



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE 52ND STREET PROJECT PROJECT UPDATE

FULL-COLOR WEB EDITION • VOL. 77 - AUGUST, 2017 • GEORGE BABIAK, EDITOR



ALL TOGETHER NOW: THE UNITED PLAYS
THE SPRING, 2017 PLAYMAKING SHOWS

Everybody loves it when the youngest, newest kids at the Project write plays for adult actors to perform. The latest Playmaking shows took place at the Five Angels on Mar. 31 through April 2nd.

THE DESIGN AND TECH TEAM
Amy Cain, Chris Rumery,
and Crystal Thompson Costume Designers
Greg MacPherson Lighting Designer
Tim J. Lord Sound Designer
Kaleigh Bernier Stage Manager



1. Aaron Costa Ganis couldn't hold a bat properly but showed Coach Danielle Davenport that he could win in Amari DuBose's *Home Run*, directed by Gus Rogerson.
2. Brandon Dirden was a tech support rep assigned to Crystal Dickinson in Nyla Blake Soden's *You Have Reached 866*, directed by Stephanie Jean Lane.
3. Michael Braun was a hammer, Carson Elrod was a nail, they were married, and the rest was Project history in Joel Gokalp's *Two-Faced*, directed by Austin Regan.
4. Michael Potts and Nancy Giles were oppressed lollipops working in a factory in *Lost Twins*, written by Faith Villanueva and directed by Chelsea Hackett.
5. Kimora Moore's *The Lie of the Statement*, directed by Rachel Levens, told the tale of two sister snowmen (Rosa Gilmore and Leslie Fray) who were living a lie.
6. Raul Castillo was a happy-face sticker who could not properly fill a Starbucks' order for #2 pencil Billy Crudup in Jayden Alvarado's *The Adventure of the Cappucino*, directed by Korey Jackson



YOUR OFFICIAL RECAP OF THE LAST THREE MONTHS OF 52ND STREET PROJECT HISTORY.

PLAYMAKING PHOTOS BY WINSTON RODNEY



Both Together, written by Gilbert Rosario and directed by Martin Moran, cast Micah Stock and Eliza Huberth as adult siblings trying to be good family to each other.



Kyle Cameron and Bjorn DuPaty were highly committed ping-pong players in Yousef Altareb's *The Tournament*, directed by George Babiak.



Lily Balatincz was a street stray and Zoe Chao a pampered lap dog in Kailey Canton's *It's Not True*, directed by Anne Troup.



A young mom (Mirirai Sithole) and a disco lamp (Nikki Massoud) became unlikely BFF's in Gianna Hires' *Best Friends Forever*, directed by Sarah Krohn.

SHOW PHOTOS BY WINSTON RODNEY; KID PIX BY GRB

TWO NEW KIDS IN TOWN

We're pleased to report that we've got two new guys on the Project team!

Ahmed Attia, Development Associate, is a Project alum and a graduate of Lehman College where he earned his BA in History and in Theatre. He is currently working on earning his master's degree in History at Lehman College as well. Prior to re-joining the Project, Ahmed was a part of the Whitney Museum's membership team for 2 years. He was also an Educator at the New York Historical Society, where he enjoyed guiding kids of all ages through the museum's exhibitions. More than anything, Ahmed loves tennis, despite a woeful record playing for the Lehman College tennis team (a record Ahmed refuses to speak about or acknowledge).

Brian Freeland, Production Manager, taking over the reins from Tim J. Lord (see page 6) joined the Project in this summer of 2017. Prior to that he ran a number of independent theatre venues in Denver, Colorado. Brian is a director, writer, sound, and media artist having worked nationally and internationally for the past 25 years. He was a founding member of The LIDA Project where he served as artistic director from 1995-2015 and a co-founder of Countdown To Zero, a political theatre collective. Brian received his education from the University of Colorado at Denver and The American Musical and Dramatic Academy.

Ahmed and Brian are already occupying their desks and keeping them very orderly. Be sure to say "Hello" next time you're wandering around the Clubhouse.



