

spans rap, soul, funk, hip-hop, rock and downtempo. White-boy funk troupe Whysowhite and MC Young General get the crowd hyped.

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## Venues

**Abbey Pub** 3420 W Grace St (773-478-4408).  
**Beauty Bar** 1444 W Chicago Ave (312-226-8828).  
**Berlin** 954 W Belmont Ave (773-348-4975).  
**Bonny's** 2417 N Milwaukee Ave (773-486-8480).  
**Congress Theater** 2135 N Milwaukee Ave (773-486-6672).  
**Crescendo** 222 W Ontario St (312-787-4480).  
**Crimson Lounge** Hotel Sax Chicago, 333 N Dearborn St (312-923-2473).  
**Danny's Tavern** 1951 W Dickens Ave (773-489-6457).  
**darkroom** 2210 W Chicago Ave (773-276-1411).  
**Debonair Social Club** 1575 N Milwaukee Ave (773-227-7990).  
**8Fifty8** 858 W Lake St (312-455-2776).  
**Empire Liquors** 1566 N Milwaukee Ave (773-278-1600).  
**Empty Bottle** 1035 N Western Ave (773-276-3600).  
**enclave** 220 W Chicago Ave (312-654-0234).  
**Evil Olive** 1551 W Division St (773-235-9100).  
**Funky Buddha Lounge** 728 W Grand Ave (312-666-1695).  
**GrandBar** 1600 W Grand Ave (312-733-1661).  
**Hideout** 1354 W Wabansia Ave (773-227-4433).  
**House of Blues** 329 N Dearborn St (312-923-2000).  
**Jerry's Sandwiches** 1938 W Division St (773-235-1006).  
**Late Bar** 3534 W Belmont Ave (773-267-5283).  
**Lincoln Hall** 2424 N Lincoln Ave (773-525-2508).  
**Lumen** 839 W Fulton Market (312-733-2222).  
**The Mid** 306 N Halsted St (312-265-3990).  
**Morseland** 1218 W Morse Ave (773-764-8900).  
**Neo** 2350 N Clark St (773-528-2622).  
**People Lounge** 1560 N Milwaukee Ave (773-227-9339).  
**The Red Canary** 695 N Milwaukee Ave (312-846-1475).  
**Reggie's Rock Club** 2109 S State St (312-949-0120).  
**Rodan** 1530 N Milwaukee Ave (773-276-7036).  
**The Shrine** 2109 S Wabash Ave (312-753-5700).  
**Simone's** 960 W 18th St (312-666-8601).  
**Smart Bar** 3730 N Clark St (773-549-4140).  
**Sound-Bar** 226 W Ontario St (312-787-4480).  
**Spy Bar** 646 N Franklin St (312-587-8779).  
**Stone Lotus** 873 N Orleans St (312-440-9680).  
**Subterranean** 2011 W North Ave (773-478-6600).  
**The Underground** 56 W Illinois St (312-644-7600).  
**Underground Lounge** 952 W Newport Ave (773-327-2739).  
**V Live** 2047 N Milwaukee Ave (773-489-5483).  
**Villain's Bar and Grill** 649 S Clark St (312-356-9992).  
**Vision** 632 N Dearborn St (312-266-1944).  
**The Whistler** 2421 N Milwaukee Ave (773-227-3530).  
**Zentra** 923 W Weed St (312-787-0400).

PHOTO: JOEL MOORMAN

# Theater



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**CIVIL DISCOURSE**  
Galati leads the charge in rehearsal.

## Acts of war

Frank Galati stages E.L. Doctorow's Civil War epic *The March*. By **Kris Vire**

In 1864, as the tide of the Civil War started to turn against the Confederacy, Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman of the Union Army began a campaign that led 60,000 troops on a scorched-earth march from captured Atlanta to the coastal city of Savannah, Georgia, before turning north through the Carolinas. As they went, Sherman's troops amassed a following of freed slaves, Southern refugees and other hangers-on. The march became a massive collective organism, miles long and wide, both rapacious and transformative.

That's the sense created in *The March*, E.L. Doctorow's 2005 novel about Sherman's campaign. As he did in 1975's *Ragtime*, Doctorow passes historical circumstances through a prism of characters and events both real and fictional.

"It's kind of like *War and Peace* in the way that it foregrounds and backgrounds fictional and historical characters," Frank Galati says recently over coffee at a shop near Steppenwolf Theatre Company, where he's directing his own adaptation of Doctorow's sprawling narrative.

Galati, 68, a longtime Steppenwolf ensemble member, is known for corralling sprawl: His 1988 44-actor adaptation of *The Grapes of Wrath*

won him a pair of Tony Awards, while in more recent years he's directed Tony Kushner's *Homebody/Kabul* and adapted fantastical works by Japanese novelist Haruki Murakami. Galati also has an established relationship with Doctorow, having directed the Broadway musical adaptation of *Ragtime* in 1997.

"Over the years since then, as his other novels have come out, I've always picked them up and read them with great interest," Galati says. "When *The March* came out...it was the one that sort of leapt off the page in a way and suggested, Wow, could this possibly work onstage?"

Galati, who calls Doctorow "a novelist of extraordinary genius," says the author has been more pleased with stage versions of his novels than screen adaptations. "He was not real keen on the movie of *Ragtime*," Galati says of Milos Forman's 1981 film. "He felt that the proportions of the story were unbalanced."

The author confirms this. "Most films automatically take on the burden of realism, of things actually happening on a day-to-day basis," Doctorow, 81, says via e-mail. "The

novel *Ragtime*, for instance, does not operate that way so the *Ragtime* film loses touch with it." The theatricality of the stage-musical format triggers a different reading, he says: "You know you're watching an art work that begins to approximate the nature of the novel, which is not realism but cured up reality."

Doctorow used plenty of primary texts in his research: "letters home, of course," but also Gen. Sherman's memoirs, Union Army medical manuals and lots of photographs. "It was a very well-photographed war—no action shots, but scenes of wrecked towns, dead bodies, or soldiers posing in the field."

Doctorow's characters—including a fair-skinned daughter of her former slave master, a socialite daughter of a Georgia Supreme Court judge, a Confederate con artist who uses the march to take up a new identity, and a host of other Yankees and rebels—will be portrayed by a 26-member cast that includes Ian Barford, Carrie Coon, Shannon Matesky and Harry Groener as Sherman himself.

"[Doctorow's] interest in the American story, over and over again," Galati says, "sort of plunges into the core of America's character by bringing forth hosts of characters who are all facets of the American sensibility."

*The March* is in previews now, opening Sunday 15. Steppenwolf hosts a public conversation between Doctorow and Galati, moderated by Martha Lavey, on Monday 16. See *Resident companies*.

**“Wow, could this possibly work onstage?”**

Theater