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## Their Holiday Favorites: Emily Hagins's 'Nightmare' Research

By [Jordan Gass-Poore](#) on December 20, 2011 - 3:00pm in [Holiday Favorites](#)



Welcome to our latest entry in Their Holiday Favorites, a series in which members of the Austin film community tell us about movies they enjoy watching during the holiday season. This one is from 19-year-old Austin-based movie director [Emily Hagins](#), whose horror-comedy [My Sucky Teen Romance](#) premiered at last year's SXSW. Here's her account of a holiday movie she not only likes but respects as a filmmaker.

I've been doing research for a script that takes place around Halloween, so a lot of the films I've been watching lately have not been so timely for the holiday season. Except! I think one of the most unique and most difficult to achieve characteristics about [The Nightmare Before Christmas](#) is that it is just as fun to watch at Halloween as it is to watch on Christmas -- the two most opposite days of the year. By exploring the darker side of even the most joyous of holidays, this film is able to delve deeper than a lot of conventional films.

I think there's something special about films that deal with smart subject matter but are still appropriate for a younger audience. I remember watching films like *The Nightmare Before Christmas* when I was little and being thankful that it wasn't condescending, like some of the other kid's movies. The holidays are especially prone to "family films" with trivial stories that are made for the sake of marketing without much other thought. On the other side of that, everything from the stunningly detailed production design to the storytelling (I'm not a huge fan of musicals, but I love how the songs are incorporated into this film) of *The Nightmare Before Christmas* shows nothing but the highest admiration of the material by the filmmakers.

**Want to watch?** *The Nightmare Before Christmas* is available for DVD rental at both I Luv Video and Vulcan Video. You can also see it at [Blue Starlite](#) on Friday, Dec. 23 at 6:30 pm.

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