



# PROJECT UPDATE

FULL-COLOR ONLINE EDITION • VOL. 89 - APRIL, 2022 • GEORGE BABIAK, EDITOR

## SONGMAKING CONCERT THRILLS FANS ONSTAGE AND ONLINE

It's good to be back! A highlight of Autumn, 2021 was *Hear Me Out! The 2021 Songmaking Concert*. Five Project members wrote songs that were scored and performed at the **Five Angels Theater** by some very talented adult volunteers on Thursday, Nov. 18. Here's a recap of the event, which was live and livestreamed. Click the artwork box at right to see the video! →



← **Kassandra Sinchi** kicked off the concert by introducing her two songs. **Laura Riveros-Sefair** sang the heartfelt *Para Mis Niños* and **Natalie Walker** did an extremely comic turn with *What Do We Need? Hedgehogs*. Both were composed by **John Brautigam**.

→ **Morgan Smalls** then presented her songs, the first of which was *The Big Stage*, an animal-character duet sung by **Kyle Cameron** and **Angel Desai**. **Adrienne C. Moore** followed them with a powerful *Change*. Morgan's songs were scored by **Joely Zuker**.



← **Kylie Chester's** two songs were very different in mood from each other. The somber *Safety Blanket* was performed by **Vanessa Porrás**, and the cheery *Light* was brought to the stage by **Allie Babich**. **Raijah Rofsky** composed both songs.

→ Our oldest writer, **Alex Torres**, gave us *Kevin Hart*, a song about the comedian/actor of the same name. It was performed by **Marchánt Davis**. **Jon-Michael Reese** then sang Alex's mythic epic *Jack and Tammy: The Mightiest Hammer*. The two songs were composed by **Utsav Bhargava**.



← **Jai-Lyzz Rodriguez** brought in the spirit of play with *A Guide to Create Fun*, sung by **Jen Anaya**. Closing the night was **Ronald Peet** with Jai-Lyzz's positive anthem *You Don't Have to Be Scared*. The music for this pair was provided by **Julio Vaquero Ramos**.



# THEY HAD THEIR CAKE AND ATE IT, TOO!

In December of 2021, we continued to bring children and the plays they write back into the **Five Angels Theater** with our ever-popular Playmaking program. Click the poster below to see a video of the plays seen here!



POSTER ART BY CAYLYN WAN-CREAGER



Schoolmates **Nick Mills** and **Annie Henk** got off to a bad start but fixed it up with music and dance in **Caelnne Arango-Ramirez's** *Untitled*, directed by **Therese Barbato**.



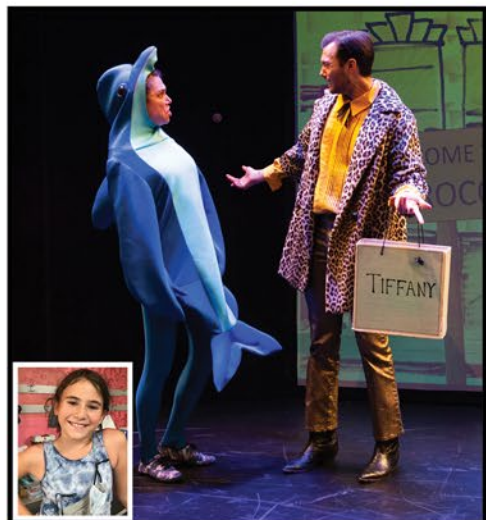
**Ashley Marie Ortiz** was the daughter of celestial bodies and **Sullivan Jones** was Blok O. Cheese in *Sun and Moon*, by **Hansel Benedicto**. **Nolan Doran** directed the piece.



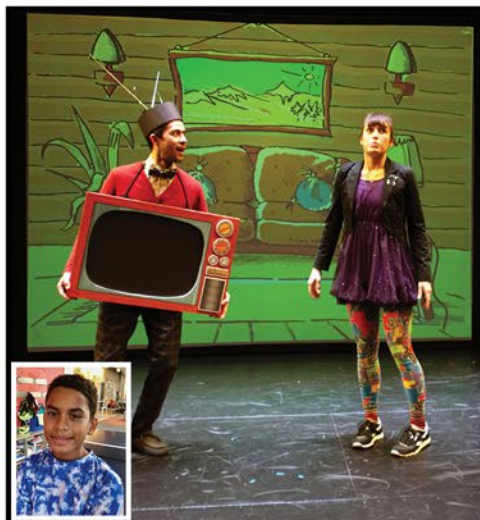
**Lorelei de Campi** treated us to an epic quest in *Of Flights and Fights*. Here, the evil **Skullmancer (John Sheehy)** menaces **Betsy Hogg** and **Keshav Moodliar**. **Marielle Young** was the director.

