



PROJECT UPDATE

ISSUE #90 ● OCTOBER, 2022 ● GEORGE BABIAK, EDITOR

THE RETURN OF THE ONE-ON-ONES

The 52nd Street Project's longest-running program is the annual summertime One-on-One play festival. Every year since 1986, the Project has taken young members to the country to rehearse and perform two sets of short adult-written musical plays with grown-up partners. The pandemic forced us to put the "Ones" on pause for two years, but 2022 saw the return of our performing pairs. We were not ready to take kids out of town yet, but we did treat each of our two groups to a city-based week of work and fun, followed by full-blown productions of their shows. Our first set, *Are We There Yet? The Location Plays (Part I)* was presented July 22 and 23. Here are photos and recaps:



1. **Kylie Rose Beato-Rivera** was a flashy celebrity pursued by reluctant shutterbug **Gracie Fojtik** in *Pa-Pa Parazzi*, written by **Nina Braddock**.



2. **Ana Soto's** *The Hammer* cast Ana and her partner **Jessica Elie-Pierre** as rather wicked sisters who were both hoping to inherit the same bejeweled candy hammer



3. *The Harrowing History Hitch* by **Tim J. Lord** told the story of two scientist-adventurers (**Michael DeSouza** and **Xavier Valentin**) who were striving to solve humanity's woes.

5. **Michael Propster** was a ghost-hunter in pursuit of the spirits haunting **Edgar Sinchi's** balloon darts booth in *Darts and Coasters*, which Michael also wrote.

4. **Jasminn Johnson** was a "zebra-elephant" conjured up by magical painter **Evelyn Myers** in **Caylyn Wan-Creager's** *Believe*. They teamed up to tackle the evil Lizard of Ev (**John Sheehy**) and won.

6. **Jed Clarke's** *Choices* featured **Christian DeMarais** and **Aiden Vasquez** as a pair of vaguely super-powered heroes who were adversaries turned partners. They teamed up to tackle the evil Corporate Steel (**Xavier Espinal**) and won.

Working behind the scenes on *Are We There Yet I* were **Avi A. Amon** as Composer/Music Director, **Greg MacPherson** as Lighting Designer, **Michael Piatkowski** on Costumes, **Alicia Moeller** on Sound, and **Margaret Gleberman** as our stage manager. Our stage crew were **Evan Schultz**, **Leo Layla Diaz**, and **Xavier Espinal** while our livestream team were **Katie Bartz**, **Sarah Lopez**, and **Kassandra Sinchi**.



PHOTOS BY WINSTON RODNEY

[CLICK HERE TO SEE THIS SHOW ON OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL!](#)

ARE WE THERE YET? THE LOCATION PLAYS (PART II)

On August 19 and 20, we presented the second batch of One-on-Ones, this time with 50% more product! If these still photos aren't enough, click [HERE](#) to see the Saturday night performance on our YouTube Channel.



Hannah Santos was a mean general who sent astronaut **George Babiak** off to capture an alien, also played by Hannah. *Gimme Some Space* was written by George.



Playwright **Max Posner** wrote *Cure for Headache* for **Jojo Perez** and **Emma Ramos**. Jojo was a nurse/doctor/cleaning man forced to attend to dotty dowager Emma.



The Most Amazingest Show On Earth, by **Helen Cespedes**, featured **Alex J. Gould** as a strong-man kangaroo and **Giovanni Benedicto** as a ringmaster penguin.



Aishling Pembroke was a talent-free best friend to promising young singer **Arianna Casiano** in **Molly Carden's** *Happier Than Ever*.



Garrett Kim's *The Curse of Hoo-Ra-Ra* was all about a monster city council. **Jasminn Johnson** was a Type A cyclops and **Alyssa Garcia** was a sweet young werewolf.



Marinda Anderson and **Khailey Peña** had trouble getting out of their cocoons in *Butterflies Are Free*, by **Cynthia Kaplan**. Hardware store owner **John Sheehy** helped.



Sean Kenealy's *The Cheese Tycoon* told the tale of an old man (**Mat Hostetler**) who refused to sell out to an ambitious developer with a cheese obsession (**Hansel Benedicto**).



Ethan Cruz was a young wrestler who sought out the help of a washed-up trainer (**Jose Duran**) in Jose's epic *Coquito Libre*. They succeeded in both their goals.



Arielle Goldman and **Faith Mitchell** were western theme park employees striving to become famous singers in spite of a mean boss in Arielle's *Wild Wild West BFF*.

