

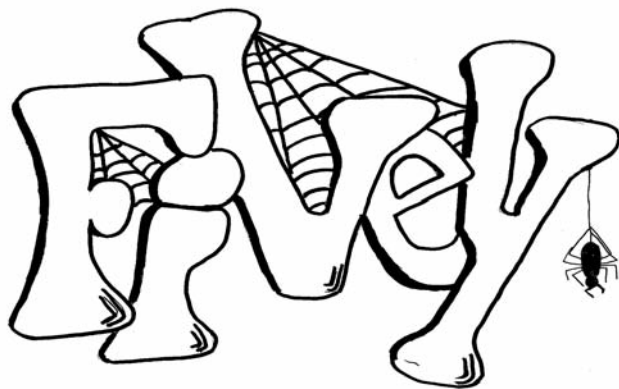
FEAR

THE LITERARY MAGAZINE OF THE 52ND STREET PROJECT



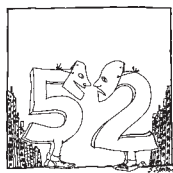
THE
FEAR
ISSUE

2004-2005



Smart Partners 2004-2005

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Smart Partners is the one-on-one educational tutoring/mentoring program of The 52nd Street Project. Fivey is the program's literary magazine.

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WHATCHA SCARED OF?

This year we decided to do something REALLY scary with *Fivey* magazine—hand it over to some Project kids! Our “Kiditors,” Christopher Ramirez, Mark Gamero, Skyebly Welsh and Aladino Olivares made up The 52nd Street Project’s premier Fivey Club, and came to weekly editorial meetings in June. Their first task was to decide on the theme for the seventh edition of the magazine. Fortunately this creative team thought alike, and after very little debate they decided on “Fear.” Don’t think, however, that these kids limited their submissions to horror stories filled with ghosts, goblins and serial killers. They all agreed that 2005 was a year of big change, and thus real trepidation—from three of the kiditors graduating P.S. 111 and starting high school next year, to one of the Project’s favorite people, Megan Sandberg-Zakian, moving on to bigger things in little Providence. *Fivey* maga-

zine became a place for the kids and the adults (check out page 14) to vent their worst fears and spookiest nightmares, and maybe even come out a little bit braver in the end.

After deciding on the theme, there was plenty more to do. They worked on their own submissions in addition to recruiting other stories, poems, essays, photos and drawings from the rest of the kid talent floating around the Clubhouse. Finally, they planned and executed a photo shoot for additional images and helped George with the design and layout of the magazine. Turn the page to see the fantastically frightening result of all their hard work! - LB 



ALEX TOMAS



JOHN SHEEHY

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SCARY MOVIE REVIEWS

BY BRYANT ACOSTA



ALEX TOMAS

Skyeblu Welsh imitates Samara from "The Ring."


It was hard to scare me as a kid. I don't know why but since I was little I was never scared of horror movies. I always found them funny. Sometimes they even make me sleep. Like the Michael Jackson video for "Thriller" – that was the first "scary" thing that I saw on television. I didn't find the zombies scary, they just made me laugh. I thought the dancing was funny too. I thought it was kind of cool, the way that the zombies looked in the video, not scary.

"Freddy vs. Jason" – that was also a funny movie. I saw that movie for my birthday, and that was one of the funniest horror movies I've seen. My sister always screams at scary movies. She wants me to sit next to her so she can use me as a pillow. Sometimes she bites me when she's scared.

"The Ring" was a movie that made me sleep. It wasn't exciting, it was boring. In the movie, almost everyone that she knows gets killed by a videotape. I think the idea of a tape killing people is not very exciting to watch. "Chuckie" – wow, a doll killing people. I mean, come on, it's plastic. How could people actually be afraid of a doll that's forty inches shorter than you? I mean, you could throw it. In the movie, the doll has the spirit of a man inside him, so he can do anything a human can do, so that's kind of weird. It wasn't bad, but it wasn't good at the same time. And "Scary Movie 3" was one stupid movie.


A movie that I think is good is "The Amityville Horror," the 2005 remake. A house that is haunted by a man who killed his family is a good idea. "Chainsaw Massacre" is a good movie that's probably better than "The Amityville Horror." A man who is very psychotic who kills anybody who comes around his property with a chainsaw and cuts off their body parts to make stuff out of them, I think that's very exciting. It might not sound good, but if you see the movie, it might seem like a good idea to you.

What I think IS scary is when something pops out of nowhere, like let's say in "Amityville Horror," when a ghost that you can't see pops out. I find nothing else scary.

A dark room that's supposed to scare me just makes me lonely. I'm used to being surrounded by people and by a lot of noise; my house is always loud, always. Being lonely is not part of a normal day for me. These are some things that I think about horror movies. 