**PIECE OF CAKE: THE SLICE OF LIFE PLAYS**  
THE FALL 2021 PLAYMAKING SHOWS  
THE DESIGN AND TECH TEAM

|  |                       |
|--|-----------------------|
| Jenny Peek.....  | Stage Manager         |
| Avi A. Amon .....  | Composer/Maestro      |
| Greg MacPherson .....  | Lighting              |
| Lara De Bruijn.....  | Costumes              |
| Evan Schultz.....  | Sound                 |
| Xavier Espinal, Emma Giordano,<br>Ana Gonzalez-Soto, Tina Hughes ..... | Crew                  |
| Katie Bartz, Enrique Caballero,<br>Emmanuel Goicuria .....             | Livestream Team       |
| George Babiak.....   | Props and Projections |



**Daiva Deupree** was a dolphin and **Neil D'Astolfo** a snappy dresser in **Ivy Moayed's** *We Make a Good Team*. **Lynne Rosenberg** directed their journey to Morocco and back.



**Giovanni Benedicto** wrote *Random Friends*, the tale of a friendship between an old TV (**Mitchell Winter**) and a young girl (**Stephanie Jean Lane**). **Sean Kenealy** directed.



*Furniture and Trees*, by **Katty Lopez**, featured **Krystel Lucas** as an efficient office chair and **Christian DeMarais** as a bumbling tree. **Lisa Benavides-Nelson** directed.

PHOTOS BY WINSTON RODNEY



**THE 52ND STREET PROJECT PRESENTS**

NATALIE MARSHALL HIRSCH,  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

KAT ALMIRÁÑEZ,  
ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

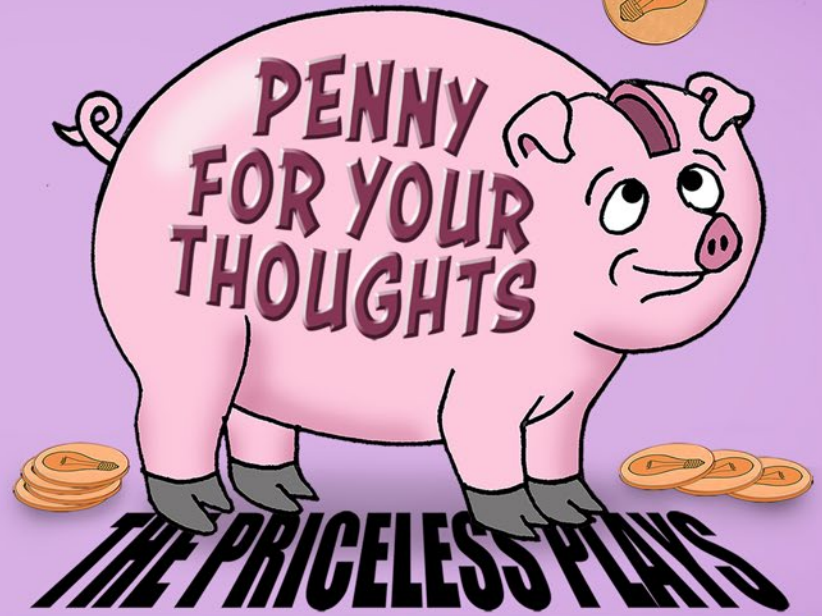
CAROL OCHS,  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**LIVE AT THE  
FIVE ANGELS THEATER  
AT 789 10TH AVE.!**

**ALSO LIVE ON OUR  
YOUTUBE CHANNEL!**

**FRIDAY, APRIL 1  
7:30 P.M.**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 2  
3:00 & 7:30 P.M.**



**THE SPRING 2022 PLAYMAKING SHOW**

CLICK THIS BOX OR VISIT 52PROJECT.ORG  
FOR RESERVATIONS AND INFORMATION



Hi, P.U. Readers! I'm Ahmed, a staff member AND Project Alum! I manage this box nowadays. The following foundations, corporations, and government agencies recently made generous grants to The 52nd Street Project. We are grateful to them for their support as well as to the many individuals who help sustain the Project's programs. ♦

