

THE TWELVE PRESS PACK

The series will from Thursday 28th March on ITV1



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1.The Twelve Press Release

The gripping courtroom drama tells the story of 12 ordinary Australians who are selected for jury duty in a murder trial as traumatising as it is controversial, in which a woman stands accused of killing her teenage niece.

Behind the façade of their anonymity, these twelve ordinary people bring with them their own histories. Lives that are as complex as the trial, full of fractured dreams, shameful secrets, hope, fears, personal trauma, and prejudice. Through the multiple lenses of these jurors, audiences will see the fragility and imbalances of the law, and the chaotic and flawed way we attempt to determine justice in our society.

The limited series also stars Marta Dusseldorp (*Wentworth, Stateless, A Place to Call Home*) and Kate Mulvany (*Fighting Season, Lambs of God, Hunters*).

The 10-episode crime drama commissioned by the FOXTEL Group, is produced by Warner Bros. International Television Production Australia in partnership with Easy Tiger Productions with major production investment from Screen Australia in association with FOXTEL. Financed with support from Screen NSW. The series is distributed globally by FIFTH SEASON. Executive Producers for the Foxtel Group are Brian Walsh and Penny Win.

2.Series outline

THE TWELVE begins on the first day of jury selection in a complicated trial.

Twelve ordinary citizens from diverse backgrounds have been summoned to the Supreme Court to decide the fate of a woman charged with murder. Is she guilty or innocent? Is it even a murder? Her fourteen-year-old niece went missing when in her care, but a body has never been found and it isn't clear what motive she would have for killing her. Her own family is divided about her guilt or innocence, what hope does the jury have of reaching the truth?

Over ten episodes we explore the lives and loves of the people who will decide the fate of the accused, their histories, their conflicts, their families, their secrets: a gentle suburban mum whose husband's adoration may be hiding coercion, a builder torn away from his responsibilities, a star student struggling with being a role model to his indigenous community, a chronic gambler with money problems, a brash millennial plagued by traumatic memories.

The values they bring and the challenges they confront will shape the different ways they react to the unfolding trial. Being on a jury for a long complex trial is tough and time consuming, the pressures of the trial impact upon the personal lives of the jurors. They are forced to contemplate the darker side of human nature while being forbidden to speak to anyone outside the jury room about the evidence they confront each day. Alliances become friendships, relationships form and come apart as they learn the contradictory details of what may be a horrible crime, or a tragic accident or simply a runaway teen who knows how to hide. When they reach a verdict, it will change the lives of everyone involved in the trial.

3.Episode Descriptions

Episode 1

As the jury is selected for Kate Lawson's lengthy trial, the press follows the sensational case of her missing 14-year-old niece, Claire Spears, who is presumed murdered. When the jurors meet for the first time, it's clear this is a diverse group, who bring their own problems to the table. Georgina, a middle-class mum, is caught between her duty to the Court and her duty to her family. Garry, a gambler struggling with debt, learns the history of fellow-juror Corrie, who has a horrific family secret she is keeping to herself.

Episode 2

The Crown calls Detective Sam Chedid to the stand. Various pieces of evidence are introduced to the Court, including a disturbing video of Claire. During his cross examination, Colby throws suspicion onto Nathan Spears, as he points out the Detective's failure to investigate him as a potential suspect. The jurors share polarising opinions on the trial thus far, as different personalities begin to rub each other the wrong way. Garry is offered a dubious bribe - his debts cleared in exchange for information on his fellow jurors. Meanwhile, Alexi makes a bad decision when confronted with a horrific work-place accident, and Jarrod finds himself unexpectedly arrested.

Episode 3

The Crown calls Claire's best friend, Amita, to the stand for questioning. Bloom suggests Kate was grooming Claire while using her as her muse, but Colby's cross examination paints Kate as a loving and caring Aunt. The Defence again throws suspicion onto Nathan, as it's revealed a dramatic argument took place the night Claire went missing. Meanwhile, Jarrod struggles to deal with the brutality of his arrest and submits an important English essay late. Alexi is plagued by his decision following a workplace accident, and he and Corrie take their connection to a new level. Garry is faced with the new task of having to ensure the jurors deliver a 'not guilty' verdict, but how will he do it?