GRB

THE COMEDY OF ERRORS: SERIOUS FUN



Every two years, as a kind of “Senior Project,” The 52nd Street Project’s Teen Ensemble mounts a full-length Shakespeare play. Since we had a pretty fun-loving group of teens, we decided to do “The Comedy of Errors,” which tells a tale of mistaken identity concerning not one, but two sets of identical twins. After a fine pair of shows at the Five Angels Theater on June 23 and 24, we flew to California to do two more performances: one at the home of Aenor Sawyer and Melinda Griffith in Bolinas (a cool town north of the Bay Area) and one at Z Below in downtown San Francisco. In addition to the shows, the teens expanded their horizons with some sightseeing and fun. Here are photos of the shows and the trip.

WINSTON RODNEY



The cast, as seen in the climactic scene in New York: From L to R, Britney Trinidad, Edelys Guerrero, Enrique Caballero, Jasmine Correa, Daniel Martinez, Ashley Thomas, Tatiana Goode, Jose-Maria Aguila (who was also our director), Faisal Afridi, and Chayse Peña. Also on the trip were staffers Natalie Hirsch (San Francisco is her home town), Carol Ochs, George Babiak, and Garrett Kim.



In Bolinas, we were helped immeasurably by Frances McDormand (in blanket), Eric Karpeles (topmost), Mike Sell (in fur hat), and Wendy vanden Heuvel (far right).



Britney gave up her graduation ceremony to do the trip, but we made sure she received her honors after the show in Bolinas.



Traveling and performing take a toll, especially at tech rehearsals. The energy at Z Below soared considerably during performance, though.



And then there was that amazing 6-hour boat excursion around the Bay: Alcatraz, the Golden Gate Bridge, Angel Island, Sausalito, Fisherman’s Wharf, and much more.

BLOCK ISLAND 1-ON-1'S - JULY, 2017
KIDS ACT WITH ADULT PARTNERS



Lovely Ramirez and John Sheehy did their own spin on Lewis Carroll's *Wonderland* in *Hover and Out*, which John also wrote.



Sebastian Roy was a ventriloquist who brought his small partner to doctor Ahmed Shabana for hand surgery in Itamar Moses' *The Dummy*.



Gilbert Rosario and KeiLyn Durrel Jones were identical twin bank robbers in search of a better life in KeiLyn's *Career Criminals*.

**STUFF AND NONSENSE:
 PLAYS FROM THE PROP CLOSET**
THE BLOCK ISLAND ONE-ON-ONES

Just weeks ago, the July set of the Summer One-on-Ones took 10 kids and their adult partners to beautiful Block Island for a solid week of rehearsing, eating, and splashing in the waves. Afterward, we returned to NY to stage the show at the Five Angels Theater. On this page and the next are some glimpses of the performances on July 21-23.

THE DESIGN AND TECH TEAM

Lily Prentice Costume Designer
 Ry Burke Lighting Designer
 Jackie McKenna Sound Designer
 Jenny Peek Stage Manager

THE B.I. HOSTS

Carl Kauffmann, Socha Cohen; Kate & Sam Bird; Cathy Joyce & Nigel Grindley; Katy Homans and Patterson Sims; Susan Matheke & Willie Feuer; Susan & Ray Torrey; and Virginia Dare.



Faith Villanueva was the hungry small fry in Stephanie Jean Lane's *Little Fish, Big Beef* while Stephanie played the burger-hoarding Mermonster.



Elizabeth Irwin's *Two Sisters* cast Morgan Smalls and Naomi Lorrain as siblings determined to serve chicken pizza to Mrs. Santa Claus.



A Customer, by Sarah Hammond, featured Nyla Blake Soden as a novice travel agent and Erin Felgar as her first and only client.



Hannah Leon and Eliza Huberth prepare to take flight in extraterrestrial Eliza's rock-shaped spaceship in *One Beef Taco*, by Lynn Rosen.

ONE-ON-ONE PHOTOS BY WINSTON RODNEY

BLOCK ISLAND ONE-ON-ONE REPORT, CONTINUED



Molly Carden and Love Jones were farm dogs grappling with the new-fangled notion that goats can be pets in Cynthia Kaplan's *New Dog in Town*.



Jose Joaquin Perez was fur baron John Jacob Astor and Aaron Ordinola was a hard-working government official in Tim Lord's *Headwinds on the Hudson*.



A diplomat (Gage Simmons) was compelled to hire a complete incompetent (Hannes Otto) as his assistant in *The Diplomat and Schlub* by Grant Harrison.

