

Actress and playwright, Gemma Kane

Tell me about how you first got into acting.

I have always been interested in storytelling. When I was younger, I would always write stories and perform them. When I was thirteen, there was an ad on the radio for The Irish Film academy. It was a ten-week course and there was a lot of theatre involved. Every 6-8 weeks we would put a show on in the New Theatre, that we had written ourselves. I loved it; I knew I didn't want to do anything else.

How did you make the transition to play wright?

When I studied at The Gaiety School of Acting, in a module called Manifesto, you have to write a new piece of theatre every week. Claire Maguire came to see one of mine called 48. She agreed to direct my play, for profit share, if I finished writing it. That really pushed me to write the play.

What advice would you give to someone starting out?

To be kind to each other- it's a very harsh industry and the powers above have a lot of control over you. You are constantly auditioning and rejection can weigh heavy on your mind. The competition of it can turn nasty. Ask for the best - Go to the people who you dream of working with and ask them. Why not? The worst they can say is no. Try to create your own work, so you're never waiting for the phone to ring and you have purpose. Once you are a writer in theatre, you are constantly making work for yourself. It's not always paid work, but it pays off in the end.

Gemma's upcoming play, "This is not a Cult" directed by Owen Collins, is running in the Boy's School in the Smock Alley Theatre, Dublin, from the 9-14th of December 2019.

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