



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE 52ND STREET PROJECT

PROJECT UPDATE

FULL-COLOR WEB EDITION • VOL. 82 - MARCH, 2019 • GEORGE BABIAK, EDITOR

THE 2-ON-2'S JAN. 2019

KIDS PERFORM WITH KIDS WHILE ADULTS WRITE & DIRECT



1. In Colleen Werthmann's *Survival of the Fittest*, a devil-may-care YouTube star (Rodery Rosario) and an earnest TV naturalist (Lauren Amador-Cruz) had an ecological clash on the Galapagos Islands. Sathya Sridharan directed.

2. Natasha Davis was Indiana Joan, an art-stealing adventurer, and Ethan Perez was a member of an artist clan who put an end to Joan's plundering in Charly Evon Simpson's *Where It Belongs*, which was directed by Nico Grelli.

3. Garrett David Kim's *Locked Out* cast Lakshmi DeJesus and Stevens Velasquez as teen neighbors who found themselves locked out of their apartments. Some 99-cent pizza helped reduce their friction. Ashley Marie Ortiz directed.

4. Everyone who's ever had to make a speech fears that their dark side may suddenly emerge. That's what happened to Rosneyri Rosario in Rachel Bonds' *Dark Side*. Her shadowy doppelganger was played by Ginaija Hires. Krystal Lucas, the director, kept things on the light side.

5. Magalis Fabian was a cloven-hooved competitor in Adaire Kamen's *The Goat Baaaa-eauty Pageant of 2019*, directed by Arielle Goldman. Darby O'Donnell was the human coach who steered her to the Most Beautiful Goat trophy.



AGAINST THE GRAIN: PLAYS THAT FIGHT BACK
The 2019 Two-On-Twos
 Each January, we match pairs of kids with adult playwrights and directors to create new plays. The 2-on-2's were rehearsed in Nyack and environs and performed Jan. 25-26 at the venerable Five Angels Theater.

THE DESIGN AND TECH TEAM
 Eric March Composer/Music Director
 Carisa Kelly Costumes
 Greg MacPherson Lighting
 Rafe Terrizzi Sound
 Jenni Swan Stage Manager

THE HOST FAMILIES
 Wendy vanden Heuvel, Brian Mertes & Melissa Kievman,
 Susanna Styron, Polly King & John-Paul Newport, and
 Patricia Kahn.

TWO-ON-TWO PHOTOGRAPHS BY WINSTON RODNEY

FALL PLAYMAKING - DEC. 2018 - KIDS WRITE, ADULTS PERFORM



In Marie Alcides' *The Magical Necklace*, directed by Monica Trausch, Shay Vawn adopted a loquaciously elegant cat, Kate Abbruzzese. They found themselves at odds until they discovered that the pendants they wore were two halves of a single, significant necklace.



More cats: *The Cat Therapist and the Artist*, by Tiffany Yam, was about a feline (Ariel Shafir) that wanted to psychoanalyze his owner (Anna Crivelli), who suffered from painter's block. Helen Cespedes was the director.

PLAYMAKING PHOTOGRAPHS BY WINSTON RODNEY



Reynaldo Piniella was a computer whiz and Jasmine Batchelor a cloudy Internet in Naseem Abdul-Majeed's *Hacker's Deal*, directed by Marchant Davis.



Marcelle Orozco's *The Witch and One Fellow* showed us how a dude (Armando Riesco) can be bewitched...literally! Clea Alsip was the spell-caster while Kaaron Briscoe directed the piece.



Angelica Toledo was a good spirit and Marisa Kennedy an assistant to Hades in *Darkness Meets Kindness*, by Laila Suero-Loyola. Kimiye Corwin directed.



Ben Mehl and Carolyn Kettig were Sythstar and Melody, warring musical super-powered entities in *Music's Control*, written by Ethan Cruz and directed by John Sheehy.