DON'T MISS THE SUMMER'S 2ND SET OF ONE-ON-ONES!

**THE 2017
WAREHAM, MASS.
ONE-ON-ONES**

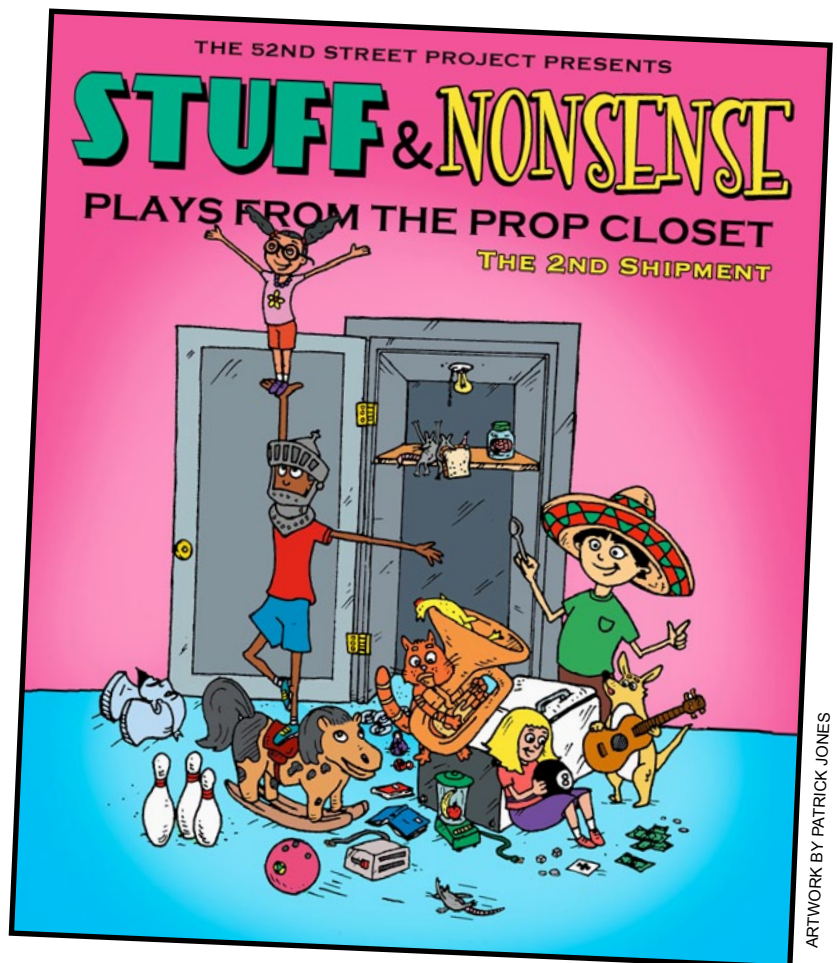
10 **MORE** adult-written plays featuring kids and adults on stage together.

Friday, August 18
@ 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, August 19
@ 7:30 p.m.

Sunday, August 20
@ 3:00 p.m.

THE 52ND STREET PROJECT'S
FIVE ANGELS THEATER
789 10th Ave., between 52nd & 53rd St.



ARTWORK BY PATRICK JONES

Watch each of the 10 teams incorporate a foam-core prop randomly drawn from the Project collection! Tickets are free, but reservations are strongly recommended. Reserve at www.52project.org

BYE, TIM! BYE, NICOLE! BYE, HENRY!



We are sad to have to say goodbye to Tim J. Lord, the Project's Technical Director since the fall of 2014 (see page 2 to meet his successor, Brian) and a writer for us since 2012. Tim's leaving for the best of reasons, though. He has been selected for a year-long fellowship at the Playwright's Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota! His wife, Director Nicole A. Watson, who has been a Proj volunteer for ages (and was an intern for us in 1998!) is moving there with him and will keep directing plays all over the country the way she has been of late.

Tim and Nicole are taking their dog, Henry, with them. Pets don't often find their way into P.U., but Henry spent a lot of time at the Clubhouse during Tim's tenure. We shall miss them all!
-GRB



Hi, P.U. Readers! John Sheehy is still here as the Director of Institutional Advancement, but I'm taking over his sidebar! The following foundations, corporations, and government agencies recently made generous grants to the Project. We are grateful to them for their support as well as to the many individuals who help sustain the Project's programs year-round.

