

Venues

Abbey Pub 3420 W Grace St (773-478-4408). El: Blue to Addison. Bus: 80, 82, 152.
Beauty Bar 1444 W Chicago Ave (312-226-8828). El: Blue to Chicago. Bus: 9, 66.
Bonny's 2417 N Milwaukee Ave (773-486-8480). El: Blue to California. Bus: 56, 74.
The Burlington 3425 W Fullerton Ave (773-384-3243). El: Blue to Logan Square. Bus: 56, 74, 82.
Congress Theater 2135 N Milwaukee Ave (773-486-6672). El: Blue to Western. Bus: 49, 56, 74.
Crimson Lounge Hotel Sax Chicago, 333 N Dearborn St (312-923-2473). El: Brown, Purple (rush hrs) to Merchandise Mart; Red to Grand. Bus: 22, 36.
Crocodile 1540 N Milwaukee Ave (773-252-0880). El: Blue to Damen. Bus: 50, 56, 72.
Danny's Tavern 1951 W Dickens Ave (773-489-6457). El: Blue to Damen. Bus: 50, 73.
darkroom 2210 W Chicago Ave (773-276-1411). El: Red to Chicago. Bus: 50, 66.
Debonair Social Club 1575 N Milwaukee Ave (773-227-7990). El: Blue to Damen.
enclave 220 W Chicago Ave (312-654-0234). El: Brown, Purple (rush hrs) to Chicago; Red to Chicago. Bus: 66, 156.
Evil Olive 1551 W Division St (773-235-9100). El: Blue to Division. Bus: 9, 56, 70.
Exit 1315 W North Ave (773-395-2700). El: Red to North/Clybourn. Bus: 9, 72.
Funky Buddha Lounge 728 W Grand Ave (312-666-1695). El: Blue to Grand. Bus: 8, 56, 65.
The Griffin Lounge 326 W Chicago Ave (312-280-9800). El: Brown, Purple (rush hrs) to Chicago; Red to Chicago. Bus: 11, 22, 66.
Hideout 1354 W Wabansia Ave (773-227-4433). Bus: 72, 73.
Late Bar 3534 W Belmont Ave (773-267-5283). El: Blue to Belmont. Bus: 56, 77, 82.
Lumen 839 W Fulton Mkt (312-733-2222). El: Green, Pink to Clinton. Bus: 8, 56, 65.
Maria's Packaged Goods and Community Bar 960 W 31st St (773-890-0588). Bus: 8, 62.
Martini Ranch 311 W Chicago Ave (312-335-9500). El: Brown, Purple (rush hrs) to Chicago. Bus: 66.
Metro 3730 N Clark St (773-549-0203). El: Red to Addison. Bus: 22, 152.
The Mid 306 N Halsted St (312-265-3990). El: Green, Pink to Clinton. Bus: 8, 20, 65.
Morseland 1218 W Morse Ave (773-764-8900). El: Red to Morse. Bus: 96, 147, 151, 155.
Neo 2350 N Clark St (773-528-2622). El: Brown, Purple (rush hrs), Red to Fullerton. Bus: 22, 36, 74.
Proof 1045 N Rush St (312-397-1045). Bus: 22, 36, 70.
The Red Canary 695 N Milwaukee Ave (312-846-1475). El: Blue to Chicago. Bus: 56, 66.
Rodan 1530 N Milwaukee Ave (773-276-7036). El: Blue to Damen. Bus: 50, 56, 72.
The Shrine 2109 S Wabash Ave (312-753-5700). El: Red to Cermak/Chinatown. Bus: 21, 24, 29, 62.
Smart Bar 3730 N Clark St (773-549-4140). El: Red to Addison. Bus: 22, 152.
Sound-Bar 226 W Ontario St (312-787-4480). El: Brown, Purple (rush hrs) to Chicago. Bus: 11, 22, 33, 65, 66, 156.
Spy Bar 646 N Franklin St (312-587-8779). El: Brown, Purple (rush hrs) to Chicago. Bus: 11, 22, 33, 65, 66, 125, 156.
Subterranean 2011 W North Ave (773-278-6600). El: Blue to Damen. Bus: 50, 56, 72.
Taxim 1558 N Milwaukee Ave (773-252-1558). El: Blue to Damen. Bus: 50, 56, 72.
Tzar 215 W Ontario St (312-265-1635). Bus: 22, 36, 66 Chicago.
V Live 2047 N Milwaukee Ave (773-489-5483). El: Blue to Western. Bus: 49, 56, 73, 126.
Vision 632 N Dearborn St (312-266-1944). El: Red to Grand. Bus: 29, 36, 65.
Zentra 923 W Weed St (312-787-0400). El: Red to North/Clybourn. Bus: 8, 72.
Zhou B Art Center 1029 W 35th St (773-523-0200). Bus: 8, 35.