FEARLESS

BY AKEEM FRAZIER


My block is fearless
Some of the realest
There's thugs on the corner
Posted on the block
They all got glocks
My block is fearless
We will go to your block smacking
The realest
We posted up in front of 540
All day
Anybody walks past
It might be their last
FEARLESS
Without fear 



GRB

MY BLOCK

BY AKEEM FRAZIER

My block is hot
Not regular hot
Extremely hot
It's the place to be
The people make the block
What it is, and what it's not
What about the people?
Some are funny
Some just fun
The block full of dealers
Some people have a need to be stealers 


WHEN I DREAM

BY ANALIS "FIFI" FERNANDEZ

When I was about to sleep I heard a big peep! "Peep! Peep!" I tossed and turned. I couldn't sleep. I closed my eyes and saw scary things. I ran, ran, ran but it was a dream. After ten minutes, I woke up. I went back to sleep, and was with my sister Cathy and with some people from the Projects named Amonson, Amoro and Angel. We walked around P.S. 111. We all went to the fifth floor. In real life, they don't open the door to the fifth floor in P.S. 111 because

bad things happened. In my dream, we saw Mordecai on the fifth floor. We thought he was the boy that got beat up and died when my dad went to P.S. 111. My dad told me his name was John Perez, but he bullied my dad. I didn't believe him but he showed me the picture of John Perez in his yearbook. Wow, I got scared! My dad also said the boy died by getting beat up by the football team. There were kids everywhere saying, "Fight! Fight! Fight!"

So, in my dream, we were walking and we lost Angel. We looked everywhere and we found him sleeping. We woke him up, every step we took it became colder and we were thrilled. Me and my sister ran because someone chased us. We ran to the other kids. Me and Angel got tapped on the shoulder. I looked to my right, he looked to his left. A man covered in blood grabbed Amonson and threw him. Amonson was heading towards me. Plop! He fell on me. I pushed him up and we ran. We jumped down the stairs. The bloody man tripped down the stairs, cracked his head open and died.

"Wake up!" my sister screamed. I did. I was in my bed. What's wrong with my head?! Hum. I wondered what is really on that fifth floor. I've been there but never saw anyone. 



School of Terror? P.S. 111, on 10th and 53rd.

GRB

WHO I AM INSIDE

BY KAYELANI SILVA

I am a mix of my mom
And my dad.

I am a mix of where rice and beans is smelled almost everyday
And where childhood memories still float in my head.

I am a mix of hop-scotch, tag and pin the tail on the donkey.

I am a mix of my favorite childhood toys: a teddy bear, a rag doll
And a Barbie.

I am from where “We Belong Together,” “Since You Been Gone” and
“American Idiot” are always being played.

I am a mix of reprimands from my parents which are always being
heard.

(Kayelani do this) (Kayelani stop screaming) (Kayelani clean your
room)

I am a mix of summer, winter and.....

The Puerto Rican culture.

I am a mix of me. 🇵🇷



MEGAN CRAMER

CASE 102: THE MURDER OF MR. 52ND STREET PROJECT BY CHRISTOPHER RAMIREZ

October 22nd, 1902 the first building was built on 52nd Street. It was a deserted area, a perfect place to kill someone. Mr. 52nd Street Project sat at his desk.

"Fivey and Twoey, you two are boring me, you pair of numbers," Mr. 52nd complained.

"Well, first of all, how dare you call us a pair of numbers! Then you always say that we bore you, come on man, we're your logos. We make your name stick out. We are Fivey and

Twoey, the funniest numbers, wait, not numbers, logos in the universe. I think we deserve a raise," Fivey explained excitedly.

"What? Are you kidding me? I won't add one single penny in those paychecks. Your check will still contain five bucks a month. And you, Twoey, will still receive two bucks a month," Mr. 52nd commented.

"But that's not fair. How come Fivey gets more money than me?"

"Fivey gets more money because



GRB

his face appears the most," Mr. 52nd explained.

"Don't be a hater!" Fivey yelled.

"You know what? I have been through a lot today. I'm just going to my cube, which is the bathroom, you see what I mean!? So I'll pick up my coat and flush the toilet and go to my numeral yoga class. That's a class where a whole bunch of numbers stretch their numbooty!" Twoey shouted.

That same day at 8:00 p.m., Twoey went out to have a drink. He went to his favorite place, The Num Lounge.

"Hit me big 100,300," he shouted desperately to the bartender 100,300.

"The usual, sir? The Twogarita?" 100,300 asked.

"Yes!" he answered.

While Twoey was having his hard moments, Fivey planned something, something big, something huge, something bad, something...

"Hey, enough with the somethings, now continue!"

Umm, I'm sorry! Now, like I was saying, he planned to destroy Mr. 52nd Street Project.

"Now, how should I do it, huum? I got it! I'll..."

While Fivey wrote down his evil plan, Twoey was drinking and drinking his sadness away.

