

# BWW Spotlight Series: Meet Tanya Alexander – Spoken Word Artist and Lead Actor in HUMAN INTEREST STORY at the Fountain Theatre

by Shari Barrett | Mar. 27, 2020



With the current theatre world on hiatus, I have created a Spotlight Series on Broadway World Los Angeles which features interviews with some of the many talented artists who make our Los Angeles theatre community so exciting and vibrant thanks to their ongoing contribution to keeping the arts alive in the City of the Angels. And like all of us, how are they dealing with the abrupt end of productions in which they were involved?

This Spotlight focuses on **Tanya Alexander**, a spoken word artist and writer of poetry and music, who I recently reviewed in her leading role in **HUMAN INTEREST STORY** at **The Fountain Theatre** in Hollywood, in which she plays Jane Doe, an anonymous homeless woman plucked from a park bench and made a media celebrity.

**Shari Barrett (SB):** *What would you like readers to know about your own theatrical background?*

**Tanya Alexander (Tanya):** I've always loved to learn new things and study diverse subjects. I wanted to really get into the technical process of performing and art, as well as the history of it, so it was a must that I go to college and actually study acting and theatre. I graduated Summa Cum Laude/Phi Beta Kappa with an Honors BA in Theatre from St. Louis University. I then moved to New York City to attend AMDA and studied in their musical theatre program. I can say that what I learned at SLU in a university setting was the art and history of theatre, performance, human stories. But what I learned at AMDA was how to be a professional in the business of entertainment. How to actually work. Two very different schools with very different curriculums that benefitted me in all aspects of my career today.

**(SB):** *What production(s) were you involved with when word went out you needed to immediately postpone/cancel the show?*

**(Tanya):** I was in the middle of our run of 'Human Interest Story' at **The Fountain Theatre** in Hollywood. We had just finished our fourth week of shows and were about to go into the final four weeks.

**(SB):** *If you missed the show, read my review on Broadway World at /los-angeles/article/BWW-Review-Timely-New-Play-HUMAN-INTEREST-STORY-Focuses-on-Homelessness-Celebrity-Worship-and-Truth-in-American-Journalism-20200224*

**How was the shutdown communicated with the cast and production team?**

**(Tanya):** We were actually contacted by email by our producer, Simon Levy. At first it was just a cast and crew meeting to see what our next steps would be, then very quickly (within an hour), we were informed of Mayor Garcetti and Governor Newsom's request to curb all public gatherings over ten people. After that, there was really no choice but to suspend the run. But thankfully, we just got great news that there are plans to remount the show in the summer.

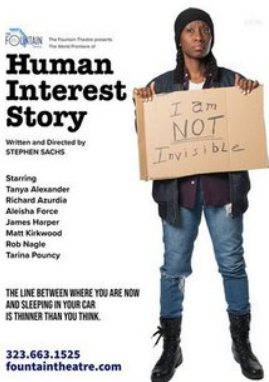
**(SB):** *What future productions on your schedule are also affected by the shutdown?*

**(Tanya):** Interestingly enough I had just finished production on a film during our 'Human Interest Story' tech week, so no future theatre productions were on my plate except for some local poetry features and performances which were affected.

**(SB):** *How are you keeping the Arts alive while at home by using social media or other online sites?*

**(Tanya):** Since I'm also a spoken word artist and a huge advocate of dance and music, I've been keeping my poetry work available for download and sharing my videos from my website and social media pages. Facebook's watch parties are great for real time sharing. I've also been supporting a lot of dancers, singers, and musicians on Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and Facebook. There's plenty of content to watch and I've been staying engaged with many of my colleagues and friends as we all continue to create at this time.

**(SB)** *The online world certainly has been a lifesaver for the Arts as a creative outlet for so many around the world right now. I am really enjoying and sharing them on my Facebook page as well.*





***Do you have any thoughts you would like to share with the rest of the L.A. Theatre community while we are all leaving the Ghostlight on and promising to return back to the stage soon?***

**(Tanya):** I'm very hopeful and optimistic that we'll all be back in the saddle soon! I understand the disappointment that can settle in when you've booked a show, rehearsed and now have to put it on ice. But we are all artists and we have always supported each other and uplifted the world's spirit. So many people are looking to us, our posts, comments and creations to give them light and keep them entertained and engaged and that's beautiful. We just have to keep using the mediums we have and do it! We are appreciated and it'll be our song, dance, drama, comedy, literature, movies, shows, poetry, and creations that get our global family through these times.

Most importantly, I'd like to encourage everyone to donate to your local theatre and arts communities as they go through this economic downturn. You can go to [www.FountainTheatre.com](http://www.FountainTheatre.com) to donate and support their season, as well as my website [www.TanyaAlexander.net](http://www.TanyaAlexander.net) to hear and download my poetry and music. Keep supporting the arts and the artists and we'll keep creating beautiful work to feed and inspire this world.



***(SB): For all the poetry fans out there: After listening to Tanya's poetry and music on her website, please tune in to the just-announced Ren Hen Press Poetry Hour, a new, recurring series broadcast live as part of The Broad Stage at Home, offering new, live-streamed content from artistic partners and archival concert footage beginning Saturday, March 28 at 8pm at [thebroadstage.org](http://thebroadstage.org). Following the live broadcast, programming will be available on that site and [redhen.org](http://redhen.org).***

*Human Interest Story photo credits: Jenny Graham*