

# Bakehouse Theatre going to extremes for *The Audition*

September 20, 2015 11:30am  
Peter BurdonThe Advertiser



*Clare Mansfield and Krystal Brock in The Audition. Picture: Michael Errey*

LAUREN is an aspiring actress, and enters the studio of theatre director Stella in response to an advertisement. The audition unfolds in an intense psychological drama – thriller is not too strong a word – that created quite the stir when it was first performed on theatrical byways of a university drama group, setting itself up nicely for wider recognition, which it has duly achieved.

Everything about *The Audition* is designed to challenge. As directors go, Stella takes the cake. If some directors are controlling, she's a psychopath. The wide-eyed Lauren is putty in her hands, subjected to shocking extremes under the guise of needing to do anything, but anything, to get the part. And the extremes are shocking: you have been warned.

The biggest challenge is to sustain the intensity across the two acts. Director Joh Hartog and actors Krystal Brock (Stella) and Clare Mansfield (Lauren) succeed in this, with the longer first act building to almost unbearable pitch, only to be sustained and developed further after interval. (Tip for the wise, get a drink!)

*The Audition* is not the best-written play of its type, but the sheer commitment of the actors, especially Mansfield's steadily-crumbling Stella, makes for satisfying, if discomfiting, theatre. Good on the Bakehouse Theatre for continuing to support local drama in these tough economic times.