

Moonlight After Midnight

By Concrete Drops Theatre

PULL QUOTES & DISTINCTIONS

“WEEKLY AWARD FOR BEST THEATRE OF FESTIVAL (Over 1200 shows) -

★ ★ ★ ★ ★: Compelling and intriguing, this sophisticated show is a must for theatre buffs.”
—*The Advertiser, Adelaide, Australia*

“**CRITICS PICK:** “The writing is beautiful and utterly compelling... Quesnelle is spellbinding... They engage in a swirling verbal dance that takes the audience to a completely unexpected place.”—*Pioneer Press, Minneapolis, MN*

“**CRITICS PICK:** “Takes us through 360 degrees of emotion, a full gamut of life, longing and love. A tour de force of writing and acting.”—*City Beat, Cincinnati, OH*

“**CRITICS PICK:** “A lilting slow dance of longing, loss, love and life... There’s magic in this moonlight.”—*Orlando Sentinel*

“**BEST OF FEST:** “A complex & compassionate romantic mystery... Dockery is dynamic, while Quesnelle displays huge emotional range.”—*Orlando Weekly*

“Equal parts fun and compelling, *Moonlight After Midnight* will leave you thinking.”—*Culture Catch, New York, NY*

“★ ★ ★ ★ ★ This elegantly written show turns and turns on itself, like an emotional kaleidoscope.”—*Winnipeg Free Press, MB*

“This play is everything I’ve ever wanted out of theatre. To say that Dockery and Quesnelle’s chemistry is riveting would be an understatement. Don’t miss this play.”—*Capital Critics Circle, Ottawa, ON*

“Yes: dramatic ambition and sophistication. Thank you.”—*The Georgia Straight, Vancouver, BC*

“Terrific chemistry.”—*Vancouver Courier, BC*

“★ ★ ★ ★ Moonlight After Midnight is clever – a sweet, delicate two-hander anchored by nimble acting and a subtle script.”—*Edmonton Journal, AB*

“This mystery about relationships tickled my brain and captivated me from start to finish. The vivid performances by Dockery and Quesnelle, and the chemistry between them, cannot be denied.”—*Plank Magazine, Vancouver, BC*

“The complexity of the story combined with the excellent character work allows this performance to engage both the mind and the soul... These two actors really bring something beautiful to the stage, a natural chemistry.”—*New Ottawa Critics, ON*

“★★★★ The chemistry between Dockery and Quesnelle is electric, playing off each other with a genuine connection.”—*Vancouver Presents, BC*

“A magical performance by Dockery and Quesnelle which captures the essence of theatre, the essence of performativity, perhaps captured better than any other writing for the stage I have ever seen.”—*Capital Critics Circle, Ottawa, ON*

“★★★★½ Dockery and Quesnelle are both talented solo performers, and this bittersweet gem of an hour they crafted is a rare treat.”—*Fringe Review, Edmonton, AB*

“This is the kind of art that changes you.”—*Manhattan With a Twist, New York, NY*

“I was impressed with the way Dockery and Quesnelle gradually drew the audience into the mystery. I was hanging on every word, every emotion, every clue.”—*Apt 613, Ottawa, ON*

“Moonlight After Midnight is one polished show that kept its audience at such rapt attention that you could have heard a pin drop.”—*On Stage Ottawa, ON*

Full reviews and links to the articles are below.

DISTINCTIONS

2016 Weekly Award - Best Theatre

—*Adelaide Australia Fringe Festival*

2016 Best Theatre of Adelaide Fringe

—*The Advertiser newspaper*

2015 Critics Pick Best Show

—*Cincinnati Fringe Festival*

2015 Critics Pick Best Show

—*Orlando Fringe Festival*

2014 Runner-Up Critics Pick

—*Vancouver Fringe Festival*

2014 Best Original Work

—*Ottawa Fringe Festival*

2014 Critics' Choice Honorable Mention

—*Ottawa Fringe Festival*

Winnipeg Free Press

Moonlight After Midnight

Written by: By Martin Dockery - Asper Centre for Theatre and Film (U of W) | Drama | 07/20/2014



Friday evening's thunderstorm was serendipitous, providing a perfectly timed atmospheric underscore, rising and falling in dramatic sync with Martin Dockery's enigmatic drama, *Moonlight After Midnight*. The elegantly written show turns and turns on itself, like an emotional kaleidoscope that changes shape but keeps something familiar every time you twist it. A couple, both familiar and strange to one and other, try to decipher the story that has brought them to a place strangely out of time. Their story shifts and drifts and changes

as they try to settle it into something real.