HEAD IN THE CLOUDS: THE AMBITIOUS PLAYS

THE FALL 2018 PLAYMAKING SHOWS

Playmaking, which we do twice a year, teams up our youngest kids with seasoned adult actors to create wildly unpredictable new plays. This batch was written on a retreat in Stone Ridge, NY, and performed Nov. 30 - Dec. 2 at the Five Angels Theater.

THE DESIGN AND TECH TEAM

Avi A. Amon Composer/Music Director
 Michael Piatkowski & M.E. Guadalupe Rubi Costumes
 Scott Bolman Lighting
 Stephen Galvan & Sayantee Sahoo Sound
 Caylyn Creager Stage Manager

THE HOST FAMILIES

Steve Gom & Barbara Bash, Sean Cullen & Tess Hartman, Laura Shaine Cunningham, Deborah Freedman, Nicole & Paul Quinn, Lisa Decker, Ciana Proto, Andrew Tingle & Sylvia Greiser, and Charlie & Naomi Miles. Last, but not least, thanks to Iris Brown and Joe White for being our Stone Ridge liaisons and chefs. Oh, and Iris did the art for the flyer, too!

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE 52ND STREET PROJECT
INVITE YOU TO SAVE THE DATE FOR

POWER IN NUMBERS

The only gala that really counts
for The 52nd Street Project

HONORING 52ND STREET PROJECT
"POWER COUPLE"

DAVID COSTABILE
& ELIZA BALDI

05/06/19
6:30 P.M.

The electricity will happen at Capitale on Bowery and Grand St.
For more information, contact Kali "The Power Broker" Crandall
at (212) 333-5252 or crandall@52project.org



SPRING PLAYMAKING, CONTINUED:



◀ Do aliens from other worlds get along? Not a bit, according to Frankie Suero Loyola's *Never Give Up*. The combative extraterrestrials were Geoffrey Cantor, Joshua David Robinson, and Alex J. Gould. Nolan Doran directed the play, in which the three finally came to an interstellar truce.

▶ We're pretty sure that *Woods*, by Andrew Moore, is the first Project play about salamander love. Gardiner Comfort was the amphibious amigo who brought Michael Braun and Kat Almirañez together. Michael Propster directed the piece.



◀ RJ Brown was a dog-wolf and Sol Crespo a cat-wolf in Kaytie Gil's *The 2 Best Friends*, directed by Danaya Esparanza. While being pursued by dog-catchers through woods and around ponds, they realized that they could be, well, "2 best friends."

▶ *Will I Get My Sister Back or Will I Get My Revenge?*, by Hanna Brea, had Mallory Portnoy and Rachel Dratch traveling all over the solar system to find: 1. the killers of Rachel's family and 2. a way to revive Mallory's dead sister. John Sheehy was the science teacher that provided the "alive potion." Eliza Huberth was the director.



SCENES FROM SONGMAKING

SONGMAKING PHOTOS BY RYAN NAVA



The Band



Heath



Friday, Nov. 16 was a magical night that combined the writing talents of kids from The 52nd Street Project and the composing, playing, and singing talents of a host of adult volunteers. The event was **Songmaking 2018: Songs of Hell's Kitchen**, and it was the culminating concert of a program spearheaded by Songmaking Director **Avi A. Amon** and our own **Garrett Kim**.

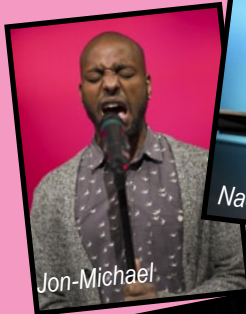
The kids were **Nyla Blake-Soden**, **Amari DuBose**, **Kiara Figueroa**, **Christian Santoni**, and **Jayleen Velez**.

The composers and musicians (current MFA Music Theatre Writing candidates at NYU) were **Kim Jinhyoung**, **Jarrett Murray**, **Sean P. Pallatroni**, **David Trujillo-Tapias**, and **Richard C. Walter**.

