

Scully's new play opens at Patrick's

Play about AIDS runs one weekend

Cabaret Preview, Pulse Twin Cities, 1997

by Elaine Klaassen

For the past eleven years, Twin Cities artist Patrick Scully has been the heart and soul of Patrick's Cabaret, a performance venue where performers don't audition, where performers are free to be whatever they are, where musicians recite poetry, comedians play the piano and dancers write plays — where everybody tries new things, in other words. To celebrate the beginning of the Cabaret's 12th year, Scully is presenting his first play, *Protease Inhibited* on Friday and Saturday, April 25 and 26.

People say about Scully, "I thought he was a dancer." "Didn't he make some films, something about pink ice-cream?" "I thought he was an actor." "Well, I thought he was a performance artist. I heard him describe his occupation as 'doing the kinds of things that make Jesse Helms want to stop funding for the NEA.'" "No, he's a writer. He got a Jerome Foundation Playwright Fellowship to write a play."

"It all started when I had

the chance to write something about rage for a reading at the Playwright Center," says Scully. "Until that time I had always heard my own voice saying words I had written. Suddenly I heard someone else's voice saying what I had written and the possibilities fascinated me."

The characters in *Protease Inhibited* are four gay men, three of them HIV positive as is Scully. The fourth man refuses to be tested and is called "HIV mysterious." Each of the men has his own attitude about the potent antiviral drug, the protease inhibitor. At one point they all decide to put the disease on hold and go out for an evening of fun at "Mystic Island" to hear Leann Reims, the 14-year-old singer who sounds like Patsy Cline.

Scully didn't really make up the play; he eavesdropped on a conversation among four imaginary characters he discovered in his head and channelled their words onto paper. Later he decided to put them into a comfortable place, and later some things started happening. He said, "Oh look, a

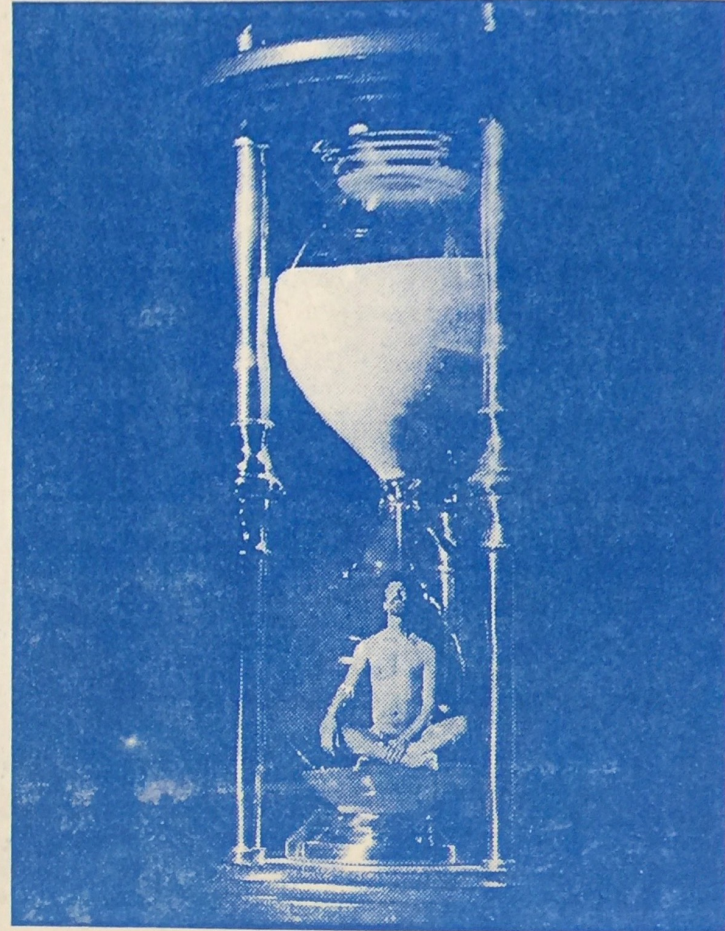
plot."

"In dance and in theatre you develop the skill to open your self in the Buddhist sense, so the material can come forward," observes Scully. "Writing can be a similar process. You trust that the story will be there. The challenge is to keep your pen moving fast enough." The fact that Scully is interested to see but not worried about whether or not he will have finished writing the play by opening night demonstrates his ease with the creative process.

Scully's ability to put gentle with caustic, abstract with socially conscious, and light with heavy promises and entertaining as well as thought provoking performance.

Other acts on the bill are Baraka de Soleil, David Mann, Kirk Washington and Marty Winkler. Show times are 7:30 and 9:30 p.m. both Friday and Saturday nights, April 25 and 26. Tickets are \$6.00.

The cabaret is located at 506 E. 24th Street. Call 222-2738 (CABARET) for reservations.



Patrick Scully