

TELEVISION TIFFANY BAKKER

Real somebody

Bridget Everett puts the average Joe into small town life

Recently, Manhattan, the small Kansas town where performer Bridget Everett grew up – and which is so beautifully depicted in her critically acclaimed TV series, *Somebody Somewhere* – held a Bridget Everett Day.

“They had this Bridget Everett Day in my hometown,” Everett says with a smile during an interview in New York where she has lived for close to 30 years.

“And we had a little stage set up in City Park and a bunch of people came out and all spoke about what the show meant to them. It was really gratifying.”

For Everett, who has had a complicated relationship with her hometown, the recognition felt, well, good.

“There was a time in my life when I didn’t go home for five years, I was just so turned off by it, and I had – not strained relationships with some of my family – but just sort of distant,” Everett recalls.

“My older brother, Brad, lives there and he’s like a real family guy; he’s got a firm handshake, he talks about the stock market ... I don’t know what the f--- he talks about most of the time because it all sounds like brown noise to me,” she laughs.

“But Brad is really community based, and he is all about his family, and I have a whole new appreciation for that and what that means and how that’s fulfilling and how there’s nothing wrong with that, and it’s actually kind of great.”

Indeed, *Somebody Somewhere* – now entering its third and final season – shows the beauty in everyday life in a way few TV shows have ever done. Yes, it’s that good.

The story centres on Sam (Everett), who moves back to her Kansas hometown, dealing with the grief of losing her sister to cancer (Everett’s real-life sister, Brinton, died of cancer in 2008), and navigating tricky family dynamics including her unpredictable alcoholic mother. Eventually, Sam finds her people in a community of outsiders “who don’t fit in but don’t give up”.

Everett’s longtime friend, actor Mary Catherine Garrison, who plays Sam’s on-screen sister, Tricia, says the show beautifully depicts the complexities of family life and what happens when your friends become your family.

“Years ago, Bridget and I were roommates (in New York) and then we became chosen family, and we had a group of friends who were part of this family,” Garrison says.

“There are things that your blood family can’t give you and there are things that people that you choose to have in your life bring that only they can, and I think there are a lot of people that that really resonates with.”

“I think one of the many things that attracts them to this show is seeing that play out like that, and seeing how family can look like so many different things.”

The show has also earned plaudits for its depiction of LGBTQ+ characters including Jeff Hiller’s mesmerising performance as Sam’s best friend, Joel, a gay man who grapples with his Christian faith and New York Drag King and



transgender actor, Murray Hill, whose wedding to girlfriend Susan forms the centrepiece of season two.

“I want people to feel good about seeing themselves back,” Everett says. “But also part of the idea of this show is like, if I didn’t live in New York – if I still lived in Kansas – these are the people I would find; the same kind of people that I found in New York, your Freds, your Joels ... because those are the people that I love and that populate my real life. So, to me it felt like, it wasn’t like trying to make any point, it was more that those are my friends and those are the people that I like to be around – so that’s the show.”

Everett is a downtown legend in New York, regularly performing her cabaret act to sold out audiences in the city. In *Somebody Somewhere*, Sam finds solace and connection in singing and Everett’s magnificent voice is used around some of the show’s most moving moments. (Watch Everett and Hiller perform Peter Gabriel and Kate Bush’s *Don’t Give Up* in episode one of the first season, and I dare you not to cry!)

Garrison says getting the opportunity to watch her good friend up close has been inspiring.

“Bridget is riveting and her being as good as she is, is such a testament to



Bridget Everett and Mary Catherine Garrison in the final season of *Somebody Somewhere*; Everett stars as Sam Miller in the comedy; and the comedian in New York City.

SOMEBODY SOMEWHERE streams on Binge from Monday, available through Hubbl



her, to the way she has spent her life, taking chances on herself and trusting herself ... It’s one of the most inspiring things I have ever seen,” Garrison says. “Watching Bridget become a producer and writer and watching the people that you love – your friends – be so good at something is everything.”

Prior to *Somebody Somewhere*, Everett had small roles in *Trainwreck* (alongside friend, Amy Schumer), *Pattie Cakes* and *Fun Mom Dinner*. She also made a memorable cameo in the first *Sex and the City* movie as a drunk woman applying to be Carrie Bradshaw’s assistant.

She says she would be open to more acting roles if “it felt right”.

“I don’t want to do anything right now unless it’s the right thing because I feel pretty confident and pretty good right now – not like grossly,” Everett laughs.

“But the next thing has to be a good fit for me, or it will all – like a house of cards – come crashing down and that will affect my stage performing and that will affect my personal life,” she says.

“I’m just walking like the tiniest little bit of dental floss right now, trying to be like, ‘OK, we’re doing OK, we’re doing OK.’”

“Somebody could literally take some nail scissors and (makes snipping sound) it could all fall down.”

So how is she navigating the intense emotions around the end of the show?

“I think the fact that we got to do three seasons of a show that feels very different and kind of like its own tiny little thing is a f---ing miracle,” Everett says.

“I’m just so proud and very, very honoured to have been part of it,” adds Garrison, getting teary.

“I’m on emotional lockdown,” cuts in Everett.

“If I start crying now, I have 12 more hours of talking to people about the show, so I can’t do it!”

What We're Loving Right Now



TO LISTEN

SECRETS OF THE ROYALS

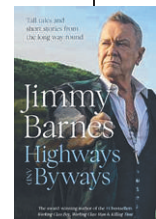
If you’re being swept with regal fervour thanks to King Charles’ visit, dig a little deeper with British journalists and royal enthusiasts Kerry Parnell and Maria Coole as they investigate some of the tragedies that have befallen the royal family. Of course there’s the sad and oft-told demise of Princess Diana, but the more interesting episodes are the lesser known stories, including the short life of Prince John, George VI’s younger brother.



TO WATCH

IT ENDS WITH US

Digital rent or buy
Despite the rumours of a feud between stars Justin Baldoni and Blake Lively, this adaptation of Colleen Hoover’s best-selling romance went gangbusters at the cinema and plays just as well from the comfort of the couch with a box of Kleenex at hand. Lively plays the grief stricken florist Lily Bloom, who falls for suave neurosurgeon Ryle Kincaid (Baldoni), only to discover too late he harbours a dark, possessive and abusive side.



TO READ

HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

HarperCollins, \$45
Anyone who has read Jimmy Barnes’ searing memoirs *Working Class Boy* and *Working Class Man* will already know the Cold Chisel front man has a turn of phrase and openness that combine for riveting reading. His new book – subtitled *Tall Tales and Short Stories From the Long Way Round* – continues that rich vein of form with fabulous stories from a life well (and hard) lived, revelations from his career and family and confronting contemplations of his own mortality.



TO BOOK

PAUL KELLY

After 50 years as one of Australia’s best loved and most revered singer-songwriters, Paul Kelly is having a bit of a moment right now, with new album *Fever Loving*. Still released next Friday, the movie based on his Aussie anthem *How To Make Gravy* out in December and now a national arena tour for next August/September. Kelly will play Brisbane, Sydney, Hobart, Adelaide and Melbourne. Tickets on sale next Wednesday at frontiertouring.com



TO DRINK

GARDEN STREET GIN CLUB

With Australian Gin Day next month, juniper enthusiasts can indulge their passion year round with a club that delivers a new release to your door (boxed up with garnishes, tonics and snacks) for \$99 a month. On offer now is the Wild Tasmanian Gin from Bright Night, which is delicious with tonic or as part of cocktail classics like a French 75. Visit gardenstreet.com.au for details.