

 /nightspots

 @nightspotschicago



nightspots

weekly nightlife section in



the DISH

Weekly Dining Guide in
WINDY CITY TIMES

SAVOR

Leviathan and Portsmouth

BY ANDREW DAVIS

Saying (or writing) that imbibing and dining, respectively, at the dana hotel and spa's **Leviathan** and **Portsmouth** (660 N. State St.)—both of which The Fifty/50 Restaurant Group developed—is “simply unique” isn't really enough to describe what these spots offer.

Leviathan (LeviathanChicago.com), located on the second floor, has items from the mind of mixologist Benjamin Schiller, who has said his attention-getting cocktails (in terms of taste as well as glasses/cups/vessels) were inspired by mythical creatures of the sea. (The restaurant group is also responsible for the visually eye-widening concoctions in the rooftop spot Apogee, like the Mr. Nice Guy that's served in a bong.)

For example, take the drink called the Leviathan. It includes gin, North Shore aquavit, ginger syrup, rum, lime, angostura, mint and—wait for it—shaved bonito flakes, the latter ingredient reinforcing the whole nautical theme. Other drinks have names such as Davy Jones' Locker, Below Deck Sazerac and the Kraken (which contains, among other things, squid-ink tuile, naturally). However, if you're not feeling too adventurous, there are generous lists of wine, beer, whiskey and the like.

After dining, take the stairs down one floor to Portsmouth (PortsmouthChicago.com), which its website says is “named for the idea that seafood



Food at Portsmouth (above) and drink at Leviathan (below).

Photos by Andrew Davis



is common in most port towns and that a chef is a food 'smith,' or craftsman.”

A recent media event allowed for some tastings of seafood items that exhibited a global fare. (Dishes are divided into “Raw + Lightly Cooked,” “Appetizers,” “Bread Service,” “Entrees” and “Middle of the Table” (side plates).)

As with Leviathan, visual presentation is key (and flawless). The uni dish was an enticing mix of lychee, candlenut and sea salt that allows diners to simply pop off the fruit's top; while Fancy Oyster—oyster with foie gras, yuzu flake daikon and green apple—came in a case that could've doubled as a jewelry box.

Fortunately, the dishes tasted as good as they looked. I especially appreciated the turbot with Meyer lemon (an ingredient I haven't seen too

often after it seemingly peaked a few years ago). The fish was meaty (yet tender) without actually being too fishy. And the rumaki (with scallops, pork belly, green papaya, lemongrass carrot puree and ginger confit) was simply heavenly. The desserts are must-haves as well, with dishes that constantly surprise (in terms of what's presented as well as the fact that things don't taste like they look).

Now an experience like this doesn't come cheaply. Entrees run \$29-\$62 each (the upper

edge going to the grass-fed ribeye, one of the few non-seafood entrees), and even rolls are \$2 each. However, if you manage to save your money or have a special occasion to mark, this is the place to hit. (Also, children are welcome, as there's a kids' menu.)

Here's hoping these wonderfully unique spots don't go underwater.

Note: Restaurant profiles/events are based on invitations arranged from restaurants and/or firms.

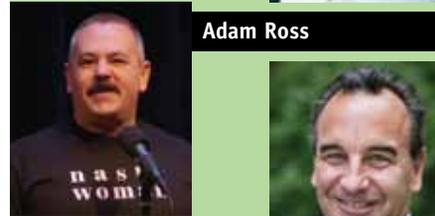
Sidetrack's OUTspoken! Series: September's featured storytellers



Jenn Henry



Courtney O'Connell



Adam Ross



Daniel Ryan



Sadé



Kaelan Strouse



Rohan Zhou-Lee

The September edition of **OUTspoken! LGBTQ storyteller series** takes place Tuesday, Sept. 5, at Sidetrack, 3349 N. Halsted St. Doors open at 6 pm, stories begin at 7.

See www.outspokenchicago.com for more info.

—**Jenn Henry** is a wife, daughter, sister, aunt, friend, dog mom, writer, and 2.5 years sober. She attends Urban Village Church, Edgewater, and is a student at Northwestern University. Her two favorite colors are green and purple, sage and plum to be exact, and she is obsessed with polka dots and the band Phish, much to her wife Leslie's dismay.