None of the plays in *Are We There Yet II* would have been possible without the help of lighting designer **Katie Bartz**, Costume Designers **Taylor Barnett** and **Michael Piatkowski** (for *Wild Wild West BFF*), Sound Designer **Evan Schultz**, and our Stage Manager **Betsy Hogg**. The stage crew were **Daniel Henk**, **Kassandra Sinchi**, and **Ally Thomas** and our livestream team were **Katie Bartz**, **Ella Lieberman**, and **Gianna Sheppard**.

PHOTOS BY THE STAFF

Natalie Hirsch
Artistic Director

Carol Ochs
Executive Director

Kat Almirañez
Associate Artistic Director

The
52nd Street Project
Presents

CLICK
THIS PAGE TO
RESERVE!

Artwork Lee Aaron Rosen and Adria Vitlar

THE 2022 PLAYBACK SHOW
**THICK
AS
THIEVES**
THE RELATIONSHIP PLAYS

See the work of
8
young Author/
Actors...

... paired with
8
Adult
Partners!

Friday, October 14 at 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, October 15 at 3:00 and 7:30 p.m.

Live and **FREE** onstage at The Five Angels Theater
789 10th Ave., between 52nd and 53rd St.

Also livestreamed on YouTube! Visit 52project.org for all reservations.

PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS: THE PRICELESS PLAYS

In the Spring, we produced 8 great new plays by 8 great new young playwrights in our bi-annual Playmaking series. The shows happened on April 1 and 2 and can still be seen on YouTube. Just click [HERE!](#)



Isabella Taveras, age 10, wrote *The Hole*. Trapped in that hole were a young shark (**Ceci Fernandez**) and her crab-dad (**Marchánt Davis**). **Annabelle Cousins** directed.

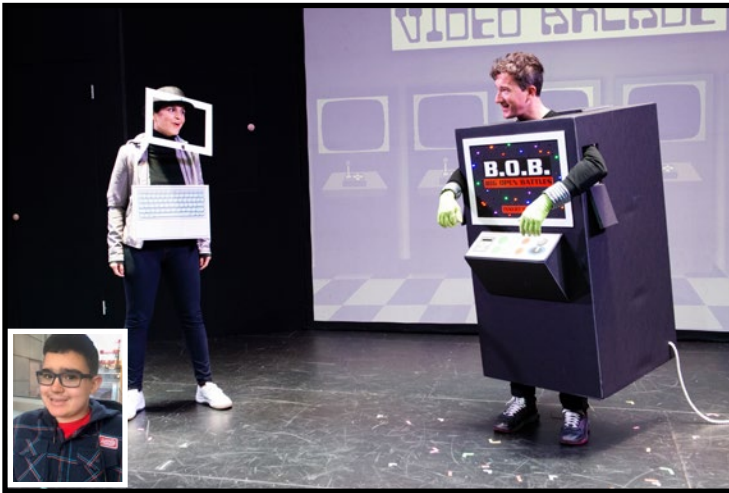


Ben Mehl and **Sasha Diamond** were the title characters of **Alyssa Garcia's** *The Turtle and the Tortoise*. **Arielle Goldman** (who is all over this newsletter) directed the show.



Stephanie Linas and **Reggie White** were a separated-at-birth brother and sister in **Logan Centeno's** *Lamar's Shocking Adventure* which was directed by **Sathya Sridharan**.

PHOTOS BY WINSTON RODNEY



Shirley Rumierk was a laptop who had some conflicts with an arcade video game played by **Carson Elrod**. **Mat Hostetler** directed **Anthony Zappa's** *Mack and Machine*, and it was truly electric.



In **Oliver Tanner's** *An Unlikely Performance*, **Helen Cespedes** was an acrobatic monkey impresario who had to train a new cast member: mountain goat **Jimmy Kenna**. **Gaven Trinidad** was the director.



Grace Rex and **Jose Maria Aquila** were rival shop owners who had to combine forces in *Friendship Struggle*, written by **Ramsis Ramirez** and directed by **Austin Regan**.



Ali Sohaili was the father of a son with an actual cloud over his head (**Mallory Portnoy**) in **Christiana Keorajavongsay's** *Hard to Live to Easy to Live*, directed by **Anne Troup**.



Molly Garden and **Arielle Goldman** were a morose seal and a confident snow leopard in **Annabelle Yam's** *Daisey and Tony*, which was directed by **Jen Anaya**.

The tech team for *Penny For Your Thoughts* was **Erica Ji** as Composer/Music Director, **Jade Barnett-Irons** and **Aaron Conover** as Lighting Designers, **Taylor Barnett** on Costumes, **Evan Schultz** on Sound, and **Jenni Swan** as our stage manager. Our stage crew were **Ana Soto**, **Leo Layla Diaz** and **Jayleen Velez** while our livestream team were **Katie Bartz**, **Christian Corpening**, and **Tina Hughes**.