Vanessa Quesnelle, the mysterious woman who wanders into Dockery's hotel room, is a deep and beguiling presence, giving the drama its emotional centre, keeping Dockery's character, slightly ragged and a little desperate, caught in her orbit. The London, Ont., duo have a polished chemistry that draws their audience in as it draws them together on stage in this 60-minute mystery. — Wendy King

<http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/special/fringe/reviews/Moonlight-After-Midnight-266110281.html>

Moonlight After Midnight (Critic's Pick)

By [Rick Pender](#) · May 28th, 2015 · Cincinnati, OH

Patsy Cline is the muse for Martin Dockery's excellent script, *Moonlight After Midnight*. It's the story of two lonely people who meet in a hotel room, perhaps an anonymous assignation arranged by a phone call. He is bored and waiting; she arrives, and verbal sparring ensues. What is motivating either one is not immediately clear.

They decide to do a bit of role-playing to explore where it might take them, and *Moonlight After Midnight* is off and running — down blind alleys and around unexpected corners as they move like quicksilver from one relationship to another, sometimes happily and sometimes with angst and awkward emotion. Are they acquainted? Are they friends? Are they lovers? Are they married? Are they divorced? Over 55 swift minutes — without ever physically touching until the very last moment — they smoothly move from one moment to another.

Twice an imaginary radio is turned on, given voice by Quesnelle singing a cappella renditions of "Crazy" and "I Fall to Pieces," using Cline's evocative vocal range and yearning phrasing. Her voice distills the emotion that bubbles between them as they slide from one scenario to the next. Searching is the thread that binds them and this script.

By show's end, *Moonlight After Midnight* has taken us through 360 degrees of emotion, a full gamut of life, longing and love. It concludes with Quesnelle sitting alone on the chair where we saw Dockery at the play's beginning. Full circle. But we are full with the feelings that have been explored and expressed. It's a tour de force of writing and acting.

Dockery and Quesnelle, co-founders of Concrete Drops Theatre Company based in New York City, are making their first appearance at the Cincinnati Fringe. But they are veterans of numerous festivals; they have come to Cincinnati straight from Florida, where *Moonlight After Midnight* was named the best show at the Orlando Fringe. Dockery also won Orlando's best-show award a year ago with another script, *The Surprise*. Let's hope they make the Cincy Fringe a regular stop on future Fringe travels across the U.S and Canada.

http://citybeat.com/cincinnati/article-32869-moonlight_after_midnight_%28critics_pick%29.html

By [Matthew J. Palm](#) Orlando Sentinel Theater Critic – May 13, 2015 **CRITICS PICK**

"Moonlight After Midnight" is a lilting slow dance of longing, loss, love and life.

Vanessa Quesnelle and Martin Dockery star in this two-character fictional piece about an unexpected late-night encounter in a hotel room. Or is it unexpected? This, of course, is one of the motifs used in their shows — expertly creating the sense that nothing is by happenstance, things are destined to be. Another trademark, spinning wordplay, is also used to great effect as one character utters a phrase or asks a question, only to have it repeated by the other moments later.

When Quesnelle shows up at Dockery's room, a mystery is set in motion. Who is she? Who is he? The action seemingly shifts through time and place ... or does it? Details add to the sense of something being explored much grander than an awkward meeting: a comet that will only appear twice in 10 years before vanishing into the cosmos forever has a key part to play. And mournful Patsy Cline tunes, hauntingly sung a cappella by Quesnelle, add to the portentous atmosphere, along with effective lighting in the intimate Green venue.

Quesnelle and Dockery, real-life newlyweds, circle each other warily in this disorientating duet but an underlying connection remains. There's magic in this moonlight.

<http://www.orlandosentinel.com/entertainment/arts-and-theater/os-fringe-review-moonlight-after-midnight-20150513-story.html>

Best of the Fest

By [Seth Kubersky](#) – MAY 13, 2015



Moonlight After Midnight

ORLANDO INTERNATIONAL FRINGE THEATRE FESTIVAL through
May 25 | Loch Haven Park | orlandofringe.org | various times and prices orlandofringe.org



A man (Martin Dockery) sits alone in a darkened hotel room. A woman (Vanessa Quesnelle) enters uninvited, singing a Patsy Cline classic. She initially appears surprised to see him, then insists that she is the call girl he phoned for. Despite his denials, they begin a strange circular dance of role-play, alternately pretending to be strangers meeting cute while comet-watching, a newly married couple on their wedding night, and a pair of old lovers reuniting after a decade apart.

