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## ILLUSION THEATER's 2024 Fresh Ink Series New works by Patrick Scully, Carlyle Brown and Noel Raymond, Jeffrey Hatcher, and Transatlantic Love Affair

ILLUSION THEATER's Fresh Ink Series allows writers to explore innovative ideas and forms by giving them a platform and the resources they need to develop new work in a workshop setting. The Fresh Ink Series began in 1987 and has continued each year since.

ILLUSION THEATER is nationally known for creating new works and has been producing socially impactful plays for 50 years. Producing Directors Michael Robins and Bonnie Morris have led ILLUSION THEATER since 1974, they have now been joined by Associate Producer, Tree O'Halloran. 2024's Fresh Ink Series purposely celebrates artists who have previously created new works in the past with ILLUSION and invites them once again to generate something for these times.

The 2024 Series will invite audiences to look behind the curtain and share in the process of the creation of a new play. For this June's Fresh Ink Series performances will be by invitation only.

### The 2024 Fresh Ink Series Lineup

- **Somewhere Along the Rainbow: A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Gay Man**  
Written and performed by **Patrick Scully** directed by **Michael Robins** with movement consultant **Blake Nellis** and lighting collaborator **Gavin Jellison**.  
**Friday June 7 and Saturday June 8 (invitation only)**
- **The Noel and Carlyle Show**  
Created and performed by **Noel Raymond** and **Carlyle Brown** directed by **Louise Smith**.  
**Saturday June 15 (invitation only)**
- **Groucho Marx Meets T.S. Elliot**  
Written by **Jeffrey Hatcher** directed by **Michael Robins** and featuring **Jim**

**Cunningham and John Middleton**  
**Friday June 21 and Saturday June 22 (invitation only)**

- ***the mother and the mourning song***  
Written and performed by **Transatlantic Love Affair** from a poem by **Isabel Nelson**  
**June 25 or 26 (invitation only)**

## **The Plays and Playwrights**

**Portrait of the Artist as a Young Gay Man** is the first work in Patrick Scully's autobiographical series ***Somewhere Along the Rainbow***. Mixing together stories of his personal life, his life as an artist and activist, and progress and setbacks in the world of LGBTQ rights. This first installment begins in Scully's high school in the 60's and takes us on a journey through his school and college years, into his early professional life in the arts. The first segment ends in 1980, having traversed the ups and downs of Scully's coming out story, the victories and defeats of Minneapolis and St Paul passing laws protecting Lesbian, Gay and Trans rights, and Harvey Milk's legacy in San Francisco. If your own life intersects with this time period, your memories of this time will be reawakened. If this was all before your time, it promises an engaging history lesson that no school has yet taught.

**Patrick Scully** has been associated with ILLUSION THEATER since nearly the beginning when Patrick choreographed the original production of *Orlando, Orlando* in 1977. ILLUSION has produced Patrick's *Queer Thinking*, *Forever Hold Your Piece*, *Leaves of Grass – Illuminated* (began as a large-scale work for two actors and 18 male dancers), and *The 3rd Act*.

Scully is well known for work ranging from large scale group works, to solo work. His largest works include: a *Ballet for Boats*, for forty to fifty boats, done to great critical acclaim in both Minneapolis (2015) and Potsdam, Germany (2010); His solo works, more intimate and often biographical, and highly acclaimed, have included works ranging from *Too Soon Lost* (1990) to *Thrive!* (2010).

Scully began dancing in 1972 as a college freshman. In 1976 he co-founded *Contactworks*, a Minneapolis based dance collective focused on contact improvisation. In 1980 he left *Contactworks* to explore broader horizons. That led him to dance with Remy Charlip, beginning with Remy's Ten Men show in the Brooklyn Academy of Music's Next Wave Festival in 1984. Dancing for Remy Charlip, Scully toured to Boston, Los Angeles, Amsterdam, New York, Berkeley CA. Eventually he returned to Minneapolis focusing on the creation of his own work.

Performing his own work, Scully has toured internationally and nationally, as well as across all of Minnesota. In addition to his performing work, Patrick was the founder and longtime director of *Patrick's Cabaret*, in Minneapolis. More complete information is available at <http://www.patrickscully.org>

### **The Noel and Carlyle Show**

Playwright Carlyle Brown and director Noel Raymond have been collaborating in their respective roles for nearly thirty years. Now, they are exploring working together as co-creators of a theatrical work in which they will both perform. "Something new is about to begin."

**Louise Smith** directs, she returns to ILLUSION where she was part of several shared works that Ping Chong's Company and ILLUSION created in the 1980's including *Angels of Swedenborg*, *Nosferatu*, and *Snow*.