Episode 4

As Kate's artwork is put before the Court, Bloom focuses on its preoccupation with mortality and suggests Kate orchestrated Claire's death for her final work. A complicated mental health diagnosis is revealed, which is particularly pertinent for Vanessa. The jury room is once again divided as they begin to untangle the mammoth question in front of them - was Kate Lawson's artwork a blueprint for murder? Meanwhile, Corrie is haunted by the horrific crime from her past, which Garry uses in an attempt to push her off the jury. Jarrod seeks answers from Lowanna, and Alexi's worst fears are confirmed.

Episode 5

Claire's father is called to the stand. Nathan paints Kate as a sexual predator, who groomed Claire before murdering her. However, Colby throws suspicion back onto Nathan when it's revealed he had a false online persona, posing as a young girl in order to monitor Claire's social media. The courtroom is also given a taste of his temper when Colby successfully gets under his skin. Despite trying to focus on the task at hand, some jurors struggle with the mounting pressures of life outside the jury room. Georgina's husband's controlling behaviour goes from bad to worse, Jarrod tries to get his scholarship money back, and Alexi is plagued with guilt over Luiz' death.

Episode 6

When the jurors are taken to Kate's house to observe a demonstration of the Crown's theory, it ends in disaster for the Defence when someone tampers with Kate's studio. Back in the courtroom, an eyewitness testifies he saw Kate at 4am out on the water the night Claire disappeared. Kate's brother, Robbie, takes the stand, before the jurors are left perplexed when a man from Kate's past causes a disturbance in the courtroom. Inside the jury room, the jurors' debate and discuss the logistics of the prosecution's theory - could Kate really have disposed of Claire's body by herself? Meanwhile, Alexi gets into trouble trying to give money to Luiz' widow, whilst Corrie becomes all too aware of his lack of transparency with her. Georgina is fired from her job because of Jamie and is surprised to find a helping hand from Garry, and Jarrod finds a connection with his university's secretary, Yvette.

Episode 7

Following a bizarre interruption in the Courtroom, the Defence cross-examines Kate's brother, Robbie. Colby adds fuel to the theory that Claire ran away, highlighting a particular text conversation between the uncle and niece. When Kate's sister and Claire's mother, Diane, takes the stand, the Defence again focus on the tumultuous and fraught relationship between Claire and her father, Nathan. However, during her re-examination, Bloom suggests that Diane suspects that Claire is dead and is protecting her sister. Who will the jury believe? Meanwhile, Garry becomes nervous when Otto reveals himself and applies pressure, Georgina finds a babysitting solution in Simon's daughter, Ava, and Peter and Margaret have a date which ends badly. However, proceedings come to halt when Melissa has a seizure.

Episode 8

When Claire's ex-boyfriend, Blake, takes the stand, Colby uses it as an opportunity to further the theory that Claire could have run away. When Claire's boarding school mistress, Fiona, takes the stand, she changes the course of the trial. She not only reveals that she knew Kate from her teen years, but divulges that Claire believed Kate and Nathan were having an affair. Rocked by the revelation and the secrecy of his client, Colby scrambles to save the case.

But Kate's focus is on Diane- will the revelation destroy the one ally she had in her sister? Meanwhile, when Georgina finds herself kicked out of her own home, Garry once again comes to her aid. Alexi finally shares his dark secret with Corrie, Jarrod finds himself stuck on the bureaucratic treadmill of the university's appeal process, and Vanessa turns to her mother for answers.

Episode 9

The strain of the trial is taking its toll on all in the Court. As the end approaches, Kate insists on taking the stand to tell the truth about her relationship with Nathan, but her decision hands Bloom the weapon she needs to bring Kate down. Meanwhile Ezekiel finds evidence that may help salvage the case. With new revelations about her sister's betrayal, Diane's support begins to wane – but does she hold a secret that could smash things wide open? Georgina's decision to take shelter with the troubled Garry has a backlash when Jamie discovers she has been lying to him again – while the complications for Garry only increase when Simon's daughter goes missing. Corrie confronts a painful truth to break through Alexi's wall – but will it free them to be together, or drive them further apart? Emotionally exposed by Kate's testimony, Vanessa pushes her relationship to breaking point.

Episode 10

In the final episode of this series, startling revelations emerge about the ties between a past crime and the present crime – but is Kate Lawson guilty of her niece’s murder? The legal system is tested by the jury’s process of deliberation – how can twelve people with diverse problems and morals judge the fate of another? This question is raised – and the group’s individual flaws are challenged by the least likely among them. Sequestered in a hotel, their conflicts and personal connections are put under a microscope; and Georgina’s domestic drama comes to a head when her jealous husband breaks the rules to find her.