To say much more about the plot of *Moonlight After Midnight* would spoil the delicate surprises awaiting inside this complex, confounding and ultimately compassionate romantic mystery. Written by Dockery with dramaturgy by Quesnelle, the script works on multiple levels: It's a fast-talking sex comedy with passionate chemistry between the likable leads; a domestic drama that's fairly realistic despite the strangeness of the scenario; a philosophical debate about our human need for fantasy to facilitate communication; and a meta-commentary on theater that gently skewers both actors and directors.

Fringe vet Dockery is dynamic as always, his signature floppy hair and undulating fingers painting the portrait of a man for whom following the direction to "go with the flow" is harder than it sounds. But by the time we reach the *Twilight Zone*-ish twist, it's clear that this is really Quesnelle's showcase. She displays huge emotional range in her characterizations, from hard-bitten hooker to heartbroken honeymooner, along with a fine singing voice. While *Moonlight After Midnight* may seem at first to be simply an exercise in circular screwball silliness, there's something touching and tragic awaiting inside for those patient enough to unpack this puzzle box's pleasures.

<http://www.orlandoweekly.com/orlando/best-of-the-fest-three-of-our-favorite-fringe-shows-so-far/Content?oid=2395908>



Moonlight After Midnight

April 13, 2015 — Leah Richards, NY, NY - [The Kraine Theater, NYC](http://theatre.krainetheater.com)

A wooden chair, really the only prop onstage in Martin Dockery's *Moonlight After Midnight*, is also the only thing in this mind-bending play that actually remains what it seems from the first. A woman (Vanessa Quesnelle) walks into the hotel room of a man (Martin Dockery). After a tense exchange that suggests that they know and love each other, the lights are turned up, and the woman claims that she has been sent by the "service" that she works for. He reluctantly pays her for her time, paying the way for an encounter during which we never learn either of their names, but which qualifies as a journey of discovery nonetheless, one in which their roleplaying continually reboots.



In the beginning, the characters' seeming misunderstanding rapidly turns meta-theatrical. The woman, who says that her job often involves role-playing to allow people to express or work through things that they otherwise couldn't, replays her entrance, tries to get her companion to establish their characters and to describe the setting, and even acts out the part of a non-existent radio playing sad Patsy Cline love songs. Role-playing, here, though, is far from straightforward, and increasingly takes on

multiple dimensions of meaning. Along the way, *Moonlight* considers the idea of performance not just in but as one's self and life. Is it the case that only an audience makes reality real, as Quesnelle's character, or her character's character, at one point asserts? (And can a person be both actor and his own audience, as she tells the man in the same conversation that he is?) Who exactly these two people are is central as both a literal and an existential question. This is not to say that the characters become ciphers; despite all of the shifting performativity, their interplay retains a grounded emotional core. Dockery and Quesnelle move adroitly through shifts in tone as their characters both tease and tease admissions from one another in sharp, often fast-paced and funny dialogue. Never quite touching one another, the actors generate tension and longing in a series of distinct but overlapping demanding roles.

Moonlight After Midnight keeps the audience wonderfully off-balance. It refuses stability, and its exchanges almost always function on two levels, doubling their referents and calling into question what the audience thinks it knows. (Even the fact that Dockery and Quesnelle mime actions instead of using props permits one to question almost everything -- to take a small example, if the "radio" is a piece of stage improvisation, does he actually even pay her in the beginning? Is the money invisible to us as the audience, or does it not exist? Or is that too binary a question?) One resolution that the play does offer is a final, fraught turn that we won't spoil here. Equal parts fun and compelling, *Moonlight after Midnight* will leave you thinking. - Leah Richards & John Ziegler

