

# Theatrical horror Any Night

**T.L. Reid**

writer

How do you get new audiences into the theatre? For Fringe Theatre Adventures, the answer is simple—scare them. Just in time for Halloween, FTA presents *Any Night*, a psychological thriller from the DualMinds team of Medina Hahn and Daniel Arnold.

Hahn says that *Any Night* takes the performers and audience on an emotional rollercoaster to a darker realm.

"It is an intense show. It's not a light show at all. It's a psychological thriller and a love story melded together," she explains. "It's thrilling, it's scary, it's creepy... and there's a very film structure to it. It jumps time lines, and you have to use your brain."

Developing the piece has been a rollercoaster ride for Hahn and Arnold as well. They started to play with the basic idea – of a young woman who moves into a basement suite, starts a relationship with the guy who lives upstairs, and finds her sleep problems becoming even more disturbed – back in 2002. Initially commissioned by Theatre Network, the script was put aside and then brought back for productions in Victoria, Toronto and Vancouver, with substantial rewrites in between each... and even more changes before opening night in Edmonton.

At the same time they were honing the stage play, Hahn and Arnold have been through two rounds of development for the film adaptation. The first attempt (with an American company) fell through, but the current process (with a Canadian company) is ongoing.

That's a lot of different versions of the characters and story to keep straight. Hahn has learned to keep them completely separate – preferably with a break in between for her to read a book or focus on something new.

"Sometimes it can be confusing if you don't stop and change your focus," she says. "I love discovering

deeper and deeper, and the longer you have to sit with something, the more things come up."

*Any Nights* is the second piece from the duo, who met 13 years ago in the University of Alberta's BFA acting program and found themselves to be a good creative match.

"We would have bets and challenges to push each other further than our comfort zone, just as actors, when we were in school," says Hahn. "That's originally how we began to create together. Sometimes you end up with people in your lives that challenge you or push you to do better or work harder or look at things from other angles."

The summer before their last year, Arnold suggested writing something together. That year-long experiment produced their first play, *Tuesdays and Sundays*.

"We lived across the street from each other and we'd come home from school, both of us, at about 10 p.m. because we were doing shows. I would run across the street, change into my pajamas and run back to his house. We would write until the middle of the night, then I'd go home, sleep, and then we'd get up and go back to school the next day," Hahn reminisces. "And a whole world opened up of creating and touring and writing for ourselves."

That included touring their work to New York City, Prague and Scotland, as well as being mentored by Daniel MacIvor. Sometimes, Hahn realizes how different her career would have turned out if she hadn't returned for to Edmonton.

"Maybe I would have come to creation later, but I probably would have gone the purely acting road, I think," she speculates. "It opened my whole world to the possibilities of what you can do as an artist, and where you can go and who you can meet."

And after working on the film adaptation, she's ready to get back onstage.

"A theatre show is never the same every night. It's alive, and you can



Suppli

Medina Hahn stars in the Fringe's thriller production of *Any Night*

feel an energy in the room between the people onstage, the audience, and [between] the audience members themselves," says Hahn. "I think it hits your body, your mind, your heart right then and right there and it's never the same. It's a 'one night only' kind of experience, and once

it's gone, it's gone. A movie, you can rent it. You can't rent a play."

*Any Night* runs Oct. 21 to 24 at 26 to 31 at 8 pm in the Westbus Theatre (TransAlta Arts Barn building, 10330 84 Ave). Student tickets are \$21 and are available online at [fringetheatre.ca](http://fringetheatre.ca).