STAGE COMBAT COMEBACK

The Project's annual festival of fake-fighting returned with a literal vengeance this year. On June 17, 7 kid/adult duos took to the stage for a battle royale in a show entitled *Knuckle Sandwich*. Everyone, of course, was trained to harm each other as little as possible!

Garrett Kim led the slugfest while **Kerry Warren** was our Stage Combat Instructor. **Jenni Swan** was the stage manager, **Bri Weintraub** did lights, and **Katie Bartz**, **Ahmed Attia**, and **Leo Layla Diaz** handled the livestream, which you can see [HERE](#).

↓ The Full Company in *Hangry*.



↙ Lanai Blake-Soden and Aishling Pembroke in *2013 Rematch*.



→ Kaytie GII and Evan Schultz in *Crumbs vs. Rachel*.



PHOTOS BY KAT ALMIRANÉZ



↑ Peter Muca and Zach Fike Hodges in *Battle of Gods*.



↗ Denise Xolocotzi and Betsy Hogg in *What Happens in the Bathroom, Stays in the Bathroom..*



↑ Daniel Henk and Jason Alexander Wilks in *The Cure for Anger*.



← Aiden Vasquez and Conor Proft in *NinJa Warriors*.



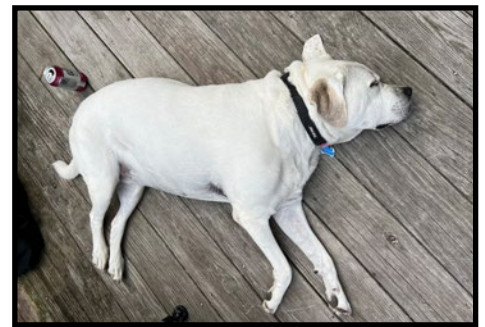
→ Maria Alcides and Andrea Abello in *Anger*.

MORE AND MORE GATHERINGS!

As you can tell, we're opening up the Clubhouse more and more. To welcome our young charges back to the Project for the fall, we had a special orientation meeting open to all ages of our membership on September 14. The turn-out was pretty impressive! Then, just days later, on Sept. 17, the ProjStaff all went up to Production Manager **Bri Weintraub's** house in Tomkins Cove, NY for what later became known as "The BRI-B-Q." (Say it "Bree-Bee-Cue.") Both events were a blast and we were grateful to be able to get together and do some bonding. ♦



THE ORIENTATION: No less than 26 members came to our "little meeting."



THE BRI-B-Q: Sammy was very popular.



THE BRI-B-Q: We ate well...



...and then ate some more...



...and then posed for a shot (although some had to leave early!)



Hi, P.U. Readers! I'm Ahmed, and 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. ♦

Cantor Fitzgerald Relief Fund.....	\$10,000	Frederick Loewe Foundation.....	\$10,000
Carol M. & Stephen E. Canter Family Foundation.....	\$7,500	Henlopen Foundation.....	\$5,000
Educational Foundation of America.....	\$10,000	Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation.....	\$30,000
Department of Cultural Affairs.....	\$77,350	Howard Ashman Trust for Theater Arts.....	\$5,000
Council Member Corey Johnson Discretionary Fund.....	\$5,000	NEA.....	\$30,000
Council Member Erik Bottcher Discretionary Fund.....	\$5,000	NYSICA.....	\$49,500
Filomen M. D'Agostino Foundation.....	\$10,000	Rose M. Badgeley Foundation.....	\$25,000
The Ettinger Foundation.....	\$10,000	Seller Lehrer Family Foundation.....	\$75,000
		Signature Bank.....	\$5,000
		Stephen P. Hanson Foundation.....	\$5,000
		Tiger Baron Foundation.....	\$5,000

(Gifts received September 21, 2021 to Sept. 27, 2022)



WANT TO DONATE TO THE 52ND STREET PROJECT?

It's as easy as 5 + 2!

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



MEGABITS • MEGABITS • MEGABITS



Another baby for **Nick Mills** and **Ashley Melone**! **Stella Ivy Mills** arrived on May 26 to join **Marlowe** and **Ava Rose**. Nick says: "We are happily sleep deprived and grateful with three kiddos under one roof."



Clea Alsip and **Danny Binstock** had **Leon Red Binstock** on July 24th. He is named for his father's grandfather, **Leon Kupferman**, and his mother's mother, **Rebecca Ellen Deaton** (that's the "RED" part).



Here is **Roark Frederic Moody**, born on 8/9/22 to **Karlyn Waldschmid** and former staffer **Josh Moody** in Peekskill, NY. Josh says of Roark. "He's a red head. We're not red heads. He likes bouncing, staring into the void, boob milk, and long walks on the beach. He is the destroyer of worlds. Learn his face well, for when you see it again, then shall you know the end is nigh."



