



60 SECONDS WITH... **KATHRYN PURKIS** **CHAMBERS** **DIRECTOR** **SERLE COURT**



Q What Would You Be Doing If You Weren't Chambers Director?

A Over the years the answer to this question has ranged between author, interior designer, psychotherapist, building conservationist and antique jeweller. But things move on. Writing now seems like a huge and solitary project, all in your head; I'd be a dreadful therapist, always dictating what people should do; and I'm not sure my eyesight is up to antique jewellery these days! In short, I'm happy where I am, but still like beautifying the house.

Q What Is One Of Your Greatest Work-Related Achievements?

A Reinventing myself from barrister to the role I have now.

Q What Personality Trait Do You Most Attribute To Your Success?

A If I have success at all: probably my reforming zeal and (fairly) big stick energy.

Q You've Been Granted A Ticket To Another Country Of Your Choice. Where Are You Going And Why?

A Ha! I might try and trade it in for cash and do my own version of Race Across the World and see a few more countries than one, from ground level. I think I'd choose South America (or Chile if I had to pick one) for the dramatic beauty and the good wine.

Q Do You Have A New Year's Resolution, And If So, How Do You Plan To Keep It?

A Get home in time for dinner at 7.30 – by remembering that almost everything will keep until the morning but my partner's good humour.

Q Dead Or Alive, Which Famous Person Would You Most Like To Have Dinner With, And Why?

A Oh, I'd be grateful for dinner with anyone who'd achieved success or prominence in any field. I'd always like to know how they did it, and what they think about the relevance of their contribution. I'd imagine creatives would talk about routine, practice, and seeing themselves with reference to a canon (in or out of it). As for politicians – that is so much about being able to connect and respond to a changing situation, in the present, but in so doing they shape the future for better or worse. For example, I wonder what Thatcher would think now about the extent of overseas ownership of our key infrastructure (utilities, transport and so on), and of our diminishing power.

Q What Does The Perfect Weekend Look Like?

A A trip on the Eurostar to a European city, maybe with some friends, or a concert at the Wigmore Hall followed by Sunday lunch in our wonderful local.

Q What Is The One Thing You Could Not Live Without?

A Aneurin George Shepherd (aka Nye, Corgiboy), age 5. He is the best dog there ever was. If I had to choose a superpower, it would be knowing what animals are really thinking, and I'd mostly want to use it around him. I dread to imagine the sass I'd hear.

Q Do You Have Any Hidden Talents?

A I don't cultivate it much, but probably singing. And cooking with spices. I know what my anti-talent is: anything athletic or gymnastic. My partner weeps with laughter every Olympics, imagining me up there, humiliating myself on the pommel horse or over the hurdles and becoming one of those catastrophic Youtube videos.

Q What Advice Would You Give To Your Younger Self?

A Become a runner in your early teens, when it's easy, and keep going. Write that diary – you'll want to remember what you did and how you felt, better than you'll turn out to be able to. Prioritise your hobbies. Trust your instincts. Take your time. Have fun!

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