4.Character descriptions

Brett Colby played by Sam Neill

Colby is one of the rock stars of the Sydney bar. You don’t get to be a ‘silk’ (Senior Counsel) in Criminal Defence unless you have charisma. Criminal defence isn’t lucrative, it isn’t glamorous, it is tough and demanding and Colby is right at the top. Despite a hard shell and cynical disposition, hides a soft heart. A mercurial opponent to any SC unlucky enough to face him, Colby’s born maverick streak and gift of improvisation make him as much a performer as a litigator in court. He has a hard-earned reputation for being absolutely ethical and scrupulous, and it serves him well, because when he needs to break the rules to serve justice, he is likely to get away with it. Where others love the law, Colby loves justice. He is in this game to set the world to rights, and much as he presents as tough and cynical, he is an idealist with deep wells of empathy for the flawed humans who call on his counsel.

Kate Lawson played by Kate Mulvany

Reared in a home that harboured dark secrets, Kate learned at an early age that the truth is always more than meets the eye. This gave her a passion for photography as a teen. Her art may be in-your-face with its themes of death, sexuality and violence, but Kate’s winning sensitivity tells a different story. In her teenage niece Claire, Kate found a muse of enchanting depths and the nature of this relationship stands at the centre of the trial and the truth of what happened to Claire may hinge on the truth of what happened to Kate when she was Claire’s age.

Claire Spears played by Coco Jack Gillies

A precocious single child more impacted by her parents’ divorce than she is ever willing to admit. Claire is in many ways a typical teenager of the digital era stuck in her phone with a bad case of FOMO and strong addiction to TikTok. At school her cunning smarts branded her an often-rebellious student and a manipulative friend. Her parents’ divorce sends Claire into turmoil, yet she finds a refuge with her Aunt Kate, that allows her creative and rebellious side full rein, while giving her a break from the angst that has ripped her once stable family apart.

5.Cast biographies

Sam Neill

A recipient of an *Order of the British Empire for Services to Acting*, and a *Distinguished Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit*, Sam Neill is internationally recognized for his contribution to film and television, with more than 75 films and over 45 television programs to his credit.

Neill made his film debut in Roger Donaldson's *Sleeping Dogs* and his feature breakthrough in a starring role opposite Judy Davis in *My Brilliant Career*. The two films that subsequently brought him international stardom and acclaim were writer/director Jane Campion's *The Piano* and Steven Spielberg's *Jurassic Park*. Written and directed by visionary filmmaker Jane Campion, *The Piano* starred Neill, Holly Hunter, Harvey Keitel and Anna Paquin and won 3 Oscars, 3 BAFTA and 11 Australian Film Institute (AFI) awards, along with an AFI Best Supporting Actor nomination for Neill. In 2016 he received an AFI Best Supporting Actor nomination for his work in *The Daughter*.

His film credits include *Dead Calm* opposite Nicole Kidman for director Phillip Noyce; *A Cry In The Dark* opposite Meryl Streep for director Fred Schepisi; *The Hunter* opposite Willem Dafoe (for which Neill received an AACTA *Best Actor* nomination); *Little Fish* with Cate Blanchett; *The Horse Whisperer* alongside Kristin Scott Thomas, Robert Redford and Scarlett Johansson; *Perfect Strangers*; *The Hunt For Red October* alongside Sean Connery and Alec Baldwin; *Dirty Deeds* alongside Bryan Brown and Toni Collette; *Bicentennial Man* opposite Robin Williams, directed by Chris Columbus; *Wimbledon* opposite Kirsten Dunst; *My Talks With Dean Spanley* alongside Peter O'Toole and Bryan Brown; *Skin* opposite Sophie Okonedo; *Daybreakers*; animated film *Legend Of The Guardians: The Owls*

Of Ga'hoole; Czech production *The Zookeeper* and Taika Waititi's *Hunt For The Wilderpeople*. Recent features include *Sweet Country*, *Ride Like a Girl*, *Palm Beach* and *Rams*.

His work in television has earned Sam Neill three Golden Globe Best Actor nominations. In 1998 he received Emmy and Golden Globe nominations for his performance in the title role of the NBC miniseries *Merlin*. He received a Golden Globe nomination in 1992 for his performance opposite Judy Davis in *One Against the Wind* and a third Golden Globe nomination, along with the BAFTA Award for Best Actor for his performance as British spy Sidney Reilly in director Martin Campbell's *Reilly: Ace of Spies*. He also received the Australian Film Institute (AFI) *Best Actor* Award for the Australian drama *Jessica*.

