



## **Playwrights of Distinction**

Socio-political animals like Darren O'Donnell have an innate sanction for change in this world. Get him started on grandiose ideas revolving around distribution of income or the similarities between ourselves and 9/11 hijackers and you're bound to walk away with a tailored perspective. The punctilious playwright is no issue-driven browbeater; he simply loves an exchange of dialogue regardless of the subject matter's latitude.

Last summer's *Talking Creature* event, a gathering O'Donnell marshaled to compensate for the absence of physical interactive venues across the city, was a hit among visual artists and the literary types but was largely ignored by theatre enthusiasts. The idea was for people to show up and do inevitably what comes natural—talk. He called it a test of the social sphere and the results were impressive.

After premiering a new solo show *A Suicide Site Guide to the City* in Alberta earlier this year, a performance piece that has also taken him to Scotland, Darren O'Donnell appears to be moving away from theatre at the present time although you would be hard pressed to get him to admit that.

The artist who has given audiences such revolutionary plays as *White Mice*, *[boxhead]*, and *pppeeeaaacccee*, is a staunch accessory to his own writing rules and not those established by the playwrighting greats that came before him. He's anti-character as ever when developing stories and referring to Darren O'Donnell as "experimental" remains a four-letter word.

<http://www.torontostage.com/reviews/pd-odonnell2.html>