

The Naked Truth, Review, StarTribune, 2001

City is laid bare in 'Naked Truth'

By Graydon Royce
Star Tribune Staff Writer

There's a note in the program that says Patrick Scully's one-man show, "The Naked Truth," takes place in a fictional town called Minneapolis. Any resemblance to a real city bearing that name is purely coincidental.

With that fig leaf firmly in place, Scully satirizes a town where bike lanes steer you into freeway traffic, police busy themselves with nude sunbathers and you can be arrested for making too much noise at 7th and Hennepin on a Saturday night. These asinine frustrations spur Scully's character — a fictional creation named Patrick Scully — to run a visionary campaign for mayor.

"The Naked Truth," which opened Thursday as part of Illusion Theater's Fresh Ink series, demonstrates again why Scully is an interesting and worthwhile voice, calling out the establishment's absurd machinations and demanding honesty from politicians. Pollyanna drivels? Absolutely, in a world that seems to be getting more comfort-

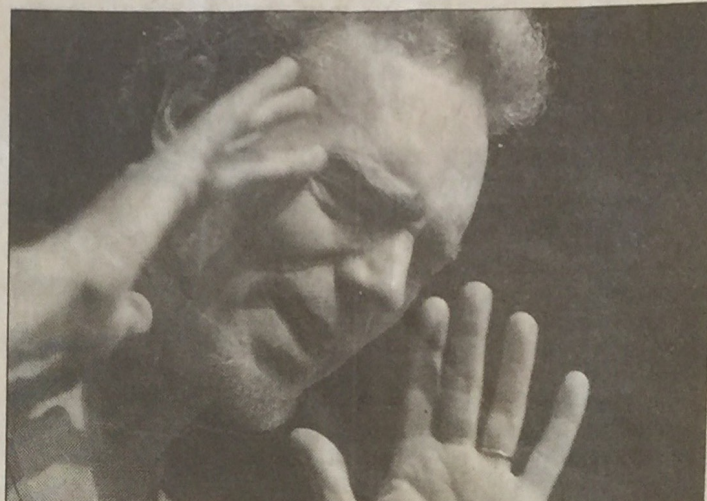
Theater review

The Naked Truth

- **Who:** Written and performed by Patrick Scully. Dramaturgy by Ben Kreilkamp.
- **Where:** Illusion Theater, 528 Hennepin Av. S., Minneapolis.
- **When:** 8 p.m. today, 7 p.m. Sunday.
- **Review:** Scully takes on City Hall with a fictional campaign for mayor that excoriates the establishment. Nakedly funny and honest as Scully himself, this is an entertaining 75-minute performance.
- **Tickets:** \$10. 612-339-4944.

able with cynicism every day. But to his credit, Scully, at 47, holds on to his radical hippie ideals for a utopia that most of us abandoned years ago for day jobs and 401(k)s.

Scully uses the Illusion stage to roll out a mythical stump speech embedded in his own experiences as a theater owner, gay activist, performance artist and avid bicy-



Star Tribune photo by Stormi Greener

Patrick Scully's fictional "The Naked Truth" hits close to home.

clist. Each slight from the authorities becomes a story told with Scully's mellow elocution and fine eye for detail. Seeking to shut down his eponymous cabaret, the city worried that such an establishment could "potentially destabilize" the neighborhood. "24th and Portland?" he asks, incredulously, ticking off the vacant lots, burned-out buildings and crack houses that littered the residential neighborhood at the time. "That's a stable residential neighborhood?"

He dreams of a city with bicycle freeways, enclosed and above the nasty cars that clog streets. He would use tax-increment financing to build communes on vacant lots. And he challenges the city to "show up at the cultural table"

and make Minneapolis — the fictional town, mind you — a cultural destination on par with New York.

"Dreaming?" he says. "You bet I'm dreaming."

Scully can call this piece fiction all he wants, but it's as naked as he often is on stage. There's nothing wrong with that, but it's difficult to imagine this work having a future as a piece of theater without Scully — his personal investment provides the zest. I'm sure he wants to develop it further, but the challenge will be to bring universality to a piece that exists right now as one man's specific polemic against a specific city.

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