Other television credits include the ITV miniseries *Tutankhamun*; the first two seasons of the hit BBC series *Peaky Blinders* alongside Cillian Murphy; the Australian crime drama *Old School* opposite Bryan Brown; the FOX drama series *Alcatraz*; acclaimed Australian television series *Rake*; NBC's *Crusoe*; Showtime's *The Tudors* with Jonathan Rhys Meyers; the miniseries *To The Ends Of Earth* with Benedict Cumberbatch; Granada's epic miniseries *Doctor Zhivago* and *The Pacific: In the Wake of Captain Cook* with Sam Neill.

He has a small organic winery called Two Paddocks and is a long-time activist and spokesman for environmental causes.

Kate Mulvany

Kate Mulvany OAM has a Bachelor of Arts degree and honorary Doctorate of Letters from Curtin University, Western Australia. She is an award-winning actor, playwright, screenwriter, librettist and dramaturg. In 2020, Kate was awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for her contribution to the Australian arts.

Kate is one of Australia's most respected and sought-after theatrical artists. She has performed for almost every major Australian theatre company, including roles as Antigone, Lady Macbeth, Cassius (in *Julius Caesar*), Dorine (in *Tartuffe*), her highly acclaimed turn as Richard of Gloucester (*Richard III*), for which she won the 2017 Helpmann Award for Best Female Actor In A Play, and which she won again the following year for her performance in the one woman show *Every Brilliant Thing* for Belvoir.

Kate's rich character work caught the eye of Baz Luhrmann who cast her as Lucille McKee in *The Great Gatsby*. Other feature films include *The Final Winter*, *Griff The Invisible*, *The Turning*, *The Little Death* (for which she was nominated for an Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts Award) and *The Merger*. She can be seen on screen as Marion Keisker in Baz Luhrmann's new *Elvis* biopic.

Kate has appeared on television in *All Saints*, *Blue Heelers*, *The Chaser's War On Everything*, *Chandon Pictures*, *The Hamster Wheel*, the tele-movie *The Underbelly Files – The Man Who Got Away*, *Winter*, *Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries*, *Q&A*, and the highly acclaimed series *Secret City*. Kate also starred in a leading role in the Foxtel series *Fighting Season* opposite Jay Ryan and directed by Kate Woods, and as Frankie in the lauded Foxtel series *Lambs Of God*. Kate is also one of the lead actors in the Emmy nominated series *Hunters* for Amazon Prime Video, produced by Jordan Peele and created by David Weil, in which she plays Sister Harriet opposite Al Pacino.

Kate is also an award-winning playwright and screenwriter. Her adaptation of the Greek myth *Medea* was voted by the New York Times as one of the best Greek adaptations to hit the London stage in 2015. Kate also wrote four episodes of the Emmy-winning animated television series *Beat Bugs*. Her stage adaptations of Craig Silvey's novel *Jasper Jones*, Kit Williams' *Masquerade* and Ruth Park's *The Harp In The South* trilogy have had sell-out seasons across Australia, with her *Harp* trilogy of plays being awarded the esteemed David Williamson Prize at the Australian Writers Guild Awards. In 2019, Kate became the first female playwright to adapt *Mary Stuart* for the stage for Sydney Theatre Company. In 2021 her adaptation of Ruth Park's *Playing Beatie Bow* opened the historical refurbished Wharf Theatre for Sydney Theatre Company.

As a screenwriter, Kate has written several episodes of the Emmy-winning animated series *Beat Bugs* for Netflix and was co-developer and writer on the internationally lauded series *Upright* for Lingo Pictures.

Kate's life story has been covered onscreen in the documentaries *Australian Story* and *One Plus One* and on Australia's current affairs show *7:30 Report*.

Coco Jack Gillies

One of Australia's most accomplished and sought-after young talents. Her list of credits include the lead role of Olivia in the feature film *Oddball* (2015), *Mad Max: Fury Road* (2015) as Hope, and the voice of Maya in the animated feature *Maya the Bee Movie* (2014).