<http://culturecatch.com/theater/moonlight-after-midnight>



Moonlight After Midnight

News from Capital Critics Circle

Reviewed by Kat Fournier – June 25, 2014 – Ottawa, ON

The play opens with a man seated on a wooden chair, eyes closed, in an otherwise simple setting. A hotel room, we soon learn. A woman enters, and the audience believes they are witnessing a long awaited reunion. Suddenly, the dialogue shifts and from thereon-in it is impossible to know what is real and what is not. This play uses the fictionality of the stage world to keep the audience guessing, and it is a totally mind-blowing experience. The script toys with the audience, constantly shifting the story so that the line between reality and fiction blurs. But there is a constant: These two characters are meeting on a night where a rare comet can be seen just after midnight. The comet will pass by again in precisely ten years, and so they make a pact. Until the final moment, the play delivers no answers and only more questions. This play is everything I've ever wanted out of theatre. To say that Martin Dockery and Vanessa Quesnelle's chemistry is riveting would be an understatement. Don't miss this play.

Moonlight After Midnight

Written by Martin Dockery

<http://capitalcriticscircle.com/?s=dockery&x=0&y=0>

Moonlight After Midnight has dramatic ambition and sophistication

by [Colin Thomas](#) on Sep 8, 2014

Yes: dramatic ambition and sophistication. Thank you. Monologist Martin Dockery (*Wanderlust*, *The Bike Trip*, and, at this year's Fringe, *The Dark Fantastic*) has also written this two-hander. A woman, who appears to be a prostitute, enters a man's hotel room. Maybe he wants her to pretend to be his wife. But, in this complex meditation on transience and longing, the framing of reality keeps shifting. As an actor, Dockery is still his eccentric, gesticulating self; he's probably never going to disappear into a character. But he and fellow actor Vanessa Quesnelle stay grounded and emotionally true. And Quesnelle's renditions of several of Patsy Cline's songs are haunting: "I go out walkin' after midnight/Out in the moonlight, just like we used to do."

<http://www.straight.com/arts/723776/fringe-fest-2014-moonlight-after-midnight-has-dramatic-ambition-and-sophistication>

VANCOUVERcourier

Moonlight After Midnight - Waterfront Theatre

[Jo Ledingham](#) / Vancouver Courier - September 8, 2014

Back-to-back Martin Dockery for me. A surreal experience. But he's not alone in this show. Billed as a "puzzle piece," Dockery shares the stage with Vanessa Quesnelle. As with *The Dark Fantastic*, Dockery wraps it all up in a surprise ending. Along the way, however, there's lots of parry and thrust between the two characters. It appears the male character has phoned for "a brunette" to come to his hotel room. She's been instructed to pretend to be his wife. He denies the phonecall but is prepared to go along with her, to "go with the flow," an expression he says he's never used but, later, uses. He also says he never "riffs," but does. There's terrific chemistry here; Quesnelle's character gets feisty, Dockery's gets defensive. There's huge pain buried here somewhere and we don't find out why until the very end. It all makes sense in a crazy, fantastical sort of way.

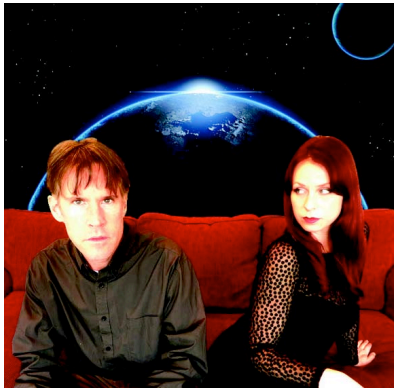
See more at: <http://www.vancourier.com/entertainment/theatre-review-fringe-fest-roundup-pt-1-1.1348157-sthash.IDbckHxh.dpuf>

EDMONTON JOURNAL

Review: Moonlight After Midnight



August 18, 2014



He sits in a dark hotel room. She slips through the open door. They start chatting, then arguing. Do they know each other? Did he hire her as an escort? Or are they just playing games?

“Who are you?” he asks.

For the next 50 minutes or so, actors Martin Dockery and Vanessa Quesnelle slowly reveal each of their several identities in this role-play within a role-play. “I was told it would be a little weird,” she says.

Moonlight After Midnight is not so much weird as clever — a sweet, delicate two-hander anchored by nimble acting and a subtle script.

— Sandra Sperounes

<http://www.edmontonjournal.com/Fringe+Review+Moonlight+After+Midnight/10102332/story.html>

Moonlight After Midnight – An Intellectual Puzzle



Vanessa B Baylen - September 7th, 2014 – Vancouver, BC

Martin Dockery, unbeknownst to me when I sat down to watch “Moonlight After Midnight,” is a fringe icon. Although the blurb of “beautiful woman, mysterious man” didn’t grab me, the concept of an intellectual puzzle play struck me as quite interesting.

