

FOREWORD

SUSAN MAUSHART

Blue online ad urging
to "chuck a sickie" and
e of "top sale fares"
last month following
h of complaints
groups fearing
r the nation's
y. The campaign
ing like an open
urs, but Virgin
dfrey maintains he
shly to pull the ad
after viewing it. And
ther ring in to say so.
alian employers coughing
n absence-related lost
year, it's no wonder they
**Forty per cent of
admit scamming the
il Day, citing "work
"life pressure" and,
"tire pressure".**
weekday, 2.7 per cent of
workforce isn't working,
forced (or stuffed) to do so.
where workers' entitlement
"sunny days" are as righteously
mushy peas or Prince Harry's
d of the nation's 200 million
are "not linked to ill health"
h - and Friday sickies
ting business more than
year, according to a Reuters
te Thursday afternoon.
quarters of UK workers
a illness earlier in the week.
workforce casualties are
e first Monday in February,
groundhog day that can see
workers mysteriously
their own clackers.
chucking today is a part of a
onomy. The *Zoo Weekly*
I try to get all points of
arried a story recently of a
so desperate for time off
stab wound to his own
d when the 'supposed' perp
entified, the lazy sushi-lover
Zoo concluded, with a
htness of touch that cannot
endured. (The hilarity
o the blog. "I think going to
ave been less taxing than
self with a rusty knife," put in
tch!" [sic] quipped another.)
shows that married couples
ly prone to sickies, perhaps
tise makes perfect. ("I can't
a headache.") For those of
elf-employed, lying to the
more of a challenge. But with
n and discipline, it's possible
neself - although personally



ALEX BROUN

10-MINUTE PLAYWRIGHT

The clock is ticking but there's no slowing Alex Broun down. As one of the world's most prolific and most produced 10-minute playwrights, the NSW-based writer/journalist's goal is to have 100 of his 10-minute plays performed around the globe. He has made his plays available for free on his website (www.alexbroun.com.au), and thrown down the gauntlet to theatre lovers.

"I've written about 50 [10-minute plays] so far, 39 of which have been produced, so I have to write another 50," he smiles, adding he's happy to write about any subject suggested to him. "The only thing I request is that if you're going to do one of the plays, you let me know."

Topics range from fast food in China (*Beijing Big Mac*) to lonely stars (*Cate Blanchett Wants to be my Friend on Facebook*), and run the gamut from comedy to thriller. His most-produced play (31 productions in the US) is *10,000 Cigarettes*.

"Somewhere in the world, someone is probably performing or rehearsing an Alex Broun play," says the 43-year-old. "It's thrilling."

Why short plays? "I still write full-length plays but theatre is competing against film, video, YouTube," he explains. "The idea of a play going for two or three hours is old-fashioned. I believe 10-minute plays are the way of the future."

And a good way to get him noticed. "If I get 100 of my 10-minute plays produced, one of the mainstream theatre companies has got to surely think: 'OK, people like this guy's work. Maybe we should have a proper look at it, too!'"

Report Helen O'Neill
Photography Adam Knott