In 2022, Coco's television roles included surf drama *Barons* playing Tania Sanderson and Zoe in *After The Verdict*. She played Emma in the American TV series *Camp* (2013), and Megan

Davies in the six-part Foxtel series *Devil's Playground* (2014). Other credits include her role as mob boss Kovak in the 2017 web series *Skinford* (2017). Coco's theatre credits include The Australian Shakespeare Company's *Wind in the Willows*, *The Trolleys* for ATYP and *1984* for the Sydney Theatre Company.

The feature film *Ruby's Choice* was released in 2022, in which Coco co-starred with Jane Seymour, Jacqueline McKenzie, and directed by Michael Budd.

6. Sam Neill Interview

Who is Brett Colby and how would you sum him up as a character?

He's old school and he's been in the law profession for many years. He's a very successful barrister and works assiduously for his clients, so he's the sort of man you want on your side. I found him quite amusing and my characterisation is kind of based on two or three barristers I know who love the sound of their own voice and are very good at what they do. He's a familiar figure if you're in any way familiar with the courts system.

What did you most enjoy about playing him?

He loves to be a man who commands the room and that was fun to play. He's very smart at cross-examination. One slip and you're dead when he's cross-examining you. He's a clever man and I enjoyed playing such a clever chap who is loquacious and can put one word in front of another. I've played a lot of silent blokes over my career who don't say much but Brett is a man who loves the English language.

Did you do any research into the law profession?

I'm not sure if I needed to really because I'm kind of a frustrated lawyer myself. At one stage I thought I'd like to be a barrister when I was at university. I started doing a double degree. I did a BA in English and started an LLB in law but law is taught in an incredibly dull way. It sent me to sleep. It's just learning cases by rote and why they teach it that way completely baffles me. Perhaps things have changed since then but God, it was dull fare so I stuck to what I knew - which was English and History and so on - and that's why I ended up doing what I do instead of spending 50 years at the bar.

Going into filming, did you know whether or not Kate Lawson [played by Kate Mulvany] was guilty?

I didn't know, no, but then again that's not Brett's job. I don't know if this is the right word but it's a matter of indifference to defence lawyers as to whether their client is guilty or not. They have to do the best they possibly can in their client's defence and knowing if they're guilty or not probably hinders that. It's better if they're neutral because they're simply there to advocate.

Why do you think audiences love a courtroom drama?

That's an interesting question but it's possibly like submarine films. You've got a lot of people in a confined space and there's a lot at stake. When it comes to drama, that is also what's happening in courtrooms. People's lives and people's futures are at stake. There are also themes of justice and fairness, which are things that really matter. Also, you'll find all of humankind in a courtroom, from the basest criminal to the most high-minded judge. There's a

full spectrum if you walk into a courtroom, particularly when it's a very dramatic case like this one.

What makes The Twelve unique among shows in the genre?

I don't think I've seen anything like this before, where the lives of the jurors are as important to the plot as anything else. How those lives intersect with the future of the accused is a very important story and they all have very different, very diverse backgrounds. Some of them have very difficult lives, for one reason or another, so you have one drama happening in the courtroom and 12 other dramas happening in different houses all over the city.

Have you ever done jury duty yourself?

I've never been called up but of course millions of people are, so it's something people need to think about. What would you do in these circumstances? How would you judge a person? And who are you to judge someone else? Those are interesting questions to ask yourself.

You must get offered lots of projects. What made you say yes to this one?

I found the story very intriguing. I know some of the rest of the cast and I think they're very good. And I'd worked with a couple of the directors before and I like them a lot. So, I thought 'Yeah, sounds good, I'll do this'. I read three of the scripts and decided on the strength of those that I wanted to do it.

How do you feel about it going out in the UK after all the praise and awards for it in Australia?

I think people will relate to it very strongly in the UK. The jury system is, of course, in its origin British, I believe, and they're very fond of the jury system - if 'fond' is the right word - in Britain. There are all sorts of things in the story that are humanly relatable wherever you are in the world. It surprised me how big a response we got to it in Australia. People really loved it and that was very rewarding.

Given the edge-of-the-seat storyline, it really lends itself to binge-watching, doesn't it?

It does, yes. [Laughs] The funny thing is that it was on a platform called Binge in Australia but the episodes were released one week at a time. People were complaining to me, going 'It's called Binge but we can't binge the show'. They were intrigued by what happened next and frustrated at having to wait to find out. I do think binge-ing is the way to go. Once you're hooked on a series you really don't want to have to wait another week for the next instalment.

You started out in television in the early 70s. How has the medium evolved since then?

