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Toronto musical Broadway-bound Canadian Stage Company's 'The Story of My Life' reworked by pair for 2009 Great White Way debut

By Richard Ouzounian

Maybe we'll have to call Berkeley St. "Broadway North."

The Story of My Life, a musical by Torontonians Neil Bartram and Brian Hill that had its world premiere at the Canadian Stage Company's Berkeley St. Theatre in 2006, looks like it's headed to Broadway.

According to Playbill.com, the wheels are in motion to bring *The Story of My Life* to the Great White Way in January 2009 at a theatre to be announced, with producer Chase Mishkin at the helm.

Mishkin, one of the producers of the critically acclaimed rap musical *Passing Strange*, has been producing on Broadway since 1996. Her biggest success was presenting *Dame Edna* in the 1999-2000 season, for which she won a Tony.

The Story of My Life is an intimate musical about the life-long relationship between two friends. Bartram and Hill, its authors, have been life and professional partners since they met during the Toronto production of *Forever Plaid* in 1993.

They began writing in 1996, with the inspiration, Hill said during a 2006 interview, being "an idea about how a friendship that begins in childhood can change the trajectory of two people's lives, but you only realize it in retrospect."

After years of workshops, the 2006 production at the Canadian Stage Company drew mixed to negative reviews, but artistic producer Martin Bragg insists "I was always proud of Neil and Brian. They worked so hard and continued to make changes all during the run."

Once the show had closed, they returned to New York (where they have been living since 2001) and took it to veteran director/lyricist Richard Maltby, Jr. (*Ain't Misbehavin'*, *Miss Saigon*) who had them rewrite the musical considerably.

At a presentation last fall at the **National Alliance for Musical Theatre**, *The Story of My Life* received standing ovations and most insiders felt it was only a matter of time until it was produced.

Bartram, contacted yesterday in Manhattan, felt it "was a bit premature for a statement" but confirmed that "Mishkin intends to bring *The Story of My Life* to Broadway in early 2009."