

# The Heart of the Beats

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A fictional dramatic feature inspired by  
the women of the **Beat Generation**.

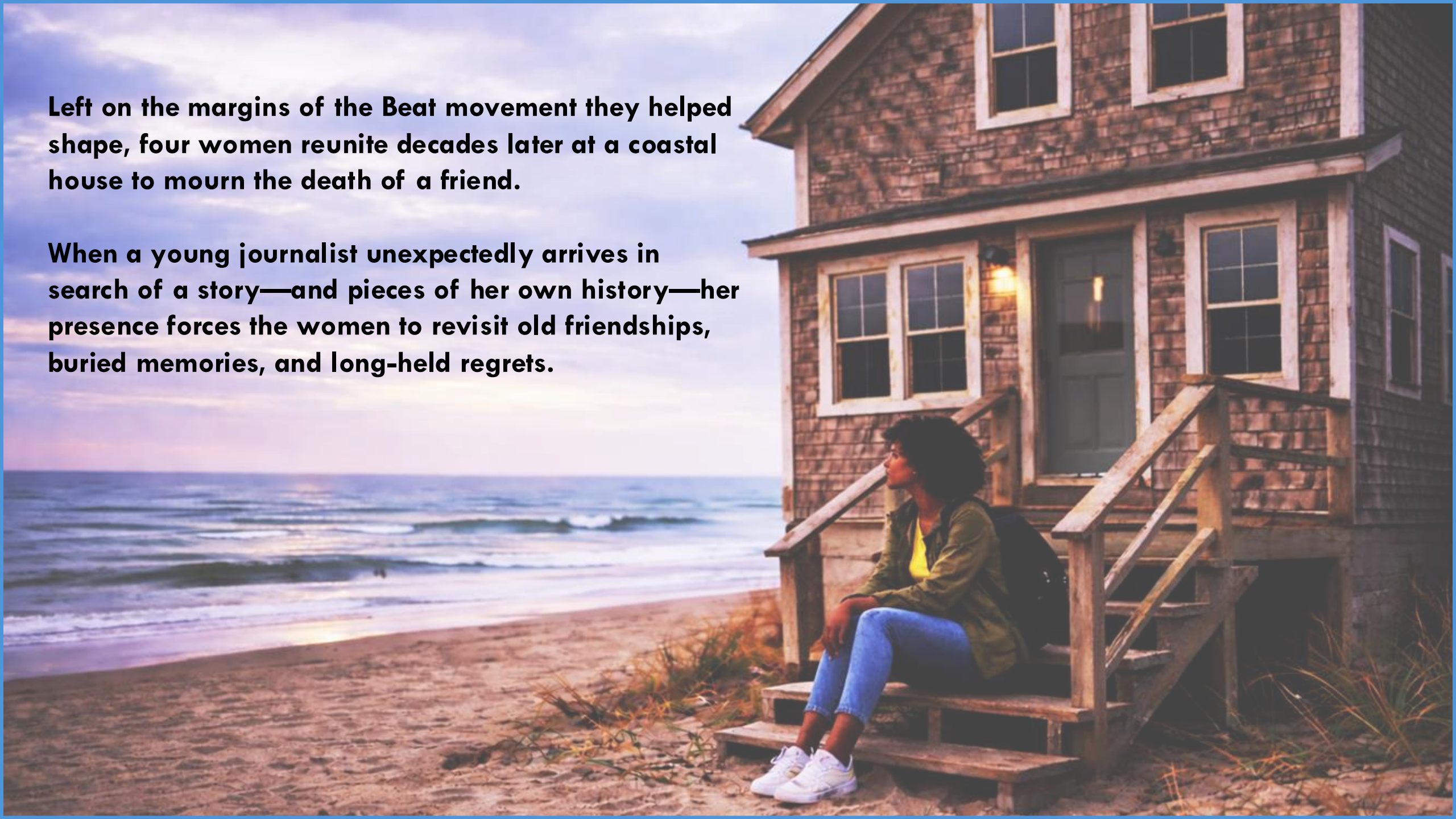
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Written by  
Jennifer Juelich



