

SAINT PAUL

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THEATER REVIEW

'Queer thinking' uncompromising, confrontational

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Nonhomosexual liberals may need a sponge to mop up the overflow from their bleeding hearts while watching "Queer Thinking," Patrick Scully's eye-opening piece about cultural differences between the gay and straight world.

This uncompromised look into a gay man's thought processes is so wondrous and strange that heterosexuals in the audience — and believe me, they are few and far between — experience that wall-flower-at-the-orgy feeling. Scully, an HIV-positive gay activist, has neither the time nor inclination to pander to straight audiences.

"Queer Thinking" contains nudity, profanity and explicit descriptions of sexuality — it's not for the judgmental or prim. Even those who are card-carrying faggots and who think they are pretty savvy about the inner workings and compulsions of gay men will find much of what Scully has to say flabbergasting.

Scully begins by removing his

WHAT: "Queer Thinking"

WHERE: Illusion Theater, 528 Hennepin Ave., 8th Floor, Mpls.

WHEN: 8 p.m. Thursday through Saturday; 7 p.m. Sunday

TICKETS: \$10; 339-4944

CAPSULE: Gay activist and performance artist Patrick Scully presents a confrontational piece on the politics and pleasures of homosexuality. ★★

everyday clothes and donning too-small high heels, a leopard-skin latex mini and a jacket with shoulders as wide as curtain rods to transform himself into the drag queen Tanya.

Using a Powerbook personal computer as a prompter, the Tanya character examines what makes homosexuals uncomfortable about other homosexuals. The answer delves into why gay men believe it's more attractive to be "straight-looking and -acting" and that the source of this self-hatred stems from a homosexual's inability to fit into the classic western dualities of male and female, good

and evil.

This first monologue fascinates, but you get the feeling that Scully is still working on the Tanya character. He keeps fidgeting with the skirt and jacket as if uncomfortable in the guise. But his words carry ferocity and weight.

In the second part, "What I Am Most Hesitant to Tell You About My Identity," Scully is naked, confessing that his "radical faerie name is Passion Fruit." He unblinkingly tells that he understands queer-on-queer violence, because of what it did to him.

In a series of harrowing and funny stories, Scully talks about his history of self-punishment, ranging from rationing masturbation to torturing himself about body image. Tales of bigotry and homophobia horrify in their nonchalant rancor.

The last section, "Secrets," delves into Scully's activism and the notion of privilege. There's a riotous part about his participating in the artists-in-the-schools program and desiring to perform excerpts from "Queer Thinking."

The school agrees and then backpedals about the nudity. In the end, Scully had to commission an artist friend to paint a pair of boxer shorts to approximate his skin-color and anatomy. Scully in the painted undies is 10 times more bizarre than Scully undressed.

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The evening ends with a call to action, with Scully demanding that gay men put themselves in one of two positions of power: spy or warrior. "Queer Thinking" presents a striking and confrontational portrait of a man entreating all gay men to come to the edge.