Jonathan Louis Dent was an intern for us way back in 2007. Not only is he now an Assistant Professor of Theater at **Hampshire College**, he is also the proud new dad of **Josiah Orion Dent**. Josiah was born on Sept. 16 to Jonathan and **Lauren Cox**.



Christina Pumariega just tied the knot on May 1. We are pretty sure it happened in the borough of Brooklyn!.

SUBSCRIBE TO "THE PROJCAST!"

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! ♦



IN MEMORIAM

BRUCE MACVITTIE

OCTOBER 14, 1956 – MAY 7, 2022

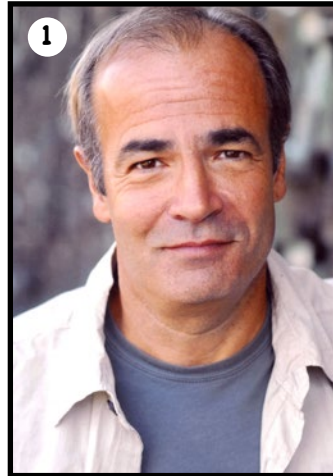
We've said goodbye to many friends in the last few years, but one of the hardest goodbyes was to our good friend **Bruce MacVittie**. Bruce was not only the husband of **Carol Ochs**, our Executive Director, and the father of **Sophia Ochs MacVittie**, but a true-blue member of **The 52nd Street Project** family of volunteers since 1988.

Bruce was born in Cranston, Rhode Island and studied theater at **Boston University**. After moving to New York in 1979, he made an early mark as an actor by appearing on Broadway with **Al Pacino** in **David Mamet's American Buffalo**. He appeared in countless plays, movies, and TV series over the years, often playing "tough guys with tormented souls," as **Barry Singer** put it in the **New York Times**.

At the Project, Bruce was always ready to write, direct, perform or just pitch in with a show strike.

Bruce never stopped acting, but in the last decade became a professional nurse who was always ready to help friends that were ailing. To the end, Bruce was a man you wanted in your corner. ♦

1. Our good pal Bruce..
2. Bruce in the very first show done at the newly built Five Angels Theater: "Brothers" by Adnan Ahmed, 2009.
3. Performing a One-on-One he wrote (aptly called "One") with Terrence Mack in 2006.



LYN REALE

APRIL 24, 1935 – JANUARY 13, 2022

The Project honors the life of **Lyn Reale** who left us this year at the age of 86. In 1987 **The 52nd Street Project** began its annual week-long retreat to **Block Island** for its One-on-One program. Lyn and her husband **Bob** hosted 10 kids in their home for a week that summer. Lyn, a mother of six quipped, "What's four more?" That began a more than 30 year relationship between Project Kids and the good people of Block Island, which continues to this day. Over that span, hundreds of new plays were written, rehearsed and performed and a thousand songs were sung. And (we guess) a million waves were ridden on boogie boards with an equal number of delighted squeals. A million and counting. Thanks Lyn.

– Willie Reale ♦

FLYER BAR PROFILE



**WILLIAM CURRAN &
PATRICE DEL CASINO**

What they do for us- William and Patrice have been catering our annual benefits and many other extravaganzas for us for at least 20 years. They are remarkable chefs and event planners with a flair for showmanship and they are unfailingly kind and generous.

Occupation- "Curran Affair Catering"

Why they do what they do- "We love creating events, from picking out the china to executing the full menu."

Place of birth - "New York City and Jersey City."

Habitat- "New York City and Long Beach Island, NJ."

Hobbies- "Reading and relaxing at the beach."

Last books read- *A Promised Land* by Barack Obama, *The Power of Now* by Eckhardt Tolle, *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo* by Taylor Jenkins Reid.

Most recent accomplishment- "Became an ordained minister and married my good friend of 20 years."

Best Project Memory- "Taking part in the groundbreaking ceremony at the Project (in 2008)."

Credo- "If you work hard, you can achieve anything."

Advice to kids- "Be happy, have fun, be kind to others."

Favorite thing about the Project- "Watching the kids grow up and come back to the community as adults and speak at the Gala."

On Flyer Bars- "Fine Swiss chocolate, wonderful American caramel. What more can we ask for? ♦"

SNAPZ! "ONCE MORE UNTO THE BEACH!"

We could not return to Block Island or Pennsylvania just yet, but we DID manage to take our One-on-One teams to Jacob Riis Park in the Rockaways. And when we weren't rockin' away, we did some Tugs of War, tie-dying, and sack racing.

