

# *Viewtiful*



## *The Beach House*

KATHRYN BOND, GEMMA BARNETT AND GEMMA LAWRENCE



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BY DAVID MONTEITH-HODGE





## Editor's Letter

Welcome to **VIEWTIES**, a digital magazine written for the fans, the talent, and the art lovers who loyally read every issue. Each month, we select and organize features that will resonate with you and will inspire your self-welling journey. We hope to facilitate the connection between you and your favourite artists, find the beauty behind the lens and hope that you will enjoy the experience as you read the pages of our magazine. Remember this is a fast-read digital publication to celebrate art and value the talent, to know the other side of the story, one artist at a time.

Don't miss any of our issues, as **Viewties** goes on bringing you the latest on film and television, introducing artists whose passion is to make you feel something with their work and dedication that brings a project / character to life requires. As I always say, If I can take something from my job, I believe you will take something from it too. Enjoy the ride and prepare your heart for being touched by our content.

Happy month!



Founding editor-in-chief  
@vanmiraglia











# *The Beach House.*

**VIEWTIES** had the pleasure of interviewing the cast of **The Beach House**, a tender new play by **Jo Harper** that explores the fragility of female relationships. Directed by **Bethany Pitts**, the story follows three women, *Kate* (**Kathryn Bond**), *Liv* (**Gemma Lawrence**), and *Jenny* (**Gemma Barnett**), who grapple with motherhood, sisterhood, and distractions until a betrayal exposes their secret longings.

In our conversation, I talk to the three delightful actresses about their characters' arc and their journey to rehearsals before debuting on stage.

**The Beach House** premieres at Park Theatre, Feb 15 - March 11 2023. Tickets available from: [parktheatre.co.uk](https://parktheatre.co.uk).







**V: Why don't we start our conversation by giving readers a quick note of who you are? What's your story? How did you discover your passion for the arts, and what makes you choose this profession every day?**

**Bond:** Kathryn Bond. Actress, Comic and writer. I love the people who make theatre. Usually a good bunch. My brief story is born in Essex, was an incredibly awkward kid, had a great drama teacher, been hooked ever since. The variety is great and I constantly have to push out of comfort zone and you get to laugh lots.

**Barnett:** Hello! I'm Gemma Barnett (from Enfield not Barnet eyyy)

I started a youth theatre company because my mum thought it would get me out of my shell - I was quite shy. It took a few years before I was playing anything other than girl 3 or tree but I realised how much I loved performing and being in a cast. Then a particularly lovely teacher at school really pushed me to see it as a potential career. Good teachers are the best.

I don't know if I choose this profession every day to be honest - I think it's more a case of I choose not to leave it (the industry can make it difficult to want to stay a lot of the time.) That being said, I have so many days where I catch myself thinking 'wow it's pretty cool that I'm messing around and being silly and that's my job.'

**Lawrence:** I've been acting across stage and screen since I was about 14, so a good long time now... I'm a writer as well - my debut play Sunnymead Court opened in September 2020, and told the story of two women who fall in love from the safety of their balconies during lockdown. I love the variety and the intensity of acting and writing. I love that no week is the same, and you get to work with so many amazing people, telling such different stories.

**V: We're here today to talk about your performances in The Beach House by Jo Harper. How did you get these roles, and what do you remember doing during the audition process to capture the essence of the characters with just a few details?**

**Bond:** I loved the playful nature of the relationships in the play despite the characters having quite a rough time. I have audition amnesia but remember enjoying chatting to Beth and Jo about the characters and being relaxed enough to do so. I enjoy playing a character who has a corporate job and different career background as so far from my own work. Feels like a fun challenge.

**Barnett:** I did a couple of rounds of auditions. I learnt the scene they wanted to see and read the play which I really loved. I remember thinking Jenny felt quite instinctive and slightly chaotic so I essentially tried to relax as much as possible for the recall audition. I try my very best to look at auditions as just a chance to perform some good writing. Some of the things the play tackles, especially with Jenny's character, were things I'd been really thinking about myself so I was able to draw on that.

**Lawrence:** I think my character is very torn between different versions of herself and different visions of her life - could she be happier with someone else, as someone else? I focused on this idea for the audition.

**V: Once you found out you booked the roles, did you create a backstory of your characters to help you get into those scenes?**

**Bond:** I think we will build layers in the rehearsal process but I have been picking up clues from the script about Kate.

**Barnett:** I haven't created an in depth back story as we haven't started rehearsing quite yet (unless Kat and Gemma have? In which case yes, yes I have done too.)

I do like to start by reading the script a few times and jotting down everything I say about myself and then separately everything all the other characters say about me.

**Lawrence:** Always! I like to wait til rehearsals to get started on that work so you can ensure you're all on the same page.

**V: How do you prepare to become these characters? What is the main focus? And what is important to you to convey to the audience in your interpretation?**

**Bond:** By combining my own lived experience with discussions and improves we have played it in the room.

**Barnett:** I think I felt a lot of compassion towards Jenny - it's important that I empathised with her. So when we watch her making questionable decisions we understand where they're coming from. I really like playing fallible characters that try to grapple with the messiness/anxiety of life.

**V: How do you girls work your chemistry on stage? What helps you build a bond and develop your dynamics as genuinely as possible?**

**Bond:** I think you build a trust over a rehearsal process and in theatre you tend to get close quite quick. Not often a huge amount of time to make theatre in the UK so you move, you chat, you have a wine.

**Barnett:** We snogged a lot.  
Just joking. To be honest Kat and Gemma are both so lovely and funny it's not hard to build a bond.

**V: Which are the things you agree and disagree with your characters' mindsets?**

**Lawrence:** I like that the play doesn't provide a judgement on the characters' behaviour - everyone behaves in questionable ways but it all comes from a very human place.

**V: What would you like the audience to take away from the story and your characters when they leave the theatre?**

**Barnett:** I felt that the play was about sisterhood and forgiveness. We can often look elsewhere thinking that everyone is doing 'life' right and we've got it all wrong. That's what Jenny made me feel in particular.

**Lawrence:** I really enjoy watching humans being messy onstage - I think it allows space to reflect on your own messiness. We are contradictory, messy beings.

**V: Do you have pre-show rituals? How do you deal with your nervousness?**

**Bond:** I like to wear a scent my character would wear. Excuse for a new perfume? Maybe? But this helps. I also repeat some phrases. Too embarrassing to print.

**Barnett:** I have to eat a banana before every show I do. Don't know why. It's in my head that if I don't eat the banana it will go badly. I can't shake it. I performed at the Kiln recently as part of a Jewish new writing night and I was last and I sat in the audience and snuck a banana in my mouth before going on stage.

**Lawrence:** I love a warm up. A bit of humming to take the edge off!

**V: Last question, I would like to ask you about respect because I'm aware that, at times, this career can be tricky, full of rejection, expectations, and pressure. What does it mean to be respected as an artist, and what do you do to stay focused and not let the negative aspects of the job affect you?**

**Bond:** I think enjoy the positives, make your own work and let yourself feel it when you get a no rather than try and ignore it and your recovery time with hopefully get quicker. Buy a little cake after a weird audition or a no.

**Barnett:** I think you respect yourself first and foremost, try not to worry what everyone thinks of you and just don't take it all so seriously. I had a job in the pandemic that helped put a lot into perspective for me. Also balance - see your mates. Especially the ones who don't have a clue what you do. That's quite nice really.

**Lawrence:** I mean it's easier said than done! Writing really helps because it means you can always be creative on your own terms. A really hard aspect of acting is waiting for someone else to give you the chance to do it, so being able to have more control is a game changer.







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