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Benihana/HARU | \$10,000 |
| Bloomberg Philanthropies..... | \$15,000 |
| Cantor Fitzgerald | \$30,000 |
| CBS Foundation, Inc. | \$7,500 |
| Consolidated Edison..... | \$10,000 |
| Dawkins Family Foundation..... | \$7,500 |
| National Endowment for the Arts | \$10,000 |
| Heisman Trophy Trust..... | \$4,000 |
| Hudson Scenic Studio..... | \$2,000 |
| Pamela and Wayne Garrison Family Foundation | \$15,000 |
| Sterling Foundation..... | \$15,000 |
| Susquehanna Foundation | \$5,000 |
| Lambert Family Foundation | \$2,500 |
| The Stavros Niarchos Foundation..... | \$25,000 |
| Tax Pro Financial Network, Inc. | \$2,500 |
| The Brenner Family Foundation | \$25,000 |
| The CLAWS Foundation..... | \$105,000 |
| The Harold & Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust | \$25,000 |
| The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation | \$25,000 |
| The Shubert Foundation..... | \$10,000 |
| Tiger Baron Foundation..... | \$5,000 |
| TZP Group, LLC..... | \$4,000 |
| Zubatkin Owner Representation..... | \$1,000 |

BENEFIT BOX

This year's big annual benefit, entitled *Musical Chairs*, honored some of our longest-running supporters, that is, everyone who's ever been a chair on our excellent Board of Directors. That select group consists of current co-chairs Cathy Dantchik and Louis Friedman and past chairs Wendy Ettinger, Stephen Graham, and Frances McDormand. That's a small number of chairs for 3+ decades, and all 5 are still on the board!

It all happened at the Edison Ballroom on May 8, 2017. The entertainment was provided by four young songwriters from the Project and a host of talented performers who set the kids' lyrics to music and/or sang them.

The kids were Sabrina Caldon, Ricardo Currin, Ayman Musa, and Rosneyri Rosario. The adult performers and composers were Emily Afton, the Bengsons, Wes Braver, Andy Danh, Rachel Dean, Trey Ellett, Celia Keenan-Bolger, Taylor Trench, and Danny Ursetti. As a special, added treat, Project alum and current Boardmember Shirley Rumierk belted out "Three Cheers for the Chairs," a rousing tribute written by Willie (Our Founder) Reale and composed by Henry ("Dreamgirls") Krieger.

1. Shirley sings "Three Cheers for the Chairs."
2. Co-chairs Cathy Dantchik and Louis Friedman at the podium.
3. Sabrina Caldon and her singer Taylor Trench.
4. Ricardo Currin and his singer Andy Danh.
5. Ayman Musa and his singer Shaun Bengson.
6. Rosneyri Rosario and her singer Celia Keenan-Bolger.



-GRB

BENEFIT PHOTOS BY WINSTON RODNEY



In the Stage Combat program that went on through the Spring of 2017, 8 kids teamed up with adult partners to learn the fine art of phony fisticuffs from Joe Isenberg. The kids were then asked to choreograph the moves they learned together into original fight routines featuring characters they developed. It all came together in a harmlessly brutal performance at the Five Angels on Friday, June 9th. Garrett Kim supervised the whole donnybrook and saw it to a peaceful ending.



Grown-up Leta Renée-Alan gave Magalis Viñas a royal cartwheeling for stealing her witchy powers but got her come-uppance in *Witches, Pies, Power, Friendship*.



Long-time Smartners and Play Partners Gabriel Acevedo and Jose Gamo portrayed back-stabbing frenemies in *The Adventure of Real or Fake Friends*.



Professional assassins Karen Tineo and Briana Pozner vied for the assignment of bumping off a certain president in *The Job*.



Pro soccer player Stevens "Aquacate" Velasquez brawled with referee Jose Duran over a bad call in *The Aguacate Special*.