The adult singers were **Jen Anaya**, **Kendall Cafaro**, **Nick Choksi**, **Nora Fox**, **Lora Lee Gayer**, **Charlotte Graham**, **Dan Gray**, **Korey Jackson**, **Marina Kondo**, **Nikki Massoud**, **Nadia Quinn**, **Jon-Michael Reese**, **Heath Saunders**, **Jason Tam**, and **Natalie Walker**.

Two of the kid writers, **Christian** and **Nyla**, even stepped up to perform songs of their own. We must also give a big shout-out to **Clayton Grimm**, who was the class assistant AND a musician.

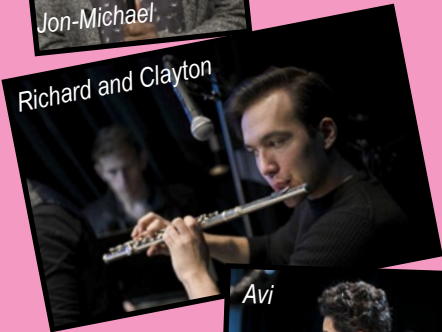
If you missed this glittering display of music and creativity, some of the songs will be encored in grand style at **Power in Numbers**, the Project's annual gala that takes place on May 6 (see page 3 for more details). In the meantime, here are some glimpses of the event. GRB



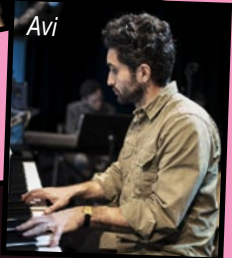
Jon-Michael



Nadia



Richard and Clayton



Avi



Christian



Jarrett



Nyla



Amari and Lora Lee



Charlotte, Jayleen, and Garrett



Kim



Natalie



Klara



Kendall



Korey, Nick, and Sean



Nora

BIG KIDS RAISE GLASSES AS SONGMAKERS RAISE VOICES



Singer Jen Anaya with Project Artistic Director Natalie Hirsch.



L to R: Joseph Martei, Yasmeen Allen Martei, Ashley Baer, and Ashley Henry. At bottom: Brittany Heier



Leta Renée-Alan is good friends with Beyoncé's disembodied head. Who are we to judge?

The 2019 **Big Kids Bash** took place on Nov. 16, the same night as the Songmaking show. This mini-fundraiser for the Project has long been held at cool locations around the city, but this time we thought we'd throw the party at the coolest location: our own Clubhouse.

The theme was **Grammy After-Party** and a large flock of Project Pals snacked on hors d'oeuvres, sipped cocktails, posed with cut-out celebrity heads, and cavorted with props in our photo booth.



Lynne Rosenberg reenacted a role she played in a recent Playmaking show.



Top: Sean Pallatrone, Kim Jinhyoung, David Trujillo-Tapias, Richie Walter. Bottom: Jarrett Murray, Clayton Grimm.



L to R: Marci Wolfish, Dan Wolfish, Will Smith, Jenna Landau, Alex Kaczmarek, and Samantha Kaczmarek.



And, of course, celebrities too numerous to mention. It was a Project party, after all!

THE 19TH ANNUAL PING-PONG TOURNAMENT RESULTS - FEB. 8, 2019



THE CHAMPIONS
"SUPER HIP TURTLE GRANDPARENTS."
Sathya Sridharan & Stevens Velasquez