**Left on the margins of the Beat movement they helped shape, four women reunite decades later at a coastal house to mourn the death of a friend.**

**When a young journalist unexpectedly arrives in search of a story—and pieces of her own history—her presence forces the women to revisit old friendships, buried memories, and long-held regrets.**



## WHY THIS STORY / WHY NOW

- The women of the Beat Generation helped shape a cultural revolution — yet history largely credited the men.
- A long-overdue reassessment of overlooked women artists is underway across literature, film, and academia.
- Intergenerational feminism is redefining legacy, authorship, and ownership of narrative.
- Queer elder lives remain largely invisible on screen.
- In an era of cultural correction, the question of who gets remembered — and who disappears — feels urgent.

## STORY OVERVIEW

**After the death of their former friend Carol Duncan, four aging writers reunite at the remote seaside house that once sheltered their Beat-era ambitions. The house holds more than memory: Carol's sudden disappearance decades earlier fractured the group and left wounds none of them fully confronted.**

**When a young journalism student arrives searching for the forgotten women of the Beat movement—and for answers about her own mother—the fragile equilibrium begins to unravel. Old loyalties, buried resentments, and unanswered questions resurface as the women confront the compromises and losses that shaped their lives.**

**When a violent coastal storm traps them together overnight, the past can no longer remain unspoken. By morning, the truth of Carol's life after them emerges. History itself is not rewritten, but something quieter is acknowledged—what was endured, what was lost, and what remains.**

## THEMES

- **Women who helped build a cultural movement — yet were left out of its legacy.**
- **Abandonment — by a friend, by a revolution, by time.**
- **Chosen family and the fragility of artistic sisterhood.**
- **The tension between survival and artistic compromise.**
- **Queer identity and invisibility across generations.**
- **Acceptance — not revision — as a final act of grace.**



## The Women

## **ELEANOR LEVIN (64)**

Professor. Critic. Reluctant witness.

Once the sharpest voice in the room, Eleanor built her identity on intellect and discipline. In the 1950s, she stood shoulder to shoulder with the men of the Beat movement — debating philosophy in smoky bars, reading her work aloud even when the lights were dimmed and the music turned up to drown her out. But history moved forward without her.

Now a respected academic, Eleanor teaches the very era she lived through — careful, composed, and fiercely protective of its narrative. What she cannot protect is the wound Carol left behind. Of all of them, Eleanor took the abandonment most personally.

## AUDREY WALKER (63)

Published author. Quiet survivor.

In the 1950s, Audrey moved through the Beat scene with restraint and observation. Where others burned recklessly, she watched, absorbed, and wrote. A lesbian in an era that demanded secrecy, she learned early how to survive by choosing her moments carefully.

Of the four women, Audrey is the only one who achieved sustained literary success. Her books found publishers. Her name endured. But recognition brought its own burden — a quiet survivor's guilt she rarely speaks aloud.

## JOYCE CLAUSEN (64)

Caretaker. Exile. The one who stayed closest.

In the 1950s, Joyce was fearless — sharp-tongued, curious, and unafraid to test limits. But when the pressures of that life collided with family expectation and cultural fear, she was institutionalized and quietly removed from the world she helped build.

After her release, she returned to Maine — to the small cottage within sight of the seaside house — and never fully left. While the others moved on, Joyce remained tethered to the landscape of their youth, living within view of what once felt like belonging.

## KATIE LAFFERTY (62)

Artist. Peacemaker. The one who chose another life.

In the 1950s, Katie arrived in New York wide-eyed and hungry — a painter from Nebraska determined to call herself an artist without apology. Carol was the first to see it in her, to insist she claim it.

But while the others continued chasing the movement, Katie chose stability. She married, built a family, and slowly stepped away from her work — not because she was asked to, but because life grew louder than art.

She is the gentlest among them — and often the bridge between fracture and repair.

