

## Days and confused

*"Tuesdays and Sundays" follows two young lovers from giddy exhilaration to ultimate frailty in a true 19th-century story given vivid, sepia-toned, expertly theatrical life.*

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Before seeing "Tuesdays and Sundays," it might help to know that it's inspired by a true story. That's not a prerequisite, but it explains why co-stars and co-authors Daniel Arnold and Medina Hahn chose to write a play set in 1887, about love and loss between two young people from a rural community. They were inspired by actual events that happened on Prince Edward Island back then.

In this spirited two-hander, Arnold and Hahn play teenage lovers William and Mary, who awake in a limbo and try to ascertain how they got there. What unravels is a reflective he-said / she-said, told concurrently, as the characters reveal the course of their relationship, from first meeting at a New Year's Eve social to their final dispute.

Since William's and Mary's fates are known from the start, the emphasis isn't on what happens to them but how and why it does. Arnold and Hahn make their characters' transition, from the youthful exuberance and nerves of first love to its somber, brokenhearted aftermath, affecting and unsettling. As is often the case, an unplanned pregnancy creates a rift, and fear and miscommunication — frequently the result of family and friends — turn a carefree relationship into an unbearable one.

Arnold's and Hahn's writing and acting exude naturalness and theatricality. Working off each other and with director Wojtek Kozlinski, they capture the exuberant and anguished inner lives of their characters, without pushing to oversell them to the audience. Catherine Mudryk's sepia-toned set and costumes are as simple and effective and the play itself, with candles burning from a dozen lanterns (this would have been the show to see during the blackout) creating an eerie spiritual atmosphere.

It's refreshing to see a gimmick-free 45-minute production put on by artists who don't seem to be looking for commercial backers for a full-length show. Arnold and Hahn don't need it. The play received numerous accolades in their native Canada, and they're working on a screen adaptation. (The program also mentions that it's being adapted into a chamber opera!) And as enchanting as "Tuesdays and Sundays" is, it also forecasts greater work on the horizon.

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