The setting, unfailingly, is a hotel room, in which our cast of two dynamically spar throughout. Who they are, and what is going on, are the central themes to the narrative. But this isn’t a vapid existential crisis; there is a well sculpted script teasing us with mystery. Clues are dropped for the audience to guess at, yet we are forever on the back-step as the play plays with our expectations. I can’t help but explain the story as a spiral: you keep returning to similar (but never the same) points, of Quesnelle entering, of the comet... points which become familiar but are ever changing as layers build atop them. I found the performances strong – the pure dynamics of the pair, the palpable power plays, and the enjoyable multitude of ways the characters turned the tables on each other.

On the topic of the ending... There is one. Which is important (for some people) regarding a puzzle. I am in two minds about it. [Don’t worry, no spoilers here.] On the one hand, a single fact means that there is a fixed point, a truth, and thus a resolution of all that has come before. Would we rather it not be there so we’re left guessing? Or does that solitary anchor prove the author wasn’t just waxing lyrical (not to mention providing peace for audiences who hate unresolved stories)?

The bottom line is that this mystery about relationships tickled my brain and captivated me from start to finish. The vivid performances by Dockery and Quesnell, and the chemistry between them, cannot be denied. This is an intellectual puzzle I enjoyed piecing together.

<http://www.plankmagazine.com/review/moonlight-after-midnight-intellectual-puzzle>



Moonlight After Midnight: Layered and Fascinating

Brianna McFarlane – June 26, 2014 – Ottawa, ON

****WARNING.** This review contains some spoilers. If you have not seen *Moonlight After Midnight* yet, go now. Do it. Get up from whatever screen you are currently looking at, head to the Courtroom at Arts Court and see this show. ******

Moonlight After Midnight, written and performed by Martin Dockery and Vanessa Quesnelle, is a seemingly classic story about the rendezvous of two lovers, which spins its narrative in such a way that by the end you will be questioning whether anything really happened, or if it was all imagined. Though the setting remains the same, serving as an anchor throughout the piece, the tale is so layered that it demands close attention from the audience to decipher who's playing what and when. That Dockery and Quesnelle are able to so expertly weave a narrative that demands the audience mind to remain active throughout is a testament both to their acting and the quality of play itself. This is not a traditional drama with a conventional plot line; the complexity of the story combined with the excellent character work of the two actors allows this performance to engage both the mind and the soul.

The piece begins with Dockery, known only later as Man in Room, sitting alone on stage. Once Quesnelle, similarly known only later as Girl at Wedding, enters the stage we enter the first layer of fantasy. The two obviously know each other, or so we think. It isn't until Dockery finally turns around, to face Quesnelle for the first time, and states that he was expecting "somebody else," that we enter the second layer. This is where the lines of the narrative begin to blur with the only grounding element being the story about the comet.

We delve deeper into the script's layers through the act of role-play and the reconstruction of memories. Each time a character "walks" in to the hotel room they are someone completely different and, though they always remain Man in Room and Girl at Wedding, the audience is brought further and further into these potential pasts by way of these characters continual creation and recreation of moments in time. It is easy to get lost if you don't pay attention, however it's hard not to stay absolutely rapt when the performers on stage are so magnetic. Which leads me to my next point:

I've noticed that there is a lot of buzz around the Fringe Courtyard about the brilliance of Martin Dockery. I am not here to dispute this, because I absolutely agree, but I must emphasize the equal brilliance of his counterpart. Dockery's presence on stage is frenzied and frenetic whereas Quesnelle's is quiet and smouldering. She is the calm to Dockery's storm, which works perfectly for this piece about two people who should be together, but ultimately aren't. Further, Quesnelle is the driving force of the emotion in this show. Where Dockery's character comes across as flaky and perhaps a little selfish, the Girl at Wedding is unwavering, selfless, and completely aware of her feelings. Though Dockery provides the majority of the laughs, one cannot help but feel immensely for Girl at Wedding who arrives at the hotel room 10 years later to an empty chair.

I really appreciate Dockery and Quesnelle's efforts to push the boundaries of traditional narrative and story-telling, and this is one of the major reasons why I recommend this show. I further recommend

this show based on the fact that, Playing at the Arts Court Courtroom, seating is limited so get your tickets in advance. It's well worth it.

