

Daylight, a new stage play from Helena Coggan (author of the fantasy novels *The Catalyst* [2015], *The Reaction* [2016], *The Orphanage of Gods* [2019], and *The Witchling's Girl* [2021], all Hodder and Stoughton), is showing at the Side Cellar @32Below at 11.30am from 15-28 August as part of the Laughing Horse Free Festival. *Daylight* is tender, tense and claustrophobic-- a 55-minute, one-act play about two friends waiting in a bunker for an apocalypse they believe is imminent. It comes to Edinburgh fresh from a two-night run at the Camden Fringe (The Rose and Crown at Kentish Town, 5-6 August, 8pm). Please contact Helena Coggan (cogganhelena@gmail.com) for details/interviews or comp tickets.

SUMMARY

In a steel-lined basement on a near-future Thursday morning, Conor and Julia are waiting for the world to end. Julia has spent her life plagued by visions of darkness, and today is the day when, according to one of her dreams, Britain will be wiped out by a nuclear strike.

No one but Conor has ever believed her. They have prepared to spend years underground together, waiting for the radiation to clear and dreaming of the world they will rebuild when they emerge. But as the moment of truth draws nearer, doubts begin to creep into the airless room with them. Can they trust each other and themselves? Have they done all they can to stop the end of the world? And what will they do with the long years ahead of them if Julia's prophecies fail, and everyone lives?

ABOUT THE WRITER/DIRECTOR

Helena Coggan is a writer from London. She published her first novel, *The Catalyst*, at the age of 15; it was named as one of *The Guardian* and Amazon's Debuts of the Year. She has published three other fantasy novels since then: her latest, *The Witchling's Girl* (2021), was described by Claire North as "having done the remarkable thing of capturing love and hope in a world without heroes, without some glorious prophecy to set you free, but where all you can do is the best you can". In February 2020, whilst studying for her degree in physics at the University of Cambridge, she wrote and directed a play, *Voyager*, about the British government mishandling a pandemic response. She is currently a doctoral candidate in mathematics at University College London.

ABOUT THE CAST

Isaac Allen (Conor) is a current star of the University of Cambridge theatre scene, fresh off well-reviewed lead roles in *Love All* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. He was previously a theatre stalwart at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, including a critically-acclaimed performance in *Eight*. He has also worked both nationally and internationally in film and radio, including an award-winning screen performance in *The Girl in the Red Dress*.

Lara Cosmetatos (Julia) eloped with student theatre in the first month of university, and graduated this summer with a complicated interdisciplinary lust for acting, directing and cabaret. This summer, she is also involved in three shows at Camden Fringe: as a director, *Just Sayin'* by Tina Zucco (On at the Hope Theatre, after being awarded runner-up in FUSE International Best Theatre Play at Brighton Fringe) and *Pearly Gates* (by Calum Macleod, Archie Williams and Lara Cosmetatos, showing at the Museum of Comedy), and *Daylight*.

PRAISE FOR HELENA COGGAN

Vivid and intense. Helena Coggan had me on the edge of my seat – *Amanda Bouchet, bestselling author of The Kingmaker Chronicles*

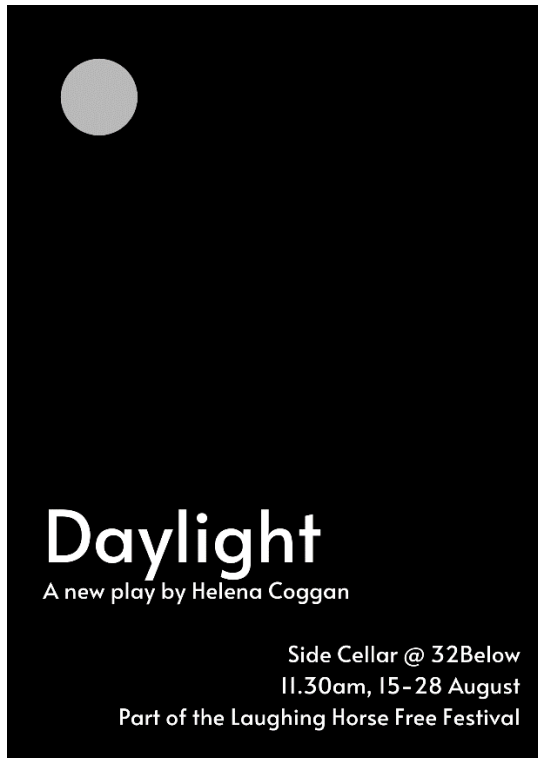
A phenomenal achievement . . . assured, frightening, action-packed – *Observer*

Tense, exciting, engaging – *Claire North, author of The First Fifteen Lives of Harry August*

A pulsing, labyrinthine, emotionally visceral plot – *Metro*

The plot pulses with action and the characters are beautifully complex. This is a book that sparks with adrenaline and longing, all the way to the final page – *Rebecca Ross, author of The Queen's Rising*

POSTER



PRESS IMAGE: Lara Cosmetatos (left) and Isaac Allen (right) in a performance of *Daylight* at the Cavendish Arms, Stockwell, 18th April 2022. Credit: Helena Coggan