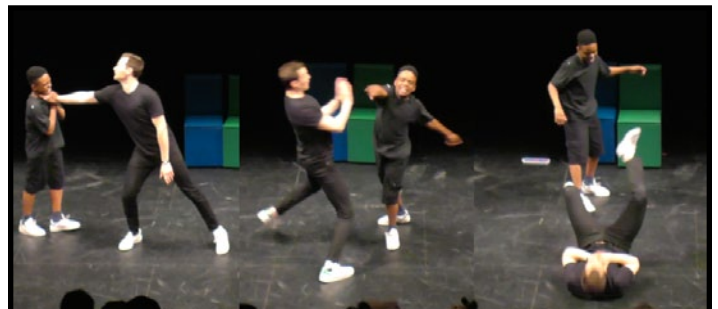
The fight between Stephanie Linas and Beyonce Thomas, two cranky, grocery-shoppers, came to a hair-raising conclusion in *The Boiling Fight*.



Postman Adam Alkindi and sleazy business guy Ian Edlund had to be broken up by security (Tony Macht) at the post office in *Everybody's Worst Day*.



Sally the Giraffe (Lakshmi DeJesus) got her revenge on Stacey the Pesky Girl (Channie Waites) in *Never Make the Fence Too High*.



Brothers Mitchell and Pitchell (Coleman Williams and Neil D'Astolfo) fought over deleted TV shows and which parent was better in *Brothers in Bones*.

A LETTER FROM OUR DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION


The past couple of years have brought much change to my life, most notably the arrival of my daughter Enza. This fills my heart with happiness, now even fuller because my husband Andrew and I are expecting another child, due in November. However, my heart is also heavy because, due to all of this change, I will be leaving The 52nd Street Project. At the end of this year, I will move from New York City, my home for the past 18 years, to Pittsburgh, where I grew up, and where there is more space and resources for my growing family. It will be unspeakably difficult to leave this most rewarding job, working with all of you, our inspiring, creative, and generous children, families, volunteers, and supporters.

While I will no longer be the full-time Director of Education, I will remain a part of the organization's mission as the Clinical Consultant, working remotely and even making regular on-site visits. I'll be supporting my successor and the rest of the staff in various ways, given my background in mental health and 17 years of experience with the organization.

Which allows me to wrap back around to some happy news! I am beyond thrilled to tell you that my successor is the incomparable Johanna Vidal. As you most likely know, Johanna is abundantly qualified for the job. She is experienced and knowledgeable, having worked as the organization's Community Coordinator for the past four years. Her understanding of our population, her empathy for the children we serve, is extraordinary because she grew up in Hell's Kitchen as a member of The 52nd Street Project. Beyond this, she has deep reserves of patience, strength, warmth, and intelligence. You are all in capable hands.

I am honored and grateful to have been a part of this incredible community for such a long and joyful time. Thank you! I hope I get to see each of you in person before I go. But if I am not so lucky, I am comforted by the fact that I will see you at some point, during a return to 789 Tenth Avenue. In which case, I won't sign off with, "Goodbye." Rather, "Until then."

-- Liz Bell



READ FIVE!

Hey, Projectiles! The 19th annual issue of *Five*, The 52nd Street Project kids' magazine is here! We've got free hard copies at the Clubhouse and the theater, but you can download the full-color web edition at our website: www.52project.org.

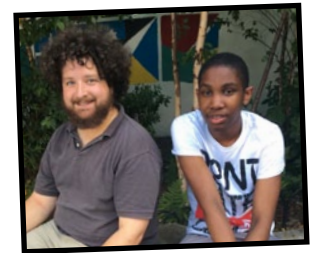
SMART PARTNER PICNIC PICS - JUNE 13, 2017



Ashley, Rosneyri, Rodery, & Michael



Beyonce & Mallory



Eric & Justin



George & Sabastian



Jayleen & Daiva



Kamil & Rory



Stephanie & Yovely



Therese & Lovely



Tim & Emmanuel

MEGABITS



Here are Kate Cusack, Burke Brown, and young Tobin Xavier Cusack Brown, who was born on Dec. 10, 2016. Kate has designed many costumes for us, Burke has lit many teen shows for us, and Tobin... well, he's a happy little guy who loves an audience.



Proj Vols Michael Salinas and Annie Purcell got married in St. Louis on Oct. 15 of 2016 and swiftly followed that up by appearing in our December Play-making show. In April, much to our dismay and their delight, they moved to Chicago. Good luck, you two!