Theater



Edited by
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Memphis beats

Joe DiPietro and David Bryan make an unlikely, Tony-winning pair. By **Kris Vire**

The winner of four 2010 Tony Awards including Best Musical, *Memphis* took a long and circuitous route to Broadway. "We played the show in four major regional theater venues and kept working on it before we got to Broadway," book writer Joe DiPietro says on the phone from New York of the musical about a white DJ and black music in the segregated South. Beginning with a workshop at Palo Alto, California's TheatreWorks in 2002, *Memphis* went on to a full production there and others at Massachusetts's North Shore Music Theatre, San Diego's La Jolla Playhouse and Seattle's 5th Avenue Theatre before finally bowing on Broadway in 2009.

The show's origins are perhaps as unlikely as its path, pairing DiPietro, the author of *I Love You, You're Perfect, Now Change*, with Bon Jovi keyboardist David Bryan. The project began with a magazine piece about real-life Memphis DJ Dewey Phillips, "one of the first white disc jockeys to play rhythm and blues music in the center of the radio dial in the South in the early '50s," DiPietro says. "Those disc jockeys of the era were very

influential in essentially integrating the radio."

DiPietro wrote an early draft of the show's book, but was stumped when considering a musical collaborator. "I thought, y'know, I know a lot of great theater composers, but this story is about the birth of rock & roll; I'd really like to work with a rocker," he recalls.

"And I know exactly zero rockers."

DiPietro's agent passed the script around to some rock & roll-manager acquaintances; DiPietro soon received a call from Bryan, a musical-theater novice.

"He said, 'I just read your script, and I hear every song in my head. I'd love to write the score.' Since rock stars don't call me every day, I was intrigued," DiPietro says wryly. He asked Bryan for a demo.

"The next day there was a FedEx at my doorstep with a CD inside," DiPietro says. "He'd written [what's now] the second song in

the show ["The Music of My Soul"], in which the lead character speaks about what drives him. I listened to it once and I said, I hope he's not crazy, 'cause this is the guy."

The pairing worked so well that, while shepherding *Memphis* to Broadway, DiPietro and Bryan took on a second project. *The Toxic Avenger*, a pop-rock adaptation of the Troma Entertainment horror spoof, opened Off Broadway in 2009. The goofy gross-out comedy, about a New Jersey nerd who transforms into a gooey mound of muscle after bullies push him into a vat of sludge, played more than 300 performances and was named best Off Broadway musical by the Outer Critics Circle.

The songwriters and director John Rando are retooling *Toxic Avenger* for a January run at Houston's Alley Theatre that could, DiPietro confirms, lead to a Broadway production in the spring, depending on theater availability and other factors. "If it doesn't, it'll have a life in regional theater," he says. "It's a really funny, out-there show."

Memphis plays the Cadillac Palace Theatre through December 4. See *Touring* shows.



PHOTOS: TOP, RANDY MORRISON; RIGHT, COURTESY OF BROADWAY IN CHICAGO