Television has changed a lot. Long-form television like this, across ten hours, has become colossal really. At the same time - and I think this is something to be regretted - cinema has diminished a bit. There's a lot of energy and a lot of money going into long-form drama. Covid, isolation, quarantine and those sorts of things have highlighted how it works well for people. Bingeing television has become something that everybody does. It's impossible to go out to dinner with friends now without them going 'What have you been watching?' It's the common currency at the moment, isn't it? You hear it much more than people asking 'Have you seen any good movies lately?'

You've had such a long and varied career. Is it possible for you to pick a few highlights?

I've just finished my book *Did I Ever Tell You This?*, which is stories of my life, and as we speak I'm doing the audiobook version of it. It's rather more work than I thought it would be. [Laughs] Every day I curse myself for having written at such length because there's so much to do in terms of voicing it. Over two days I've read 100 pages and I've got around 300-and-something to go.

It's given me an opportunity to look back on all my years in the business and while I suppose there have been highlights, the main highlight for me is that I've actually had a career at all and that it has lasted so long. I made my first film more than 45 years ago and that's a really long time. So that's the highlight for me - that I've had a career and this bizarre longevity.

Is there a secret to having longevity in the acting business?

Staying alive is a good one. It also helps to have a good work ethic and trying to get on with people is another good thing. Don't be the a***** on the set!

7. Kate Mulvany Interview

Where do we find Kate at the start of the show?

When we first meet her, she's in deep trouble. She has been accused of the murder of her 15-year-old niece, so she is thrust into the spotlight. As a very famous Australian photographic artist she's already used to the spotlight but this time it's for the wrong reasons. As a character she's incredibly complicated. She does very challenging and confrontational work that often gets her in the press, again maybe for the wrong reasons.

There's a real love/hate relationship towards Kate in the public eye but behind the scenes she's a loving aunt, she's a good sister, she's a fabulous artist but also, she's a deeply complicated woman with a very traumatic past.

What hooked you in about the show?

I guess I'd never seen a character like her before. She isn't a good character and she isn't a bad character, and she's so chewy - by which I mean she's not easy to swallow. I didn't necessarily like her and I was fascinated by that. I wanted to challenge myself and for viewers to go 'What do you think of her and what are your biases towards this woman?' as well as exploring what my own biases towards her were. She's a delicious character. I hadn't seen anything like that on the page before.

Did you know going into it whether Kate is guilty or innocent?

No, I didn't, although I wanted to know at first. Sam Neill didn't want to know, of course. He was like a typical lawyer on screen and off. He said 'I don't want to know; I just want to work through the episodes. The episodes were coming in week to week so we didn't really know where it was going to go, although I had my hopes. I really hoped Kate didn't do it but I'll leave it up to the viewers to discover if she did or didn't.

The amazing thing about her is: What is an act and what isn't? She has a costume that she appears to the public in, even away from trouble in her everyday working life, so when she

gets into trouble what is her costume? How does it serve her or how does it not serve her? Is she performing in court or just being herself? I drew on a lot of public court cases, where women in particular are judged a little bit differently because of the way they look and whether they cry or don't cry in the courtroom. I tried to bring a lot of that to Kate in the moment, not even knowing if she was guilty or not. I wanted it to be as immediate as possible in whatever scene we were playing.

Why do you think audiences love a courtroom drama?

A really good one will have an element of 'There but for the grace of God go I'. We all make bad choices that could easily lead us into trouble, so it could be us in the dock. We could also easily be one of the jurors and that's what this show does so well. It follows the jurors and their home lives. It's like 12 Angry Men, only this time it also includes women jurors and this time we get to follow them home. It makes you wonder 'I don't know how Kate Lawson's case is gonna go if this person on the jury is going through all that at home'. There's something fascinating about this particular court case and the show isn't just focussed on the defendant, it's also focussed on the people who are choosing what the rest of her life is going to be.

Have you ever done jury duty yourself?

No, never, and I don't think I'd be able to do it after doing this show. I'd have to argue that I'm now too biased against the system. So far, I've been lucky enough never to have been called up.

Does the fact the show revolves around an accused female set it apart from other courtroom dramas?

Yes, it does, especially when it's someone accused of doing something as heinous and unusual as Kate has been. A really important aspect of this show is how we judge women on the stand as opposed to men. With Kate it comes down to how many buttons she has undone, what colour lipstick she's wearing and why does she look a bit strange? She has a very strong, different look that can be challenging to some people. Outside the courtroom she's seen as arty but inside the courtroom her image takes on a more sinister aspect, at least to some.

