me. I mean, I've talked about it with Seth Rudetsky, who's the king of Broadway, and he loves this story so much because it's so utterly me. So I was like a soprano, right? I wasn't even singing. I wasn't even belting back then, or my mother thought belting was tacky, so I would never do it. I'm not kidding. So they picked *West Side Story*, and it was like the dream. I loved the musical. It would air at the classic movie theaters, and I would go see it. And we had that recording. There was an operatic recording of it with Kiri Te Kanawa and somebody, I can't remember, like Placido Domingo, somebody famous. And I had that--I knew the music like the back of my hand. I was so excited. And also, by the way, in the eighties, I was considered ethnic because

([19:33](#)):

I had brown curly hair. I mean, it was a different time. I literally have a joke. I'm like "ethnic in the eighties. Not anymore. Very, very, very patrician and white now." But yes, that's like back then. Back then you could do *West Side Story* if you weren't...

MADDIE ORTON

That's what everybody did.

ANA GASTEYER

And I mean now, it'd be utterly unacceptable, and fairly so. But anyway, so I was all gunned up. The callback list went up, "Maria - Ana Gasteyer", it was just so obvious that Hillary Dayton was going to play Anita, and I was going to play Maria, and duh. And so overnight, Sam Carter, who was the only eligible tenor who could sing Tony, dropped out of Chamber Chorus. And overnight the cast callback list got scratched out, actually scratched out. It said it went from *West Side Story* to *Fiddler on the Roof*.

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MADDIE ORTON
Oh my gosh.

ANA GASTEYER
So I went from Maria to Golde overnight, and David Schrag got his moment as Tevye, and never let anyone forget it.

MADDIE ORTON ([20:36](#)):

That is, oh my God.

ANA GASTEYER ([20:39](#)):

It was so devastating,

MADDIE ORTON ([20:41](#)):

So this one tenor messed it up for everybody.

ANA GASTEYER ([20:42](#)):

Well, if you don't have Tony, you can't do *West Side Story* in fairness.

MADDIE ORTON ([20:45](#)):

Oh yeah, a hundred percent. And also, I mean, really, honestly, how many teenage boys are there to carry...

ANA GASTEYER ([20:52](#)):

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Oh, I mean, can you imagine how terrible that production would've been? Oh my God. Honestly, let's be frank. But yes, so I mean, also, we didn't have a dance department. You know what I mean?

MADDIE ORTON

Oh yeah. Like how was that going to work?

ANA GASTEYER

Believe me, *Fiddler* was the better choice for the community by far. And for the greater good. Way more parts. Way more fun parts for everybody. Easier dances. You tape those bottles to the hats, call it a day.

MADDIE ORTON ([21:22](#)):

Yeah. But the trauma lives with you decades later.

ANA GASTEYER ([21:24](#)):

I mean, it's just hilarious to me only because I've been auditioning for 50-year-olds since I was 18, so I was like, really?

[MUSIC: "Sugar and Booze" by Ana Gasteyer] ([21:33](#)):

I love mittens and skating on the ice, right through December, mixing naughty with that nice.

MADDIE ORTON ([21:42](#)):

We have to talk about *Saturday Night Live* because it's such a big part of your career. It's frequently brought up that you are part of an *SNL* cast in which women just broke through and were heard in a way that they weren't heard before, but really dominated in many ways. Maya Rudolph, Molly Shannon, Rachel Dratch, Cheri Oteri, Tina Fey, Amy Poehler, Paula Pell. And part of me sort of hates the focus on

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the gender aspect to an extent, because you're all just funny people, and there's that alone. But at the same time, I think it really changed the way women in comedy were able to be seen. I grew up at a time where--as did you, and it's not that long ago--the thought of, "Well, women aren't really funny."

ANA GASTEYER ([22:23](#)):

Right? We still hear that, by the way, just in case you were worried.

MADDIE ORTON ([22:26](#)):

Oh, thank God, I was so worried. And I can't tell you how--this happened when I was in high school, and it meant so much to me because it really gave you an answer to like, "Oh, women aren't funny? Turn on *SNL*, and tell me who has the best sketch." And it was great. Did you feel the weight of that moment while you were in it?

ANA GASTEYER ([22:49](#)):

No, I really didn't. I mean, I felt that people recognized it. Sure. I mean, we got publicity for it. And I was kind of in the bridge there. It was like Molly, Cheri, Ana, and then it kind of really exploded into a time for women, so I straddled it. And I wouldn't say that there were TV opportunities or anything on the other side of it, necessarily, for a long time. And again, Tina and Amy had their shows, and those broke through, and that made a difference for people. But for me, it took a long time until I got to *American Auto*. And I just say that from like, if I were to do a poll of everything I auditioned for from 2002 until 2018, a lot of them were wives of male standups in their new sitcom.

MADDIE ORTON
Interesting.

ANA GASTEYER

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So where I wouldn't get the part, and I'm not kidding, I also got this feedback where "I might outshine him."

MADDIE ORTON
Ohhhh gosh.

ANA GASTEYER ([23:48](#)):

So that was actual feedback I got, I remember on this Fox show. And none of them lasted, by the way. But no, I mean, as much as--and I don't say that with bitterness. I mean, I'm lucky in that I have--I think it pushed me to develop an entirely different side of my career, which is all this music, and to keep moving and creating and growing and not spend a lot of time wondering about what I didn't have. But I feel like society itself, especially that role for women I think has evolved along with our understandings of what women are capable of, and it'll keep stepping itself back and stepping itself forward. I mean, the reason that I wanted to go be on *Saturday Night Live* was that a really fun friend, and I went to college during the era of VCRs, pulled me into his dorm room and was like, "You have to watch Jan Hooks and Nora Dunn."