2ND PLACE
"CATCH 'EM ALL"
George Babiak & Karen Tineo



3RD PLACE
"THE PURPLE RED TEAM"
Walter Olivares & Grant Harrison



4TH PLACE
"SHUT UP BEFORE I SMACK YA"
Yousef Altareb & Ahmed Attia



5TH PLACE
"THE PONGUINS"
Ethan Zenteno & Frankie Alvarez



HONORABLE MENTION
"THE LIONS"
Amari DuBose & Carol Ochs



WACKIEST TEAM
"THE PEOPLE"
Beyonce Thomas & Arielle Goldman



MOST IMPROVED
"LE PING AND LE PONG"
Rosnyri Rosario & Ashley Marie Ortiz



BEST NEW PLAYERS
"TEAM ONE"
Jose Duran & Jayden Alvarado



BEST TEAM NAME
"JELLYFAM, INC."
Ethan Perez & Josh Moody



BEST DRESSED
"N.A.G."
Nikolai Alvarez & Alex J. Gould



GOOD SPORTS
"THE LIGERS"
Ahmed Shabana & John Sheehy

PING-PONG PHOTOS BY CAYLYN CREAGER

Natalie Hirsch, Artistic Director

Kat Almirañez, Playmaking Director

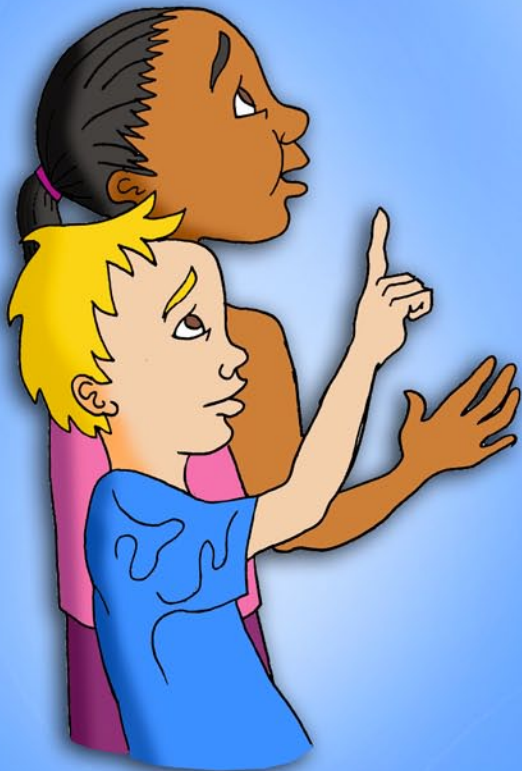
Carol Ochs, Executive Director

THE 52ND STREET PROJECT PRESENTS

OUT OF THE BLUE!

THE
UNPREDICTABLE
PLAYS

THE
SPRING, 2019
PLAYMAKING
SHOW



ARTWORK BY IO PERL-STRAHAN

10
new plays
written
by kids and
performed by
adult actors

ALL PERFORMANCES AT
THE 52ND STREET PROJECT'S
FIVE ANGELS THEATER

789 10TH AVE.,
BETWEEN 52ND & 53RD ST.

FRIDAY, MAR. 22 @ 7:30 P.M.
SATURDAY, MAR. 23 @ 3:00 & 7:30 P.M.
SUNDAY, MAR. 24 @ 3:00 P.M.

ADMISSION FREE, BUT
RESERVATIONS ARE RECOMMENDED.
VISIT WWW.52PROJECT.ORG TO RESERVE.

MEGABITS



We're pleased as punch to report the arrival of another staff baby! Our education director, Johanna Vidal, had a brand new daughter named Nova Dowling on February 17 at 10:03 p.m. We have to show you this fine photo of Johanna, Nova, and proud papa Dallas Dowling.



Here is our friend James Odin Wade and his bride Sonia Saraiya. They got married in New York City on December 13, 2018. The cool thing is that they met when James, a native of Calgary, Alberta, was an intern with us in the fall of 2016.

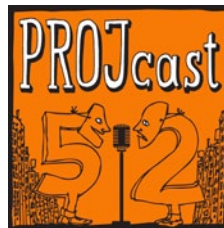
WANT TO DONATE TO THE PROJECT?

It's as easy as 5 + 2! Just visit www.52project.org and click "You Can Help."



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.

Stavros Niarchos Foundation (year two).....	\$25,000
Newman's Own Foundation	\$20,000
The Jean & Louis Dreyfus Foundation	\$15,000
Con Edison	\$10,000
The Lotos Foundation	\$8,000
Frederick Loewe Foundation.....	\$7,500
Howard Ashman Trust for Theater Arts	\$5,000



LISTEN TO US!