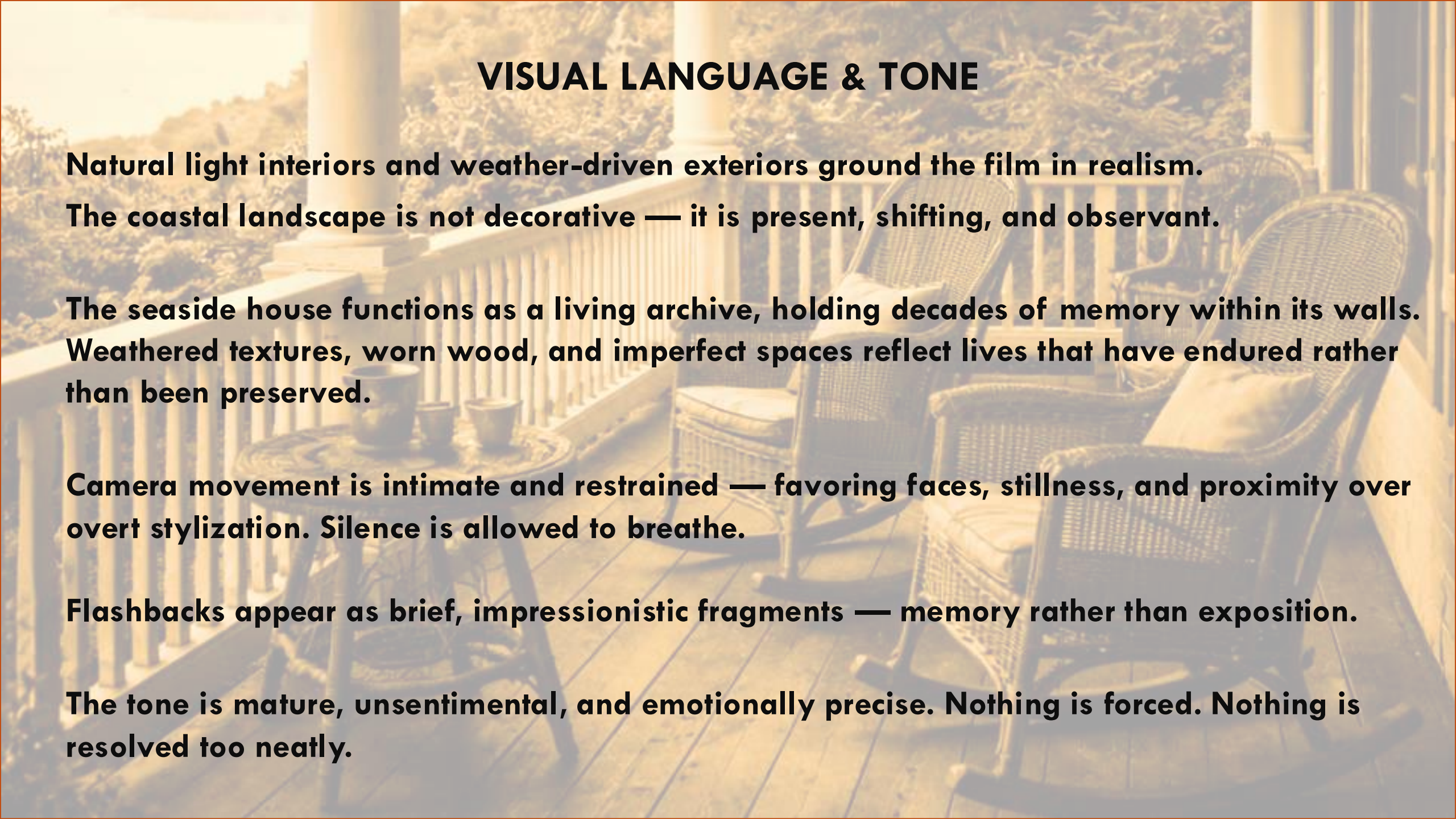
## **TOMEKA HARRIS (early 20s)**

Journalism student. Daughter. Inheritor of silence.

Tomeka arrives at the seaside house claiming to write about the forgotten women of the Beats, but she is searching for something more personal — the truth her mother never shared.

Raised by Carol Duncan in New Mexico, Tomeka grew up between two worlds — a mixed-race daughter in a story that was never fully told. She knows the revolution only by its residue, not its reality.

