

EMILY BEECHAM



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You'd be pressed to find a busier actor than **Emily Beecham** at the moment. The British actor has several projects being released this year, including **Disney's Cruella** and **The Pursuit of Love**. Calling in to the interview from a hotel room in Warsaw while quarantining for a new project, Emily is using her success to find roles that speak to her and isn't showing any signs of slowing down.



Emily Beecham caught up with Rollcoaster to discuss her current projects, the benefits of escaping her comfort-zone, and complex female characters. Recently winning a Palme d'Or for her role as Alice in Little Joe, the industry is taking notice of her incredible talent. Whether you're watching TV or a film, we're all going to start seeing a lot more of Emily Beecham.

HP Henry Petrillo: You're one of the few actors that was able to keep working through Covid - what was that experience like?

EB Emily Beecham: We were filming The Pursuit of Love July through to December, so we were sort of away from reality in the 1940s. We were taking two Covid

tests a day and there was always the risk we would have to stop. We were really lucky, but it was a very eerie and difficult experience.

HP As someone that has been able to play a very diverse range of complex women - do you feel like the industry is more interested in creating more dynamic female characters?

EB I think female characters have been quite limited in the past, which has made them quite boring and predictable. Now, people are realizing there is an interest in creating characters for women that are real, and relatable, and human, who are multifaceted. Women that have contradictions, that aren't perfect

make for more interesting characters. The popularity of films and TV shows that don't rely on these superficial versions of women has shown that the interest in those type of characters exists, which is fantastic.

HP Did you feel an added pressure working on one of your latest projects, Cruella, because of the fan-base the franchise already has?

EB It was really fun to work on a project that so many people were familiar with and love. All the costumes and set were really inspiring, which supported me doing my job to play the character truthfully. The director, Craig Gillespie (I, Tonya and Lars and the Real Girl), wanted a very realistic acting style, very natural



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even with the cartoonish aesthetic of the film, which created a good contrast and keeps it real. And I also got to drive around in little 1950s gear shift Mini, which also made it a really fun project to work on.

HP You have worked on TV series, *The Badlands* and *The Pursuit of Love*, and films, *Little Joe* and *Cruella* - is there a medium you have a preference for?

EB I think regardless of the medium, each project is

different because each director has their own style. What stands out to me is that after playing Daphne and the nominations from *Little Joe* I have had more freedom to choose jobs more selectively to my personal taste. Even though *The Pursuit of Love* is a TV series, it felt very filmic because there was a lot of film actors working on it and it felt like filming three separate films because its format is a three-part episodic drama. It's a bit like cross-country running instead of a sprint, which I think the main difference.

HP Is there a particular project you've done recently that you are most excited for people to see?

EB I think *The Pursuit of Love* will be actually the tonic that people need right now. It is a complete departure from our time into the war period, which makes it really compelling escapism. *The Pursuit of Love* was considered quite a radical book at the time when it came out and I think it still is in many ways. It is about sexual politics and adulthood and aging and friendship and sex and ambition while also managing to be really



funny. Nancy Mitford's writing is really witty and sharp, but she has a very satirical humor with edgier, darker undertones to it. The book was a favourite of many people of her writing. I guess it is about adults growing up and the evolution of relationships with really colorful characters in it along the way. So I'm excited for people to see it. It also got this amazing playlist, compiled by Emily Mortimer's brother-in-law. There is everything from Liza Minnelli, Nina Simone to Nikki Pope, Grace Jones to Bach, which really represents the goal to have quite a thorough quality and for it to feel timeless.

HP Do you consider a particular genre or style to be your comfort-zone?

EB Every experience has been different. The work is always about understanding the character's background and where they come from and doing the research to make that character come to life. I will always try to new things, new roles to keep learning. I don't have a set comfort zone; I think one of the most interesting parts of my job is working with different actors and directors on something new.

HP After all the business you've had working on so many projects - what do you have your sights on next?

EB 1899, and I'll be filming until autumn. And in general, I really just to enjoy what I do try and to stay authentic. This time-out has been really helpful to reflect on where you are or what it is you want to do in order to be true to yourself. This industry can pull you this way and that way, and I am keen to stay rooted and just be a kind person to myself and others.

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