<http://newottawacritics.com/2014/06/26/moonlight-after-midnight-layered-and-fascinating/>

Moonlight After Midnight is a sweet journey

By [Mark Robins](#) on September 6, 2014 [Vancouver Fringe](#)

Vancouver Presents Rating: ★★★★★

Moonlight After Midnight is a sweet journey, and well worth this surprisingly quiet ride.

Meeting inside a hotel room as a comet passes overhead, a man and woman meet for the first time. Or do they? In Martin Dockery's sometimes complex story, fact and fiction become blurred lines as he slowly pieces together the relationship between the two characters.



The chemistry between Dockery and Vanessa Quesnelle is electric, playing off each other with a genuine connection that makes the sometimes heady piece feel grounded.

It isn't so much a mystery as it is a love story.



See more at: <http://vancouverpresents.com/theatre/vancouver-fringe/fringe-review-moonlight-midnight-sweet-journey/#sthash.Rnruh8T.dpuf>
<http://vancouverpresents.com/theatre/vancouver-fringe/fringe-review-moonlight-midnight-sweet-journey/>



Moonlight After Midnight

Reviewed by Alvina Ruprecht - June 28, 2014 - Ottawa, ON

A magical performance by Martin Dockery and Vanessa Quesnelle which captures the essence of theatre, the essence of performativity, perhaps captured better than any other writing for the stage I have ever seen. This text and the way it is produced shows us that theatre is a point in time, a moment in space that only exists because it is repeated but that has no substance. When the performance is over, the character, the world represented, is gone, like the comet that streaks across the sky in the show which becomes the model for Dockery's vision of performance. Theatre is that kind of ephemeral art form where "characters" are liquid, unstable, based on nothing but the space they occupy on stage during the performance. time. These figments of someone's imagination, constantly adapt to whatever meaning one wants to give them and when the play is over, they no longer exist, except in the memory of the audience. Dockery has used the beautiful voice of Quesnelle and a situation that plays out in various ways as successive mise en abyme, a chance encounter that moves forward in time. Each encounter uses the same references (we are in a room, we meet for the first time, there is party next door etc etc) but each time the meanings of those references change and those changes transform the relationship between the two figures.

This is not just a Rashomon style multiple versions of one story, because there is no narrator to ancre the stories. They just flow from themselves showing that nothing is stable. Thus the play appears to repeat itself while the fluid meanings are constantly shifting, allowing it all to, arbitrarily, continue playing out various versions of the same situation, the sign of an an art form with no boundaries, no limits, no substance, just an appearance in a point of light in space, like the comet that draws the gaze of the male figure as it passes every ten years. And in spite of this, or because of this vision of theatre, Dockery has captured a most beautiful emotional atmosphere that links these two individuals where a long kiss produces a warmth and a strong emotion , apparently unmotivated but that touch us so deeply. The human quality of the actors cannot be erased.

It is a beautiful piece of theatre that has opened the possibility for an unending performance, unending transformations that drive the actors forward until they possibly could collapse. Actors are finite beings. They need rest, they need to eat. Characters need none of that. They just are...and then they are gone. Dockery is himself and Quesnelle is a magnificent stage presence who just lets it all flow around her in a most normal way. Her beautiful singing voice fills the room with light, like the comet and we suddenly understand what theatre really is.

Moonlight After Midnight (4.5 Stars)

Posted on [August 20, 2014](#) - **Moonlight After Midnight** - Edmonton Fringe Festival - **4.5 Stars**

Moonlight After Midnight is a meld of mystery and ghost story. It is a visually minimalist work, relying on character development and the richness of the prose to transform the almost empty stage into a shabby, moonlit hotel room, in one of the cold, still, loneliest hours after midnight.

The unfolding story is compelling, and the audience was readily drawn in. Martin Dockery has written a flowing, almost poetic narrative. Vanessa Quesnelle adds to the tension and eeriness of the scene with her “sad love songs” – her pretty, soulful voice sliding through the shadows is reminiscent of the last strains of birdsong echoing through the night.



It is an intimate show. At first, I felt excluded by the body language of the actors – this isn't a play addressed to the watchers. And as the tension builds, it becomes even more so. But this physical intimacy only adds to the mood being created. Dockery and Quesnelle are both talented solo performers, and this bittersweet gem of an hour they crafted is a rare treat.