|   |          |   |          |
|---|----------|---|----------|
| The Scott Family Foundation .....           | \$1,000  | Frederick Loewe Foundation.....           | \$10,000 |
| Carnegie Corporation of New York .....      | \$1,200  | NYSICA - COVID Recovery Fund.....         | \$10,000 |
| Greenwich Country Day School.....           | \$2,298  | Rose M. Badgeley                          |          |
| Bull's Head Foundation .....                | \$2,500  | Residuary Charitable Trust .....          | \$25,000 |
| Howard Ashman Trust for Theater Arts .....  | \$5,000  | The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation .....  | \$30,000 |
| Lazard Ltd.....                             | \$5,000  | National Endowment for the Arts.....      | \$30,000 |
| Cantor Fitzgerald Relief Fund.....          | \$10,000 | NYSICA - General Operating.....           | \$49,500 |
| Filomen M. D'Agostino Foundation.....       | \$10,000 | The Seller Lehrer Family Foundation ..... | \$75,000 |
| The Educational Foundation of America ..... | \$10,000 |   |          |

(Gifts received April 6, 2021 - September 21, 2021)



**WANT TO DONATE TO THE 52ND STREET PROJECT?**

It's as easy as 5 + 2!

Just click [HERE](#) to get to our donation page.





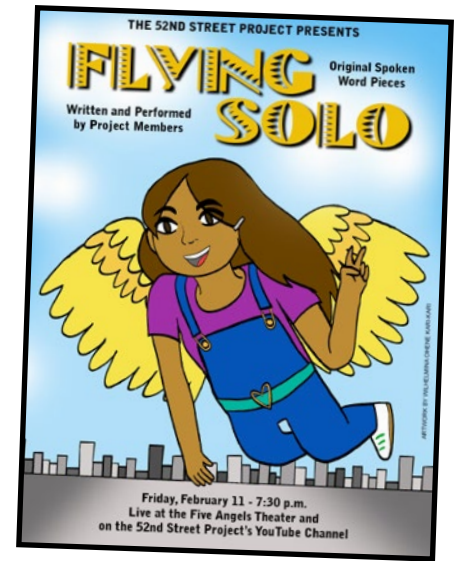
## **FIVE ANGELS TAKE FLIGHT AT THE FIVE ANGELS**

February 11, 2022 was a historic night for us. We've done several live shows in the past year, but the actors were all adults performing works written by our members. ***Flying Solo***, a collection of original spoken-word pieces, marked the return of young performers to the Five Angels stage. All five were ready to spread their wings with monologues they had created for the event.

From left to right in the photo of the group bow below:

1. **Melanie Correa** gave us *Kiara's Potential*, directed by **Michael Propster**.
2. **Kailey Caton's** *Why Are We Friends?*, directed by **Kendall Cafaro**.
3. **Xavier Espinal** with *I Am...*, directed by **Ronald Peet**.
4. **Amari DuBose** presented *AI and the Library*, directed by **Jose Gamo**.
5. **Hannah Leon's** *Charlie's New World*, directed by **Adaire Kamen**.

What did our five angels have to say? Click on the poster art at left and you can see the video of the actual show! ♦



POSTER ART BY WILHELMINA OHENE KARI-KARI



PHOTO BY WINSTON RODNEY

## **SUBSCRIBE TO "THE PROJCAST!"**

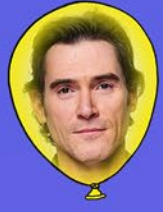
Speaking of "The Spoken Word," did you know that we have a podcast that features the writing and voices of our young members? Well, we do!

Just click on the logo at right and start downloading these fascinating nuggets of information and entertainment! ♦





THE BOARD OF THE 52ND STREET PROJECT, ALONG WITH THE CLAWS FOUNDATION AND EVENT HOSTS **BILLY CRUDUP** AND **FRANCES McDORMAND**, INVITE YOU TO GET YOUR BEAUTY REST, REMEMBER AGE IS JUST A NUMBER, AND SAVE THE DATE FOR:



# 52 IS THE NEW



THE 52ND STREET PROJECT'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY GALA  
MONDAY, MAY 9, 2022 - 6:30 P.M. AT

**CAPITALE**  
BOWERY AND GRAND STREET

COCKTAILS, DINNER, AND AN ARRAY OF NEW SONGS WITH LYRICS  
BY YOUNG PEOPLE AND MUSIC AND PERFORMANCES BY ADULTS.