Will Rogers and Rebecca Simone Rogers gave birth to young Miles Orion on March 9, 2017 and composed a limerick to mark the occasion:

*Our baby Marched in like a lion
Of that there can be no denyin'
But even through trials
We're more than all smiles
To introduce Miles Orion*



Maria Goyanes is one of the bright lights at the Public Theater and has directed quite a few plays at the Project. She got married to Mr. David Tarnowski on Sept. 2, 2016.



Sascha Paladino and Erin Torneo are on number 3! Liam Maceo Joseph Paladino was born on May 5 "and his big brothers Gianluca and Cole are very happy and helpful."



David Costabile and Eliza Baldi, who are both illustrious Proj Vols, had a second child named Julia Grace Costabile on March 8th. Their first daughter, Lucy, seems fine with her new sister.



Emma Mira Cleypool-Sherry, was born Sunday, April 9th in Inwood to our wonderful stage manager pal Colleen Sherry and her husband Damian.



Long-time Project director Danny Goldstein and his wife Melissa Lee welcomed little Ezra Glen Lee-Goldstein into their family on May 11, 2017. That's daughter Grace between the proud parents.

TRIP SNAPZ!



Aaron loves tubing on Block Island...



...while Love prefers her trusty boogie board...



...and Morgan and Lovely take the air on the Block Island ferry.



Meanwhile, in California, Enrique finds his lucky number.

NETFLIX

THE INCREDIBLE JESSICA JAMES

It's really cool that Project Pal Jessica Williams has her own movie, but just as cool is that a few scenes in it take place at the 52nd Street Clubhouse! And on top of that, Project kids Selena Sanchez, Andres Mendoza, and Angel Mendoza appear in it! Catch it on Netflix, but it has a TV-MA rating, which means that Project kids can be in it, but shouldn't watch it without parental consent. Sorry, kids!

Flyer Bar Profile

JOSH LANGMAN

What he does for us- Josh came to us as one of long-time lighting designer Greg MacPherson's proteges in 2012. Since then, Josh has designed lights for 6 mainstage Project productions. Our August show, *Stuff and Nonsense: Plays from the Prop Closet*, will be his 7th.

Occupation- "I'm an artist and teacher. As a lighting, sound, and projection designer, I work with various theatre companies around the city and elsewhere. Beginning in September, I'll also be teaching theatrical design at Talent Unlimited High School on the Upper East Side. (Hey, kids — if you're interested in design, come to TU and be in my class!) I also design books, websites, and other such things. And I'm a member of a theatre company that creates devised work."

Why he does what he does- "I make art because human beings need art to make sense of the world, and I like telling stories. I teach because nothing makes me happier than helping other people discover the power and joy of creating original work."

Hobbies- "Letterpress printing with metal type — a technology that's 560 years old."

Last book read- "At the moment, I'm immersed in *Uprooted*, a fantasy novel by Naomi Novik. You should all read it."

Most recent accomplishment- "Among my most recent accomplishments are becoming certified as a teacher and being hired by Talent Unlimited. I'm also writing the lyrics for a new musical about America's first all-female radio station (*Welcome to the Doll Den*, produced by Electric Eye Ensemble)."

Best Project Memory- "I have so many of them. Some of my favorite memories are of directors saying things like, 'We probably can't do this, but I'd really love to see...,' and my surprising them by giving them exactly what they wanted. I also fondly remember a lot of individual plays. That play about the little dragon who just wants to smell the flowers but keeps killing them because he sneezes fire is the cutest thing I've ever seen. I suppose Jonathan Groff calling me a rockstar (after I designed his benefit concert for the Project) should be on this list. Also, volunteering in the Project's scenic design class."

Credo- "Our lives become the stories that we weave." (Lynn Ahrens, *Once on This Island*)

Advice to kids- "Make things. Don't wait for someone to tell you how or give you permission. When I was about eight years old, I made a little stage under my loft bed and designed it with Christmas lights. It's incredible to think that people now pay me to do the same thing — the stages are just slightly bigger."

Place of birth- "I was born in Massachusetts, but I grew up in Allentown, Pennsylvania."

Current Habitat- "As of a few months ago, I now call the Upper West Side home."

Favorite things about the Project- "I love that the Project staff takes the work they produce so seriously. I have heard deeper, more insightful dramaturgical discussions about some ten-minute plays at the Project than I've heard about full-length plays at Off-Broadway theatres."

On Flyer Bars- "The ones with the crunchy rice are essential to your happiness and wellbeing."