**Noel Raymond** is the Co-Artistic Director of Pillsbury House + Theatre where she has helped lead, develop, and implement theatre and arts programming to promote community vitality since 1995. As an actor she has performed with Pillsbury House Theatre, the Burning House Group, the Guthrie Theater, Penumbra Theatre, Bryant Lake Bowl, and Minnesota Festival Theatres. Her directing credits include works at Pillsbury House Theatre, Theatre Mu, and the Playwrights' Center.

**Carlyle Brown** is the Andrew W. Mellon Playwright in Residence at ILLUSION. His shows produced at ILLUSION include *Finding Fish*, *Acting Black*, *A Play by Barb and Carl*, and *History of Religion*, and curator for the *Afro-Atlantic Festival of Playwrights*. He was honored for Distinguished Achievement in American Theater by the William Inge Theater Festival. Also, in 2022 he received the Legacy Award from the Legacy Playwrights Initiative of the Dramatist's Guild. The award recognizes established American playwrights for their sustained influence on the American theatre. Carlyle is a Core Writer at the Playwrights' Center in Minneapolis and an alum of New Dramatists.

### **Groucho Marx Meets T.S. Elliot**

Little known fact: the Marx brother who starred in *Animal Crackers*, *Duck Soup*, *A Night at the Opera*, and *You Bet Your Life* was pen pals with the author of *The Waste Land*, *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*, *The Cocktail Party*, and *Murder in the Cathedral*. Groucho and Eliot met once in 1964 over dinner in London. Say the secret word and be a Rufus T. Firefly on the wall as they discuss poetry, vaudeville, war, wives, Gilbert and Sullivan, Shakespeare and Freud's Jokes and their Relation to the Unconscious.

**Jeffrey Hatcher** is returning to ILLUSION to create **Groucho Marx Meets T. S. Elliot**.

Since the *Three Viewings* in 1994, ILLUSION has commissioned/produced nine Hatcher plays including *No Strings* with Stephanie Lusco (1996), his adaptation of Henry James's *Turn of the Screw* (1998), *Good N' Plenty* (2001), *Mercy of a Storm* (2003), *Murderers* (2005), *Mrs. Mannerly* (2008), *What's the Word For* (2012), *Jeffrey Hatcher's Hamlet* (2014) which ILLUSION Board's commissioned for ILLUSION's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, *A Night in Olympus* with Chan Poling (2016), and *Netherlands* (2019).

**Michael Robins**, ILLUSION's Executive Producing Director will direct both Patrick Scully's new work and Jeffrey Hatcher's new play. Most recently Michael directed T

Mychael Rambo's *PRESENT*, the premiere of Michael Egan's stage adaptation *Five Minutes of Heaven*, and *In This Moment...Now*.

***the mother and the mourning song***

ILLUSION has provided a home for Transatlantic Love Affair to present their new works since 2012 when ILLUSION presented an expanded version of *The Ballad of the Pale Fisherman*. Transatlantic Love Affair imagines the journey of Red Riding Hood's mother after her daughter disappears into the wilderness, and explores themes of grief, domesticity, and wildness. Inspired by the same well-known folktale as TLA's 2013 production of *Red Resurrected*, this dreamlike, fantastical narrative invites us to imagine what lies beyond the comfort of what we know - to allow ourselves to be swallowed by the wolf and see what we find. Featuring Allison Vincent, Isabel Nelson, Derek Miller, and additional ensemble members TBA.

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**About the ILLUSION THEATER**

ILLUSION THEATER was founded in 1974 and presents its season in its new home in the Center for Performing Arts in South Minneapolis. Since the beginning, Producing Directors Michael Robins and Bonnie Morris have led ILLUSION THEATER in illuminating the illusions, myths, and realities of our times and in using theater to catalyze personal and social change. In 2021 Tree O'Halloran joined ILLUSION as Associate Producer. ILLUSION has generated over 500 plays, developed thousands of artists, and created groundbreaking educational work. Plays developed at ILLUSION have been produced in theaters throughout the world. ILLUSION's works have catalyzed conversations in living rooms, kitchens, coffee houses boardrooms, and has led to transformations in policy, in organizations, in students and in individuals.

**INFORMATION**

FRESH INK – ILLUSION THEATER's Annual Series of New Works  
**June through June 30, 2023**

**Location:**

Center for Performing Arts  
3754 Pleasant Avenue South  
Entrance on 38<sup>th</sup> Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55409  
Box Office: 612-339-4944

[www.illusiontheater.org](http://www.illusiontheater.org)

**Schedule and Performers subject to change.**