We've got our own radio show on the Web! Go to the podcast section of the iTunes Store and search for "The 52nd Street Project" or even just "PROJcast."

When you see the bold, orange Shel Silverstein/Iris Brown logo above, hit "SUBSCRIBE" and start enjoying stories, plays, interviews and more on a monthly basis. See you on the Net, Yvette!

Flyer Bar Profile



◀ Jed at 11.

▼ Jed as a grown-up (with his dog Bean).



Jed Clarke

What he does for us- Jedidiah Clarke is one of those unique Project volunteers who started out as a kid at the Project. He did his first show, *Reluctant George and the Dragon*, in 1993 at the age of 11 and worked his way up the Project ladder, finally playing Bottom in our 2000 teen production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Since becoming a grown-up, he has written, performed, and directed for us many times. His specialty is the One-on-One, having written a play each summer for the last eleven years and appearing in almost all of them with kid partners, who all love Jed.

Occupation- "Writer, Actor, Caregiver."

Why he does what he does- "I love telling stories. When people escape into a story I'm telling, and when I can make people laugh, it gives me the ultimate rush! I'm a caregiver because I love my dad and want to keep him safe."

Hobbies- "Sneaker shopping, going to museums, taking my dog Bean on adventures."

Last book read- "*Ben & Jerry's: The Inside Scoop*. It's fun to eat their ice cream while reading the book!"

Most recent accomplishment- "I got a credit card."

Best Project Memory- "When I was in the Teen Ensemble, there was a dinner thrown by our hosts (in France) for everyone involved in the trip. There were so many people that it had to be in a field for us all to fit. It was so cool. Long story short, the sun set and it turned into the best dance party in my life! Everybody danced, it was such a happy time."

Credo- "Forever changes."

Advice to kids- "Speak loud and clear when you're on stage! (I will never stop saying this hahaha!)"

Place of birth- "Hell's Kitchen, NYC." **Habitat-** "Sunset Park, Brooklyn."

Favorite thing about the Project- "All the different people! I like it how each Project show is a collaboration between people of different generations, backgrounds, ethnicities and identities. I joined the Project after watching my cousins perform in shows there - seeing people just like me on stage made me confident enough to try it. So for me, the Project is a place where I collaborate with people who are just like me, and totally different from me. I wish everyone could have a place like the Project, I think it's amazing."

On Flyer Bars- "I usually eat candy bars in 2 minutes. Flyer bars are the only candy bars that I savor. I can eat them over a 2 day period! They're that good."

KATSNAPZ!

PHOTOS BY KAT ALMIRANEZ

STONE RIDGE PLAYMAKING



▲ Project Philosophy holds that a hearty breakfast is a vital ingredient for a well-written play.

▼ Hanna, Leila, and Marcelle enjoy taking a break from writing with a lively card game.



▲ George gave a lot of lessons at Skate Time 209. Leila is seen here treading the boards with him.

ROCKLAND COUNTY 2-ON-2'S



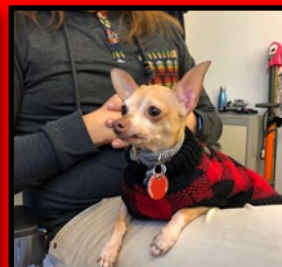
▲ The 2-on-2 kids outside the main house, where all rehearsals happened.

▼ As with writing, a good morning meal makes for better rehearsals. That's intern Marley-Rose Liburd at right.



▲ Magalis marches to the beat of her own drum.

FELIX THE DOG



We almost forgot to mention that The 52nd Street Project is now a monarchy ruled over by King Felix I. Felix is a rescued chihuahua adopted by Garrett Kim and he holds court on a daily basis from any lap that he can commandeer. He is pretty cute, we must admit.