<http://fringereview.ca/review-moonlight-after-midnight-4-5-stars/>



Moonlight After Midnight

Carol Sinclair – June 25, 2014 – Ottawa, ON

A woman enters an unlocked hotel room to find a strange man staring out the window. He seems surprised to see her, but as their story unfolds the lines begin to blur on what the dynamic of their relationship really is. What is real and what is only being played out in the scenes they are creating for themselves? Written and performed by Martin Dockery who is joined on stage by Vanessa Quesnelle, *Moonlight After Midnight* is a mysterious puzzle of truth and fiction, love and loss.

It is quite clear the duo has shared the stage before (this is their third two-hander to go on tour) as they play off each other with such ease. Their chemistry is captivating, and a joy to watch. As things become more complicated and tensions run high both seamlessly reveal new sides to their characters, but never slip up to give too much away. Dockery looks as though he was born on a stage as he is so at home in front of the audience. The awkward and almost creepy nature of his character becomes endearing, and even charming at times, with Dockery's distinctive performance style. Quesnelle started the show a little shaky and came to the brim of melodramatic but found her footing quickly. In contrast to Dockery's immediate pull, she geared herself up more gradually, and by the end of the show I was completely enthralled with her performance.

This is one of the best scripts I have experienced thus far in the festival. The details that reveal themselves as the show progresses give a unique portrayal of the complexities of relationships which are too often over simplified. There is a reason Dockery has seen success time after time at Fringe, and this show is no exception; his talent as a writer and performer and should not be missed.

<http://newottawacritics.com/2014/06/25/moonlight-after-midnight/>



[Get Cultured](#) — May 11, 2015 - by [Kendra Ralston](#) NY, NY

A single light shines on a brooding man. Empty space feeds emptiness. *Moonlight After Midnight*, written and performed by Martin Dockery and Vanessa Quesnelle, appears as an exploration of a classic love story at first; but it quickly, miraculously, transforms into a journey of love, memory, and loss.



Moonlight After Midnight is indeed gorgeous, consuming, and saturated with feeling. The play begins with a light shining on Dockery, staring into the distance. The space is stark; only a chair and table to set the scene. Quesnelle slowly, seductively, enters the room singing with a twinge of melancholy: a tone that sets the rest of the play. Within the first few minutes, we learn that Dockery may or may not have requested a female be sent to his hotel room: one who can role play, and eventually, roll with the punches. Thus begins a structure of role playing, as the characters pretend to be other people in other places and times, each scene separated by dimmed lights and Quesnelle's soulful songs.

Known simply to each other as Man In the Room and Girl At A Wedding, Dockery and Quesnelle role play scenes within scenes, making the audience become more engaged mentally and emotionally with these characters as their scenes evolve into each other. Memory, dreams, and reality merge together. The energy between Quesnelle and Dockery is tangible, kinetic. While Dockery is frenzied and frantic, jumping from thought to thought, Quesnelle balances his character with sultry, soft, and rational charm. As the play progresses, we learn bits and pieces of love, hope, and loss. Brilliantly written, with one scene morphing into another as Dockery and Quesnelle delve into different memories, times, and feelings, we develop a bond with the characters that only strengthens as their stories change and develop, linked only by a comet in the sky. Hilarious at times, ironic, and nostalgic at others, this play creates art through movement, speech, and silence.

Throughout the play, the setting never changes, but reality and dream become increasingly intertwined. To understand the complexity and depth these characters create, the audience has to be completely engaged; and that's the kind of art that changes you.

<http://www.manhattanwithatwist.com/moonlight-after-midnight-exploring-love-through-memory/>



Moonlight after Midnight

Review by [Brian Carroll](#) on Friday June 20th, 2014 Ottawa, ON

A charming whodoneewhat.

A man sits in a chair peering intently ahead. A woman enters. A stunningly beautiful woman, who states that he has telephoned for her to come. Or rather for a brunette to come. She used to be a brunette. He denies placing the call, but she insists. Furthermore he must pay for her services, in advance. But what are those services to be? He insists that he wants only to talk. But she wants to do more. To set the scene. It's what she does. The scene for what? For make-believe. For pretend. But pretending gradually becomes disturbingly real.