—**Courtney O'Connell** is a graduate of Kiddle Kollege ('71), Indiana University ('88), and Loyola University College of Law ('91). She works as an employment attorney at a state agency you've never heard of representing agencies about which you never hear anything good. She is looking forward to bankrupting the state with her bloated pension when she retires in 7 years, 10 months and 25 days.

—**Adam Ross** is a writer and frequent storyteller at curated storytelling shows and Moth StorySLAMs in San Francisco, Los Angeles, New York City and Chicago. In addition to Adam's creative projects, he has spent the last two decades working for technology companies in various legal and business capacities, where he has almost mastered the art of cat-herding.

—**Daniel Ryan** and his husband, Patrick, have two grown children whom they adopted as an openly gay couple in the early '90s. He has served on the National Board of Family Equality Council and the National Board of Welcoming Schools with Human Rights Campaign (HRC). He is also featured in the documentary, Out and Proud in Chicago. As a former Peace Corps Volunteer, openly gay educator, and gay parent, Daniel has advocated for LGBT parents for nearly 25 years.

—**Sadé** is a comedy writer who hails from the south side of Chicago. Her truthful, yet amusing stories provide a unique perspective on navigating through life as a Queer Black woman. You may have seen her on the stages of The Annoyance Theatre, Second City and The Laugh Factory.

—**Kaelan Strouse** is the creator of the blog On-TheRoadToBliss.com, about his journey learning to be happy. He wrote and directed the award-winning film Legend of Amba and has acted in TV shows, films, commercials and stages across the country. He is a Wildcat (graduate of Northwestern), as well as the Conservatory at The Second City.

—**Rohan Zhou-Lee** is a ballet dancer, classical trumpeter and writer in the Chicago area. Recent performances include: Homage, which pays tribute to Asian American survivors and victims of police brutality; The Soldier's Home, a play (that they wrote), which follows a female veteran struggling with PTSD from the War in Iraq; Indiana Ballet Theatre's Cinderella as the Autumn Cavalier; and Chicago Ballet Festival's Nutcracker as the Spanish lead.



Mother Monster and her little monsters at the Lady Gaga concert at Wrigley Field.

Photos by Jerry Nunn





BILLY Masters

"You need some manners 'bruh'. I didn't need to stop to take that picture with you. Just rude. Very rude."—The diminutive **Nick Jonas** responds to a tweet from Zak Hanzal, who posted a photo he took with Jonas on the street with the caption, "@NickJonas u need a few more inches bruhh." We can only pray Nick has those extra inches where they count.

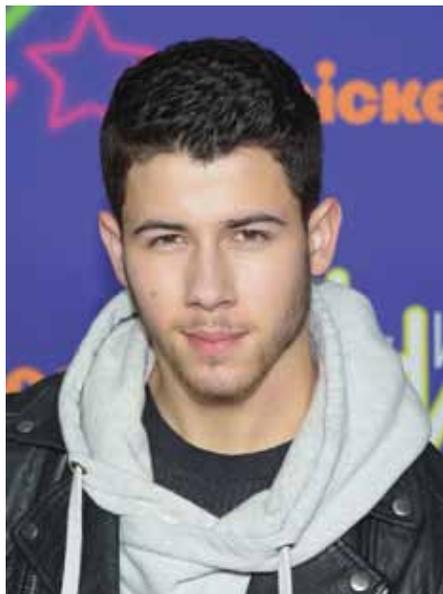
Where were you when **Princess Diana** died? For my generation, that's our touchstone—like JFK getting shot. I had just moved to LA and was in my new apartment. I'll never forget watching Diana's funeral. I had just fixed dinner for my very hot pharmacist boyfriend. (I may have been new in town, but I arranged to have a hot boyfriend in advance.) At the sight of Diana's casket being drawn through the streets of London, I had an overwhelming feeling. I believe the polite term is "horny." I can't explain it. I guess the combination of a funeral and a hot guy with access to prescription drugs overwhelmed me.

What is the end of the summer without **Jerry Lewis**? When I feel a chill in the air, I prepare to see Jerry on TV. This year was no different—except it was coverage about his death. He's been absent from our screens for the past few years after being unceremoniously ousted prior to the 2011 Muscular Dystrophy Telethon. I'm sure Jerry was no walk in the park. But whenever I think of Labor Day, Norm Crosby, or Maureen McGovern, I think of Jerry.