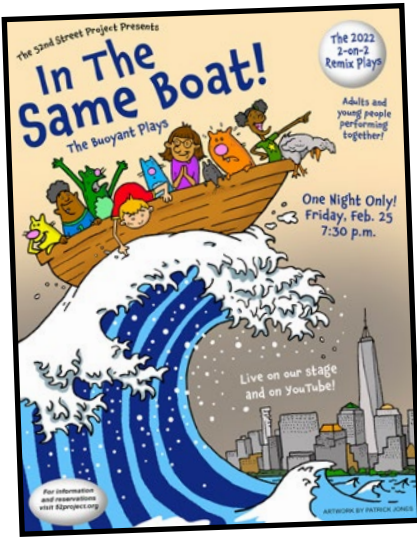
Interested? Click this page or contact John "Four-Oh" Sheehy  
at (212) 333-5252 or at [sheehy@52project.org](mailto:sheehy@52project.org).



# THERE'S NOTHING LIKE A GOOD REVIVAL!

After bringing members back to our stage with monologues (see p. 4), we thought it was high time to have them do some acting as well. The young'uns of *In The Same Boat* had a week-long midwinter break, so we took 7 tried-and-true Two-on-Two scripts from the past, tailored them a bit, and then had the kids whip their shows together with adult partner/directors in a mere five days. We presented them on Friday, Feb. 25. They turned out great and you can still see them by clicking on the poster art below. ♦

POSTER BY PATRICK JONES



Above: **Hannah Santos** played a dual role (she operated a dog puppet) in *Former Wives of Reggie* by **Max Posner**. Hannah's partner was **Alex J. Gould**, who was very fetching in green as the characters exchanged stories about the man they had both married at different times. **John Muca** was a lonely pet owner who brought his cat to veterinarian **Jon-Michael Reese** just to make a friend in *Pet Peeve*, by **Sean Kenealy**.

PHOTOS BY DENEKA PENISTON



**Carina Goebelbecker** was furious at roommate **Hannah Brea** for freezing her goldfish in **Sarah Hammond's** *Frozen Fish*. **Naseem Abdul-Majeed** and **Korey Jackson** scattered a friend's ashes while skydiving in **Beto O'Byrne's** *What We Do, We Do For True*. **Logan Goicuria** and **Tina Hughes** confronted their fears about grandmothers and other things in a mysterious room in *Bunker Brothers*, by **Jesse Liebman**.



**Emily Gardner Xu Hall** and **Kylie Rose Rivera-Beato** discovered they had both auditioned for the Beach Boys in **Melisa Tien's** *Flower Children*. **Kyle Cameron** and **Aidan Vasquez** were rival urban cowboys in a Hell's Kitchen pizzeria in *The Showdown*, by **Sung Rno**. On hand to help us with ITSB was **Kate Gulden** as our Stage Manager, **Bri Weintraub** as the Lighting and Sound Designer, and **Christian Corpening** and **George Kielty** as our livestream cameramen.



# MEGABITS • MEGABITS • MEGABITS



Here is **Naomi Lorrain** with her husband **JP Reynolds** and their new son **Nehemiah Lucca Reynolds** who was born December 1, 2021 in New York City. A Yale shirt, already? Naomi says "We rep our alma mater hard!"



Yale and Harvard on one page? Former ProjKid **Doris Alcantara** is pursuing her Masters Degree in Education Policy and Analysis at **Harvard Graduate School of Education**. We are totally impressed!

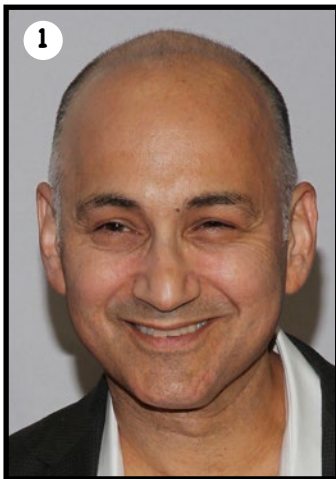


Little **Matteo Petrovski** was born to **Alexandra Lemus** and **Chris Petrovski** on October 8, 2021 in Los Angeles. They appear to be a very happy little family. Maybe Matteo can hang out with Nehemiah someday!



Our Development Manager **Ahmed Attia** and his wife **Nikki** brought **Arthur Francis Attia** into the world on November 23, 2021. They still consider **Dorothy** (the doggie in the photo) to be their first-born.