We are all familiar with the murder mystery. Only there's no murder here. Just a mystery. A mystery about romance. We the audience must try to work out what that is. Slowly, gradually, we come to want to do that. She looks familiar to him, yet she claims to be a stranger. He claims he doesn't know her, yet she takes control of the situation. Why does he let her? As this mystery unfolds, that question sticks in the back of the mind, an itch that won't be scratched.

Questions intrigue us. If she's a stranger, why does he acquiesce to her? Why so readily? She convinces him to join her in creating and play-acting a fiction. A fiction about a made-up relationship. It's what she does. But how does she improvise so many details of this fiction? He provides scant details to the story. How is she able to embellish the story in a way that draws him in? She's pushing his buttons. What are they? How does she know?

I was impressed with the way Martin Dockery and Vanessa Quesnelle gradually drew the audience into the mystery. Hanging on every word, every emotion, every clue. Why does he let a stranger take control of the situation? A question that gets answered, but only at the very end. By his last act.

I saw this show alone; that was a mistake. If you see it, take a friend. You'll want to talk about it afterwards. I know I do.

<http://apt613.ca/moonlight-after-midnight/>

On Stage: Ottawa's Theatre Arts Magazine

REVIEW: Moonlight After Midnight

June 20, 2014 by [Allan Mackey](#) [1 Comment](#)



Moonlight After Midnight is a show by real couple, Martin Dockery and Vanessa Quesnelle. Dockery is well known on the festival circuit for his solo story-telling shows, somewhat less so for his scripted fiction.

4

life-

This show sees a man in a hotel room watching a comet fly past on a 10-year trajectory around the sun before it will fly out into the universe. He's interrupted by a woman who stumbles into his room by accident. Or *was* it an accident?

The two play out scenarios in what could best be described as a Russian nesting doll of sequences that take you through different times and stages of their relationship (over those ten years) that blend and morph into one another in a way that's both beautifully clear and

mystifying at the same time.

The dialogue, too, is sharp and well constructed, which paired with the strong chemistry that Dockery and Quesnelle share, gives it a perfect pacing and feels perfectly natural and real. Particularly between the nuanced performances being portrayed at the different relationship stages. And even different characters in Quesnelle's case.

Moonlight After Midnight leaves so much up to you to figure out what is happening in front of you and keeps you doing so up until those closing moments. It On Only once the lights dropped and we shifted to start applause did I realize how quiet we had gotten.

Martin told me in an interview that he and Vanessa wanted to do a kind of show you don't see too often at Fringe Festivals. Well, I want more.

Caitlin's Follow Up

I wish I had a lot to add to Allan's review but I don't. He pretty much nailed

it, I agree with everything he's said. Since I have to write a follow up though, here it is: Before it opened, Quesnelle and Dockery were intensely secretive and tight-lipped about the show. While I want to respect their desire to not give anything away, I think it's fair to warn audience members that this is, ultimately, a love story, plain and simple. But it's neither a plain nor simple show, and it's something you really have to experience yourself to believe. The whole evening felt meta to me and though I didn't always love it, the writing was great, the performances were great, the staging was spot-on, and I left feeling profoundly affected. Plus, Vanessa Quesnelle's singing is just fantastic, definitely the best vocal performance I've heard at the Fringe Festival yet, hands down and by a landslide. I think she and Dockery have a long career of duet drama in front of them but if not, Quesnelle can certainly make a go of it as a singer. Much to my delight, I still have her renditions of *Walking After Midnight*, and *Crazy* (the Patsy Cline tune, not the Gnarl Barkley one... or the Aerosmith one) stuck in my head. I'm with Allan on this one, I want more!



Valerie's Follow-up

Caitlin and Allan have pretty much said it all; *Moonlight After Midnight* definitely isn't your typical play. It's also no secret that I'm a huge fan of Martin Dockery, and his work and chemistry with Vanessa Quesnelle here is pretty amazing. The writing was excellent and despite character and situational changes, the script always assumes that you're paying enough attention to keep up. Quesnelle's voice is like velvet, and Dockery's energetic performance style lends itself well to both solo and more traditional shows. One thing I did notice is that Martin Dockery always seems to be playing Martin Dockery – although in this case, it works beautifully. Overall, I was sucked into the world of *Moonlight After Midnight* and I can't wait to see more from this dynamic duo.



<http://www.onstageottawa.com/moonlightaftermidnightreview/>