

Comedians create new podcast that shows the lives and stories of South Chicagoans



Darcel Rockett
Chicago Tribune

“Ain’t no side like the South Side ... South SIDE!”

For fans of Comedy Central’s “South Side”— a show that follows two ambitious friends in Chicago’s Englewood neighborhood, working at a rent-to-own store — the refrain is not new. It’s reiterated in the show’s theme mu-

sic every week, and for South Siders it just states something we already know: the stories that come out of the that part of the city are as unique and interesting as those who pop-ulate it.

The cable show ended its first season this week, but not before giving fans something to hang on to until season two —10 episodes of a WBEZ pod-cast, “South Side Stories,” a collaboration with WBEZ Chi-cago and Comedy Central, that

looks at real people and places that inspired by the TV show. The show usually has local comedians interviewing local residents about people, places and things that all South Siders can relate to. Hosted by “South Side” creators and executive producers Diallo Riddle and Bashir Salahuddin, the podcast has shined a light on musician Arthur DuBois, street vendors, parking ticket debt, and steppin’ at the 50 Yard Line (legendary night

spot) among other things. “Growing up on the South Side, these are people and places that I knew, that I grew up with, but didn’t always see depicted,” said James Ed-wards, a podcast producer. “I saw the show and the podcast as an opportunity to showcase

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Q How do you decide what stories to tell, there are so many on the South Side?

A **Bashir Salahuddin** Every season starts organical-ly. The writers tell each other stories, or what we did over the break. People will tell anecdotes about stuff that happened to them the last time they were in Chicago at their mama’s house or the last time they went to high school reunion because I think with all of our stories we want to start with a real place and then let the universe get fun as we go. There are stories that we didn’t get around to telling in season one that we still love to death, we just didn’t have time. We have saddlebags full off ideas and it will be fun to put them through the rubric and have the writers chop it up and see which ones make us smile the most because those are the ones that will go into season two.

Q You have “South Side” and “South Side Stories” and “Sherman’s Showcase,” do you have a favorite child?

A **Diallo Riddle** Absolutely not, we love both shows. I’m looking forward to diving more into Chicago politics. It’s often too easy to say, ‘Oh, Chicagoland is so corrupt,’ but I think that we’re going to take a different tack on it. I think we’re going to do more exploring of politics on a local level next season with two guys running for the alderman position. I always heard about Bobby Rush and how he was always a kingmaker, we think that area is ripe for comedy.

Q What’s your favorite South Side story?

A **Bashir Salahuddin** One of my favorite stories that I think we’re going to tackle in season two is the subject of drill team – the all girl dance team, the ones who march in the Bud Billiken Parade. I’ve never seen it done on television in a comedy. We’re going to do a story about mentorship and getting these young girls in shape and it’s going to be super fun, big and flashy. These are things that I remember growing up. I think it’s such a ripe area for Chicagoans, specifically because it’s so big a part.

Q Is “South Side” for transplants or South Sid-ers themselves?

A **Bashir Salahuddin** Diallo’s from Atlanta and I’m from the South Side of Chi-cago – there is a commonality of experience there. I think this show is accessible to anybody who is familiar with an urban environment, anybody who has a side hustle – people trying to get their entrepreneurial hustles on. It doesn’t matter who you are or where you’re from, the core of the show is really, really great comedy. If you like great comedy, this show is going to be appealing to you. We write it for everybody.

More in Comedy Section C1

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‘Dolemite’ will not Appear in Many ChicagoTheaters

Movie Staring Eddy Murphy is being reserved for Streaming Costumers

Michael Phillips
Chicago Tribune

Financed by the stream-ing behemoth Netflix, the new Eddie Murphy comedy “Dolemite is My Name” enters the marketplace Thursday evening with a couple of sharp angles of interest. It’s a film-nerd movie, about the unlikely making and ultimate success of proto-rapper and stand-up comic Rudy Ray Moore’s 1975 action film, “Dolemite.” And it signals Murphy’s return to R-rated comic form, supported by a wealth of African American comic talent on screen, in-cluding Wesley Snipes, Chris Rock and Craig Robinson.

So why is it opening in a mere two theaters in Chicago and environs?

A hit at the recent Toron-to International Film Festi-val, “Dolemite is My Name” playing the Studio Movie Grill Chatham, on West 87th Street, and the New Vision Theatres Cinema 8 in Lansing, just west of Munster, Indiana. Call the theatrical scarcity of “Dolemite is My Name” a result of the ongoing stand-off between Netflix and the nation’s largest movie theater chains. Netflix begins stream-ing the Murphy film Oct. 25.

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Beifuss, Memphis
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Eddy Murphy Stars In New Netflix Movie ‘Dolemite Is My Name’

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