

month's guest DJ is another Detroit player, Patrice Scott, owner of Sistrum Records and a key figure in the Motor City's current techno and deep house scene. The goal here is to keep it danceable and eclectic. If you haven't found a reason to head out to this low-key night yet, this is it.

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Venues

The Ace Bar 1505 W Fullerton Ave (312-970-1505).
Beauty Bar 1444 W Chicago Ave (312-226-8828).
Berlin 954 W Belmont Ave (773-348-4975).
Bottom Lounge 1375 W Lake St (312-666-6775).
Chicago Ave between Wood St and Damen Ave Chicago Ave between Wood St and Damen Ave.
Crimson Lounge Hotel Sax Chicago, 333 N Dearborn St (312-923-2473).
Cuvee 308 W Erie St (312-202-9221).
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).
Dolphin 2200 N Ashland Ave (773-395-0066).
Empire Liquors 1566 N Milwaukee Ave (773-278-1600).
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).
House of Blues 329 N Dearborn St (312-923-2000).
Jackson Park 6401 S Stony Island Ave (773-256-0903).
Late Bar 3534 W Belmont Ave (773-267-5283).
Lincoln Hall 2424 N Lincoln Ave (773-525-2508).
LOKAL 1904 W North Ave (773-904-8113).
MC Restaurant 1401 N Ashland Ave (773-489-5600).
Metro 3730 N Clark St (773-549-0203).
The Mid 306 N Halsted St (312-265-3990).
Montrose Beach Lake Shore Dr (312-742-5121).
Neo 2350 N Clark St (773-528-2622).
Paris Club 59 W Hubbard St (312-595-0800).
Rodan 1530 N Milwaukee Ave (773-276-7036).
Schubas 3159 N Southport Ave (773-525-2508).
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).
Subterranean 2011 W North Ave (773-278-6600).
Summer of George Cruise Ship 330 N Wabash Ave at the River (866-213-5568).
Taxim 1558 N Milwaukee Ave (773-252-1558).
Three Aces 1321 W Taylor St (312-243-1577).
Transit 1431 W Lake St (312-491-8600).
The Underground 56 W Illinois St (312-644-7600).
Union Park 1501 W Randolph St (312-742-7529).
Vision 632 N Dearborn St (312-266-1944).
The Whistler 2421 N Milwaukee Ave (773-227-3530).

PHOTO: JOEL MOORMAN

Theater



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RUSSIAN DISCUSSION
Shapiro and Letts confer in rehearsal.

Chekhov list

Tracy Letts puts *Three Sisters* into his own words. By **Kris Vire**

"I made the point on the first day of rehearsal: Unless you speak Russian, you're never going to see *The Three Sisters* by Chekhov in a theater," Tracy Letts says.

On a recent morning at Steppenwolf Theatre Company's offices, the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *August: Osage County* is telling me what to expect from his adaptation of *Three Sisters*. Rather, what not to expect.

"I made a conscious decision pretty early on to strip away all of one thing and then see the places it just couldn't survive without it," Letts says of his version, which reunites him with *August* director Anna D. Shapiro. He removed all of Chekhov's topical references, his characters' quotations of Lermontov and Gogol, all of the Russian patronymics and references to characters' ages and name days—"[not] because I think that stuff's useless or pointless," he says, but because "my guiding principle was to try to deliver his ideas as directly to the audience as I could through the actors."

That spare approach has gotten some push-back, he says, from Shapiro, dramaturg and Russian-theater historian Dassia N. Posner, and cast member Yassen Peyankov, "who's kind of a Chekhov scholar in his own

right," Letts notes. "They have such an attachment to Chekhov. It makes for a great dynamic in the rehearsal room, them sort of fighting to get some of these things back in, me sort of fighting to keep them out."

"It's been a similar process really to when we're working on a new play," Shapiro says later on the phone. "We're in agreement about the goal—to make sure the adaptation embraced the muscular language of Chekhov."

"Sometimes I don't think it pays to be too... beholden," Letts says, choosing the word carefully. "We're not building a totem to Chekhov. We're trying to create a living evening in the theater."

The adaptation came about thanks to Portland, Oregon's Artists Repertory Theatre, which was commissioning new versions of Chekhov's four major plays. "They approached me a number of years ago—before *August: Osage County* hit, I should say—and I needed the bread, so I took the job," Letts, who turns 47 on July 4, says with a wry grin. "I thought, Well, how hard can that be, just putting somebody else's play into my words?"

The author soon learned how hard it was. Every character in his own plays, he says, is a version of himself: "From the most noble, heroic character to just the most venal, disturbing, disgusting character—they're all me," he says. "That's not the case in *Three Sisters*. They're not me, they're Chekhov. That act of trying to interpret his people is not a natural creative act."

Though he's glad to have taken on the challenge, Letts says this is his first and last adaptation of someone else's play. "If I'm gonna work that hard, I'd rather have an original play at the end of it to show for it."

Letts adapted his own script for the film version of *Killer Joe*, slated to open in Chicago August 3. He's also drafted a screenplay for *August: Osage County*.

“We’re not building a totem to Chekhov.”

"They take the screenplay away from me at some point and start figuring out how to actually make the goddamn movie," he says. This fall, he'll reprise his role as George in the Broadway

transfer of Steppenwolf's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

And he's begun work on a new play, about which he'll only say, "It's the play no one's going to like. I told Anna that, and she said, 'It's about time! It's about time you wrote a play that nobody likes. You're due.'"

Three Sisters previews Thursday 28 and opens Sunday 8. See Resident companies.

Theater