How did the hair and clothes inform your performance?

It was amazing. We had an incredible team where I said: 'I want to go really blonde. I want to bleach my eyebrows and shave my head. I want bold red lipstick and no other make-up.' I was lucky enough to have a team that went: 'Go for it. The more alien we can make her look the harder it will be for her and the more dramatic the journey will be.' It's up to the viewers to see through the mask that Kate adopts for herself. It also makes her so uncompromising. It's sort of a middle finger to the system in a way. She goes through a few different looks throughout the show, depending on how she's feeling, but ultimately, she's just being herself.

Were you familiar with the Belgian series De Twaalf on which The Twelve is based?

I watched the first three episodes and it was so spectacular, such a brilliant series, but I didn't want to try and emulate it. Ours is equally spectacular but it stands on its own and it's very different in terms of the court case.

Were there things you were interested to learn about the criminal justice system?

So many things. The look stuff and how to present yourself surprised me in terms of women defendants. Even though Kate is a well-known public figure she is still told: 'You have to change the way you look. As a woman you cannot look like that when you take the stand.' The psychological stuff that the show gets into surprised me too - just how deeply psychological a lot of lawyer-and-client relationships are. It was beautiful to explore that with the fabulous Sam Neill. I also didn't know much about our jury system, the intricacies of it and what jurors are and aren't allowed to do. You put all that together in a single room and it's a maelstrom of drama and humour a lot of times as well.

Speaking of Sam Neill, how is it working with such a legend?

It's an absolute dream. You go in thinking 'I can't possibly work with Sam, he's too much of a legend' but he's got such a familiar face and such a beautiful energy, and that relaxes you. He's wickedly funny and devilishly handsome, and he's a delight. He loves to play and he's incredibly supportive, especially with younger actors. We have some actors on the show for whom this is their first big job and he really took them under his wing. He's just a wonderful presence to have on set.

How do you feel about it going out in the UK after all the praise and awards for it in Australia?

I'm excited because my family in Nottingham will finally get to see what I do. They were born and bred there and I'm a big Anglophile. I think UK audiences will relate to the show because our legal system in Australia is similar to the British one, rather than what we see in American legal dramas. There's an alliance there and it will be a lot more familiar to British viewers than, say, American courtroom dramas.

Given the edge-of-the-seat storyline, it really lends itself to binge-watching, doesn't it?

Yes, absolutely. There were a lot of people in Australia who waited until it was all out so they could binge it. It must have been frustrating each week to go 'Oh no, we'll have to wait another week to see what happens' in that old school way. Binge away, I say!

After the success of *The Twelve*, *Hunters* and *Elvis*, do you feel you're having a seminal career moment? It was sad that we had to go through the pandemic but it's also cracked the world open a little bit to what everyone else is doing in other countries. There was a great need for content when we sat there on our couches, got to the end of our bingeing of one series and wondered 'What else is out there?' As a result, we've become more aware of what other countries are doing in terms of television. The array and depth of storytelling around the world is amazing. I think that might be why I'm having a bit of a moment and it helps to be working with the likes of Al Pacino and Sam Neill. And hopefully it won't be too long before I'm back in the UK working again. I recently did *Better Man* there, which is the Robbie Williams biopic. I play his mum Janet and I'm a Robbie fan, even more so after I got to meet him on the film set. I've been a fan ever since I went to see Duran Duran supporting him on tour. I went in thinking 'Who is this young upstart getting Duran Duran to support him?' and when I saw him perform, I thought 'Now I understand'.

What have been your career highlights so far?

Because I started out primarily as a stage actress, playing Richard III was a very important

one for me. I have his exact spinal disability so that was a pretty profound experience. That led to some incredible screen work including Hunters, where I got to hang out with Pacino and talk mostly about what it's like to play Richard III because Pacino is a Richard III fanatic. There are so many highlights and The Twelve will always glow brighter than most because Kate is such a rare gift of a character to get to explore.

8. Approved clips from episode 1

Clip 1 : <https://youtu.be/2WrxgW4NNHY>

Clip 2: <https://youtu.be/KhxA1LLViUo>

Clip 3: https://youtu.be/53vZZb9c8_Q

Clip 4: <https://youtu.be/MN4G4OuiE0Y>