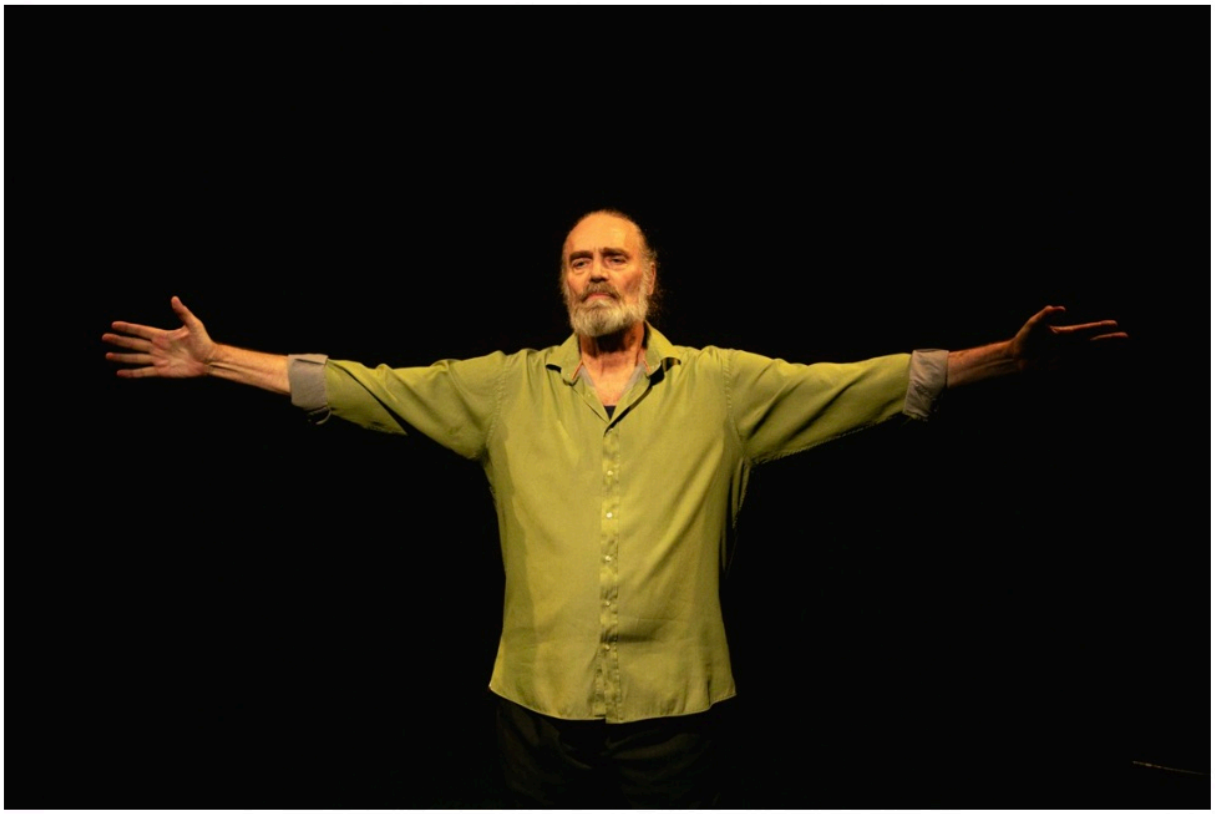
https://thestagesofmn.com/2024/09/20/portrait-of-the-artist-as-a-young-gay-man-from-illusion-theater-at-center-for-performing-arts/

Portrait of the Artist as a Young Gay Man From Illusion Theater at Center for Performing Arts



Patrick Scully Photo by Lauren B Photography

Portrait of the Artist as a Young Gay Man launches Illusion Theater's 50th year with a personal story that spans even more years. The first in Creator/Performer Patrick Scully's autobiographical series *Somewhere Along the Rainbow*, this show covers his journey from a young boy to an out gay young man. The story starts with a few anecdotes of Patrick's childhood and adolescence that illustrate his naivete and the lack of access to anything regarding homosexuality. These bits are sprinkled with humor as is the entire show. This show is as much about his moments of fear about coming out as it is about his coming out. It's because of those fears, those moments when he doesn't acknowledge he is gay, those regrets, that make the moments when he does acknowledge it all, the more inspiring. We can all relate to that moment of abject fear when we blurt out the safe answer or avoid the moment, only later to question why we did it.

The story focuses mostly on his college and first few post college years, including the period spent studying abroad in West Berlin. Beginning his college career intending to go to medical school to be a Doctor, he takes some dance classes which change the course of his life. Covering everything from his first sexual experiences to Harvey Milk's election and assassination, Scully paints a vivid picture of the times in which he came of age. In doing so he provides us with the benchmark against which we can measure the progress we have made as a society. He also shines a light on the reality that for every two steps forward there is a step backwards. Something we are definitely experiencing in today's current climate. As we witness the legalization of gay marriage and the protections put in place for transgender people locally; we also see the rise of Don't say Gay, and our state having to become a Trans refuge state for families who have to flee laws put in place in their home states that make it unsafe for them to live there.

Scully is an engaging and humorous story telling, whose honesty and willingness to share his weaknesses as well as his moments of pride make his story relatable to those with their own coming out stories and those without alike. With humor and grace he talks and dances his way into our hearts. I encourage everyone to see this show but particularly families with young people who have maybe just recently come out. There is a lot of power in seeing you are not alone and there is a lot to be gained from realizing how fortunate you are to be coming out now, rather than the 1970's in midwestern America, or in the late 1930's in Germany. There is a lot of fascinating history that that is shared in the context of Scully's story that really adds to it's scope and impact. I for one am very eager for the next installment of Somewhere Along the Rainbow!

Portrait of the Artist as a Young Gay Man runs through October 6th at the Center for Performing Arts in South Minneapolis. For more information and to purchase tickets go to https://www.illusiontheater.org/portrait-of-the-artist-as-a-young-gay-man