

## Any Night full of dread and madness

Edmonton Sun – Colin MacLean

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Any Night begins in the troubled mind of a young woman. She is in the throes of a chaotic waking nightmare. Strange sounds and images pierce the darkness as she writhes on her bed jerking her body into extreme positions.

A man with hands afire walks through the shadows.

Ace director Ron Jenkins has you in the first 10 seconds of this new play by Edmonton actors/writers Daniel Arnold and Medina Hahn.

The two wrote the much produced supernatural romance, Tuesdays and Sundays some 10 years ago and that one has proven to be a durable Canadian hit.

In their new collaboration, they probe deeply into the subconscious, peeling back layers to reveal paranoia, fear and a faltering grip on a fractured life.

After the unsettling beginning, the writers keep us off-balance by blurring the lines between dream and reality. The past, present and future are fluid. You are never sure just what is going on, but, as the 80 (intermission free) minutes rush by, a story begins to emerge.

Any Night is a slender vehicle, a sort of Hitchcock meets The Twilight Zone, enlivened by Jenkins' direction and the electric performances of Hahn and Arnold.

Jenkins and sound designer Gordon Heal place their characters (and the audience) in a nether world of sound. Thunder rolls, words echo, disjointed conversations float out of nowhere and a horrendous car crash repeats over and over.

There is a creepy undertone of barely controlled madness and more than one occasion where you will feel your skin crawl. Jenkins pulls an astonishing number of inspired moves out of his director's hat and keeps the play in almost constant motion, both physically and emotionally. It's amazing what a talented director can do with a couple of drapes, a bed and a staircase on wheels.

Anna (Hahn) is a dancer who suffers from sleepwalking. She can't tell if she is awake or asleep (and neither can we).

Trying to find some peace, she moves into a new apartment where she meets Patrick (Arnold), a sympathetic young man, with a tragic backstory of his own.

He finds himself drawn into her disordered life. But just as you think you have things figured out, the story folds back on itself.

Says Anna. "We live our lives forward, but only understand them backward."

The superlative actors and their production team will keep you involved until the last tense moment. There is lots of atmosphere and genuine dread, but not much depth in this entertaining little horror.

3½ Suns out of Five

Any Night, a production of DualMinds, is presented in the Westbury Theatre in the TransAlta Arts Barns, through Oct. 31.