Her presence does not rewrite history. It asks the questions that were never answered.

The background image is a warm, golden-hour photograph of a wooden balcony. In the foreground, there are several wicker chairs and a small round table with some items on it. The balcony has a white railing. In the background, there is a view of a coastal landscape with trees and a body of water under a soft, hazy sky.

## **VISUAL LANGUAGE & TONE**

**Natural light interiors and weather-driven exteriors ground the film in realism.**

**The coastal landscape is not decorative — it is present, shifting, and observant.**

**The seaside house functions as a living archive, holding decades of memory within its walls. Weathered textures, worn wood, and imperfect spaces reflect lives that have endured rather than been preserved.**

**Camera movement is intimate and restrained — favoring faces, stillness, and proximity over overt stylization. Silence is allowed to breathe.**

**Flashbacks appear as brief, impressionistic fragments — memory rather than exposition.**

**The tone is mature, unsentimental, and emotionally precise. Nothing is forced. Nothing is resolved too neatly.**



## **PRODUCTION STRATEGY**

**The film is designed as a contained, performance-driven ensemble drama.**

- **One primary coastal house location**
- **Limited secondary locations (cottage, local bar, beach)**
- **18–21 day shoot schedule**
- **Ensemble-blocked scheduling to maximize efficiency**
- **Natural light aesthetic to reduce heavy lighting setups**
- **Weather-integrated storm sequence using practical interior effects and sound design**
- **Impressionistic flashbacks shot economically with minimal production footprint**
- **Lean, experienced crew**

# AUDIENCE & POSITIONING

## Primary Audience

- Women 35+
- Literary and art-house audiences
- LGBTQ+ viewers
- Festival-driven independent film audiences

## Secondary Audience

- Academia and literary communities
- Streaming platforms with prestige catalogs
- Intergenerational viewers interested in cultural history

## Positioning

**A contained, performance-driven ensemble drama positioned for the festival circuit and prestige streaming acquisition. Character-focused storytelling with strong roles for women 60+ — an underserved demographic with awards potential.**



ROONEY MARA CLAIRE FOY JESSIE BUCKLEY JUDITH IVEY WITH BEN WHISHAW AND FRANCES McDORMAND

A FILM BY SARAH POLLEY  
FROM THE PRODUCERS OF MOONLIGHT AND NOMADLAND

"ONE OF THE CINEMATIC EVENTS OF THE YEAR"  
INDIEWIRE

★★★★★  
Flickering MYTH

"UNLIKE ANY FILM YOU'VE SEEN BEFORE"  
VARIETY

★★★★★  
ROBBIE COLLINS, DAILY TELEGRAPH

"A BREATHTAKING ENSEMBLE"  
THE WRAP

★★★★★  
TIME OUT

"AN INCREDIBLY POWERFUL STORY"  
THE TIMES MAGAZINE

★★★★★

CURZON ARTIFICIAL EYE

OSCAR® NOMINATED  
BEST ACTRESS  
CHARLOTTE RAMPLING

BAFTA® NOMINATED  
OUTSTANDING BRITISH FILM



The Telegraph



The Times



The Evening Standard



Financial Times

# 45 YEARS

CHARLOTTE RAMPLING TOM COURTENAY

A FILM BY ANDREW HAIGH



"Restrained, thoughtful and full of true emotion... a triumph"

Dave Calhoun, Time Out



## COMPARABLE FILMS

*The Heart of the Beats* combines the emotional restraint of *45 Years*, the character-driven intimacy of *Certain Women*, and the female ensemble storytelling of *Women Talking*.

## DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Ensemble films about older women are often framed as comedies — stories about irrelevance or reinvention in a culture that prizes youth. While those films have their place, they rarely reflect the interior reality of women who have lived full artistic and political lives.

*The Heart of the Beats* is not a comedy about aging. It is a drama about legacy, invisibility, and the quiet negotiations that come with time. These women were present for history. They created, argued, loved, compromised, and endured — even when the culture moved forward without them.