# IN MEMORIAM



## NED EISENBERG

JAN. 13, 1957 – FEB. 27, 2022

We are deeply saddened about actor **Ned Eisenberg's** passing. In the 80's and '90's, Ned was one of **The 52nd Street Project's** earliest volunteers, and he was a great one. Many remember Ned for his debut in *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, or as one of *The Fanelli Boys*, or his recurring role as Roger Kressler on *Law and Order :SVU*, or even his terrific portrayal of Iago in a 2009 Off-Broadway production of *Othello*. We, however, will always cherish his Project appearances, especially a very poignant one in 2006 called *Autumn's Nest* with **Frances McDormand** directed by **Jessica Bauman** and written by 9-year old **Doris Alcantara** (see her on page 7). Our hearts are with Ned's wife **Patricia** and their son **Lino**. ♦

Photos:

1. Ned with his ever-present smile.
2. Ned with early Project member **Tia Nesmith**, who, sadly, is also no longer with us. (photo by Barbara Ettinger).
3. Ned and **Frances McDormand** in "*Autumn's Nest*."

## EMILIO DELGADO

MAY 8, 1940 – MARCH 10, 2022

March was a hard month for us. At press time, we learned of the loss of our great friend **Emilio Delgado**. Most everyone, of course, remembers Emilio's 44 years of portraying **Luis**, the beloved handyman on *Sesame Street*. In this space, we'd like to recall his days as a stellar Project Volunteer. Emilio performed in a few plays written by our young members and directed several others. He would play any role written for him with gusto and was always unfailingly warm and friendly to everyone who worked with him. Time and again, people approached him to say "I grew up with you!" Emilio's usual answer was a cheery "Of course you did." We will miss him and give our condolences to his wife **Carole** and their family. ♦

Photos:

1. Emilio, as he looked every time he entered our Clubhouse.
2. Emilio in 2006 with **Riji Suh** in "*The Wondering Dog*," by **Jamie Yip**, directed by **Liliana Amador**.
3. Emilio and **Chris McCann** in 2004's "*Best Brothers and Good Friends*" by **Muhammad Cunningham**, directed by **Michael Potts**.





# FLYER BAR PROFILE



**HELEN CESPEDES**

**What she does for us-** **Helen Cespedes** has been an acting and directing volunteer for us since the Fall of 2015. In fact, she will be in the next Playmaking show (see page 3). Right now, however, she is most renowned at the Project for teaching SAT prep classes to a group of our teens. Helen teaches the course professionally for **Bespoke Education**, so it's a great gift to us. Oh, and she is also one of our illustrious Smart Partners!

**Occupation-** "Actor/Writer/Teacher/Smart Partner!"

**Why she does what she does-** "Because I can't seem to shake this need to make things, learn things, and tell stories with people!"

**Hobbies-** "The staff at the Project know quite well that I have a bit of a jigsaw puzzle addiction."

**Last book read-** "Ok, this one's a bit heavy, but *Looking For The Good War* by **Elizabeth Samet**. She uses social and cultural history to analyze the mythology surrounding WWII as "the last good war." Gonna need to read a novel next!"

**Most recent accomplishment-** "Adopting a puppy! Archer 'Archie' Doggoon Puppington!"

**Best Project Memory-** "So many, but most recently, getting to sit in the Five Angels Theater with my AMAZING Smart Partner **Hannah Leon's** mother and brother as we watched her TRANSFORM in her brave and transfixing solo piece in *Flying Solo*." (See page 4)

**Credo-** "*Illegitimum non carborundum*" OR "Don't let the \*bullies\* get you down."

**Advice to kids-** "Stay weird! Your weirdness is your magic."

**Place of birth-** "Boston, Massachusetts."

**Habitat-** "The wild woods of Inwood!"

**Favorite thing about the Project-** "The rush of community that I feel every time I walk into the clubhouse!"

**On Flyer Bars-** "Can I have one?" ♦

## SNAPZ! SMART PARTNER HOMECOMING WEEK

February is a cold month, so we warmed it up by inviting Smart Partner pairs for a special week of new activities, including a *Scavenger Hunt*, *Ping-Pong Pandemonium*, *Vision Boarding*, and *Video Puppetry*.



Alex and Bryanna just hung out.



Aengus and Jimmy scavenged.



Alex, Nikolai, Jayden, and Jose had a rousing ping-pong match.



Angie and Melanie made life plans with vision boards.



Maria and Marielle made a puppet music video. Click the pic to see the end result!