([24:41](#)):

And it was such specific, funny character work--in particular character work because a guy in college in an improv group with me had said, "Oh, well, you're more charactery than an improviser." Which, as though it was like a deficit, right? And so I just kind of was like, "Oh, okay, yeah, that seems fun. That seems really, really fun." And that's why I went to the Groundlings. I led with that. I went to the Second City, and there weren't that many women in the show. There were two women, I think. And then I went out to the Groundlings. It was like Jennifer Coolidge, and Mindy Sterling, Kathy Griffin, and Lisa Kudrow and all these iconic, hilarious women were in the Groundlings. And they weren't icons yet, but they were throwing on wigs and doing characters. I was like, "Oh, this is really fun. I want to do this."

([25:29](#)):

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And so I just kind of followed blindly the positives, if that makes sense. And when I got to *SNL*, there was certainly sexism in a very kind of structural way, but we really were rewarded if our sketches were good. And whatever it took to get them written may have been complicated, but the best material tended to air. And we had advocates inherently around that material. So as we kind of ascended, it was like a lucky break. And then, look, culture itself, I've said this before kind of in interviews, but as much as women are more present in the culture, they're--Martha Stewart became this huge--

MADDIE ORTON

Oh my gosh.

ANA GASTEYER

--very feminine icon, but in the 2000s, and so that was an easy person to parody. And to have Hillary Clinton run for office certainly gave people an opportunity to impersonate Hillary Clinton. So the more that things people kind of arose around us. And I'm sure there's ways that you could look at it and say, "Oh, but we were still held back or so limited" or whatever. But anyway, I'm sure the story is going to be told differently. I mean, I really see it now when I go watch my daughter and the work that they're doing and the kind of gray scale improvements from awareness to--I mean intimacy coaches that are so required now in all the work she does. And she just wrote a play with an entirely female cast, with an entirely female production team, with sexual assault at the center of it. But it was the most natural thing. I wouldn't have even, like...

[\(27:07\)](#):

There were so many young women available to the work, and the work itself wasn't wholly political, but it was partially political. It was really interesting to just see the natural entitlement to that. And to think that just so recently, we could barely find female directors for our projects. So it's kind of refreshing just be standing on this other side of it and optimistic, you know?

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MADDIE ORTON
That's great.

[MUSIC: "Sugar and Booze" by Ana Gasteyer]

MADDIE ORTON ([27:42](#)):

You've done so many things in your career. You talk about this either metaphoric or actual dream board. What haven't you tried that's on your "to-do list"?

ANA GASTEYER ([27:54](#)):

Yeah, it's actually, I'm literally like, "I've got to do this in real life." I have to manifest some things. I really want to voice a Disney character.

MADDIE ORTON
Oh, yeah!

ANA GASTEYER

I would really, really love to do it with a song. I would like to do some kind of professional moment that kind of gets--I'm 15 years into it, and still—I mean last night, literally, it was like, "Oh my God, I didn't know that you sing. I thought I was going to a comedy show!"

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MADDIE ORTON
Really? Interesting!

ANA GASTEYER
You know what I mean? I would like for the hyphenate to be a little less of a confusing phenomenon to people. Only because, purely selfishly, when I show up on stage, I'm like, "Oh my God, if you come for a comedy show and some lady starts singing, I can't imagine anything more disappointing." So I always just want, for the people who have bought tickets to my shows to be fulfilled, you know? I would really like to do that. I would really like, there's a couple of big ideas that I have creatively that I would like to fulfill that are in motion now, and see those shows come to life, and produce those. And I would like to produce for other people because I really like doing that. I would like to collaborate with my daughter--

MADDIE ORTON
Oh, cool!

ANA GASTEYER
--Who's an unbelievable talent. And I, dream board, would love to, obviously to originate on Broadway would be high on the list. And I've had some close shots at it, but that's a hard one. There's not a lot of shots people get at that and getting the right role. And of course, I want to play like Mama Rose, and Mrs. Lovett, and all the classics, but those are probably at the top of my dream board.

MADDIE ORTON ([29:33](#)):

I love it. Well, I can't wait to see what you do next.

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ANA GASTEYER
Thank you.

MADDIE ORTON
I have always been, and remain, a fan.

ANA GASTEYER ([29:39](#)):

Thank you. Well, thanks for taking the time to ask such thoughtful questions. It's so nice to talk to somebody who likes musicals that much.

MADDIE ORTON ([29:45](#)):

You too. Thank you so much for your time!

ANA GASTEYER ([29:47](#)):

You're very welcome.

MADDIE ORTON ([29:53](#)):

Ana Gasteyer will perform at Kean Stage on Sunday, December 17th. For more information, visit [KeanStage.com](#). If you like this episode, be sure to give us a review, subscribe and tell your friends a transcript of this podcast, as well as links to related content and more about the arts in New Jersey can be found on [JerseyArts.com](#). The Jersey Arts Podcast is presented by ArtPride New Jersey, advancing Estate of Creativity since 1986. The show is co-founded by and currently supported by funds from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts, with additional support from the National Endowment for the Arts. This episode was hosted, produced, and edited by yours truly, Maddie Orton. Executive producers are Jim Atkinson and Isaac Serna-Diez. Special thanks to the lovely and talented Ana Gasteyer. I'm Maddie Orton for the Jersey Arts Podcast. Thanks for listening.

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[MUSIC: "Sugar and Booze" by Ana Gasteyer]

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