I am interested in portraying women in their sixties without caricature or sentimentality. The writing is intentionally restrained, leaving space for subtext and silence. The camera will remain intimate and patient, trusting stillness over excess.

This story does not attempt to rewrite history or manufacture redemption. It seeks acknowledgment. I want the audience to leave with recognition — of women who were there, who created, and who endured.



# PRODUCTION PLAN

*The Heart of the Beats* is a contained feature film about a group of women whose connection to the Beat movement shapes their lives, their choices, and their friendship. Our approach is intimate, character-driven, and true to the era—bringing an authentic story to the screen with care and heart.

## SHOOT PLAN

ESTIMATED SHOOT  
18–22 DAYS

## 5 MAJOR CAST MEMBERS

An ensemble of five women at the heart of the story.

## LEAN & FOCUSED CREW

A small, experienced crew allowing flexibility, efficiency, and the ability to stay out of the way of the story.

## CASTING APPROACH

We will cast talented actors who embody the lived experience of each character with depth, humor, and nuance.

## PRIMARY LOCATIONS

Major Primary Location:  
Coastal Home

Minor Secondary Locations:

- University Classroom
- Local Bar

## AUTHENTICITY FIRST

We will shoot in real locations, use period-appropriate props and wardrobe, and recreate the 1950s world with attention to detail and respect.

## OUR APPROACH

With a lean production model, we can invest in what matters most—outstanding performances, period detail, and immersive storytelling—while keeping the production grounded and efficient.

## MAXIMUM IMPACT

A focused plan ensures every dollar is on screen, creating the highest possible impact for this intimate story about friendship, art, and the choices that shape a life.

## PRODUCTION TIMELINE



## WHY THIS PLAN WORKS



### INTIMATE STORY

A character-driven approach



### REAL ENVIRONMENTS

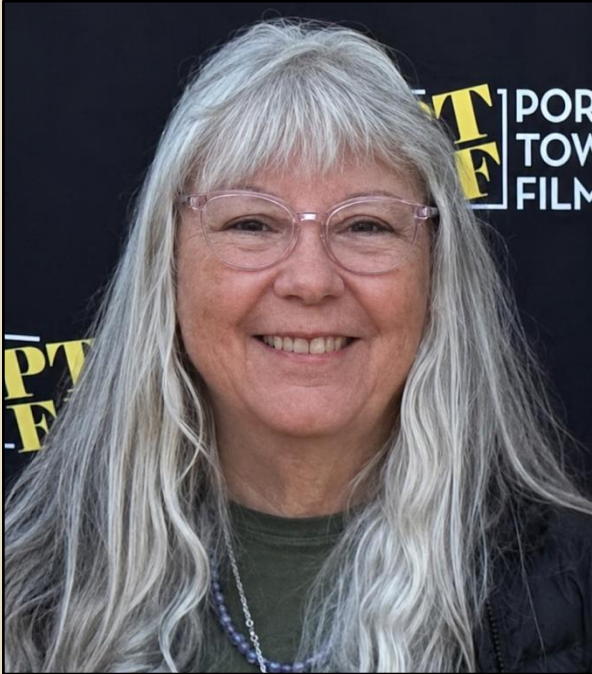
Our selection of real locations—



### TIMELESS THEMES

The film explores friendship,

## ABOUT THE FILMMAKER



Jennifer Juelich is a writer/director based in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Her feature film *Neon Sky* screened at the Sonoma International Film Festival and the Tiburon Film Festival, and her short films have screened at festivals including the San Francisco Independent Film Festival and the Silicon Valley Queer Film Festival.

Her work explores memory, identity, family, and the lives of people often overlooked by history. Through intimate, performance-driven storytelling, she is drawn to characters navigating the distance between the lives they imagined and the lives they ultimately lived.

*The Heart of the Beats* continues that exploration through the story of four women whose contributions to a cultural movement were forgotten, and the young woman determined to remember them.

[www.jenniferjuelich.com](http://www.jenniferjuelich.com) | [Jennifer Juelich IMDbProfile](#)

They were there.  
They created.  
They endured.