This past Friday, our president began banning transgender people from serving in the military. Phase one is stopping transgender individuals from being recruited. Along with that, he has asked Defense and Homeland Security to ascertain "how to address transgender individuals currently serving." In protest, MTV invited active-duty transgender troops to appear at the Video Music Awards. Walking the carpet were six members of the armed forces alongside the president of GLAAD—well, you know, GLAAD always finds a way to get involved.

While the U.S. government tries to figure out what to do with transgender people, **Richard Simmons** is coming out with his top five reasons why he isn't one, saying, "1) I am male, 2) I am not transgender, 3) I have never sought nor obtained any medical treatment or procedure designed to transition from male to female, 4) I have never had breast implant surgery, 5) I have never consulted with any medical professional regarding sex reassignment surgery." This isn't done to brag—it's part of his lawsuit against the National Enquirer and its cover story last year that he was dropping out of sight to become a woman named Fiona. He added, "The false and fabricated claims that I was contemplating 'castration' and have had a 'boob job' have caused me extreme embarrassment."

Charlie Carver and **Colton Haynes** are back on Teen Wolf—as a couple! The reveal of Ethan and Jackson was included in a preview for the episode that aired this past Sunday. Many people have



Nick Jonas didn't take kindly to a fan's comments, **Billy** says.

Photo by Michael Loccisano

pointed out that this is one of the rare cases of a gay television couple being played by two gay men—how quickly people forget Ellen. If you're into that sorta thing, tune in quickly—the series finale is Sept. 24.

Meanwhile, on Broadway, some people are coming and some people are going. **Ben Platt** has taken Broadway by storm with his sensational portrayal of the title role in *Dear Evan Hansen*—but all good things must come to an end. He'll be leaving the show on Nov. 19. So, who will be the next *Evan Hansen*? The first one is **Noah Galvin**, late of *The Real O'Neals*—and the one who gave that loathsome interview to *Vulture* where he basically trashed his colleagues, his work, Colton Haynes and (worst of all) his fans. He may be a name, but a somewhat tarnished one. That said, perhaps he's a lovely boy who has grown up and will do a good job.

Happily, he'll be holding the spot for a real star—**Taylor Trensch**. Taylor is currently appearing opposite Bette Midler in the revival of *Hello, Dolly!*, as Barnaby. His scenes are a HOOT, and he really deserves this break. And he's cute as a button (not like I collect buttons or anything).

Proving you can't keep a funny lady down, **Kathy Griffin** has announced a world tour, appropriately titled "Laugh Your Head Off." And it is truly a world tour. It kicks off in New Zealand on Oct. 19 and then continues to Australia and Singapore before shifting to Europe and wrapping up in Iceland. 'Cause until you play Reykjavik, you haven't played the top.

Don't ask how or why, but **Shania Twain** suddenly feels compelled to explain to us what some of the references in her 1997 hit "That Don't Impress Me Much" actually meant. She said, "I remember I had a girl friend visiting me and it was near Christmas and we were baking cookies. I was writing this album 'Come On Over' and there was a scandal of Brad and Gwyneth where there was naked photos of him. And this was like all the rage. I just thought, 'I don't know what all the fuss is about.' I'm like, 'Well, that don't impress me

much. I mean what is all the fuss. We see people naked every day. That's really what I thought." Really? I was sure the song was about shrinkage.

Hundreds (and I do mean hundreds) of you have been writing to me asking if I have **Tiger Woods'** penis. I swear I never touched it and never wanted to. But, you know, different strokes—HA! Apparently some pics were stolen by a hacker who got into **Hope Solo's** phone. (P.S. If you're a straight man reading this and have the chance to go anywhere near Hope's vagina, put on a hazmat suit first.) Anyway, yes, I've got the photo. Yes, I think many of you would like to see it. So, sure, I'll put it on BillyMasters.com.

When Shania and I aren't impressed much, it's definitely time to end yet another column. If you'd like to get some wood ... literally, check out BillyMasters.com, the site that appreciates the little things. And if you have a question, by all means drop a note to me at Billy@BillyMasters.com and I promise to get back to you before I launch a Labor Day Orgy in Jerry's memory! Until next time, remember: One man's filth is another man's bible.