"I can't believe that he is doing this to me, and Fivey, too. I've been his friend all my life and look how he

pays me back. I can't believe him, and Mr. 52nd Street Project is so unfair. I must destroy him, but how? No, no, no, I can't do that. I won't do that just to get more money. No, I'm not like that, Twoey, now stop! That's something Fivey would do."

And he will! Fivey had it all planned out to get Mr. 52nd Street Project to raise his check. After all, Fivey was going to be the owner of all Mr. 52nd Street Project's money. He knew that Mr. 52nd wrote in his will that he would leave everything to Fivey and only Fivey. So he thought that if he killed Mr. 52nd he would get all the money.

The next day at the Project:

"Fivey and Twoey, the One-on-Ones are coming up and I want this advertising to go big time, ok? Now read the script and learn your lines!" Mr. 52nd screamed.

"Sure, Boss. Oh, I got a lot of lines!" Fivey shouted.

"Hey, I don't have any lines," Twoey complained.

"Sure you do," said Mr. 52nd.

"Where?" shouted Twoey, getting frustrated.

"Go to the last page," he commanded.

"Ok, I still don't see anything!" he shouted.

"Look way at the bottom of the page, the small words. Here, you're going to need this microscope," Mr. 52nd said, handing him a microscope.

"What!? My part is the banana boy during the advertising shoot? You must be kidding me!" Twoey complained, trying not to cry.

"What are you going to do about it? Huh?" Mr. 52nd asked meanly.

"Nothing, Boss," Twoey answered.

"Now go to your office. Now!" Mr. 52nd demanded.

"Yes, sir." Twoey answered, leaving the room crying.

As Twoey headed out of Mr. 52nd's office, Fivey took visual notes, trying to see how he was going to make his plan.

"Um, sir, one quick question?" Fivey offered.

"Sure. Be quick about it, you're wasting time," Mr. 52nd shouted.

"Do you sit in your chair more than your table?" Fivey asked.

"Why do you want to know? I mean, why do you care whether I sit in my chair more than the table? Tell me!" Mr. 52nd yelled.

"Oh, nothing big, I'm just doing a survey of people and you happen to be one of those that I want to ask. I mean, you're my boss and I notice that you sit in many different places," Fivey explained.

"Well, if that's the case, sure. My beautiful leather seat is where I prefer sitting the best!" Mr. 52nd explained.

"Thanks, Boss, now I'm going to do my work!" Fivey said sneakily, giving a smirk!

As Fivey walked towards his office, he bumped into the really hot girl Eight-ty. She was the 52nd Street Project social worker.

"Oh, I'm sorry, excuse myself," Eight-ty said flirtatiously.

"Oh, baby, for you I'll do anything," Fivey explained. "Hey Eight-ty, what can I do for a beautiful eight like you, huh?"

"You see Gram-eight, you know, is really sick and I'll have..." Eight-ty explained, getting interrupted by Mr. 52nd Street Project.

"A raise? Sure, how much? How about 40 bucks an hour?" Mr. 52nd commented.

"Sure, that's great!" Eight-ty said happily as she walked out the door.

3:30 p.m.: Twoey is doing his job when Fivey walks into Twoey's cubicle.

"Ohhhh, Twoey, how is the best friend of my life?" Fivey shouted.

"Nothing. Fivey, what do you want? I know you want to, go ahead, tell me," Twoey said.

"It's nothing I want to know. It's something you need to know about Mr. 52nd," Fivey said.

"What now?" Twoey shouted. "You see, I'm getting tired of him," Twoey complained.

"Well, Mr. 52nd is going to give me a raise of 20 bucks an hour. Wait, that's not all. He also said that he was finally going to put you in a commer-

cial because this company said that they would give him 1 million bucks if you were in it. Then he was going to fire you so you don't get a single penny. Then he would split the money with me," Fivey lied.

"What? I can't believe him! I'm going to tell him something. Watch!" Twoey yelled.

"Ohhh, this is going to be great," Fivey said to himself.

3:45 p.m.: The big tragedy.

"Mr. 52nd, we need to talk!" Twoey commented.

"Good, me too!" Mr. 52nd agreed.

"It's working perfectly!" Fivey said to himself.

"Now you listen to me, I'm tired of you not treating me like everyone else!" Twoey yelled.

"Now shut up!" Mr. 52nd yelled.

"No! You shut up!" Twoey yelled.

3:47 p.m.: Twoey smacked Mr. 52nd. Bad thing to do. Twoey got crazy and started punching Mr. 52nd.

"Do you need help, Twoey? Here, have this knife," Fivey said.

Fivey gave the knife to Twoey. Bad thing to do. Twoey killed Mr. 52nd.

"Oh my God, look what you made me do! Why did you give me that knife?" Twoey shouted.

"Me? You did it. Help! Please! A murderer!" Fivey yelled.

4 p.m.: The police arrived. Twoey was crying. There was blood everywhere.

"He handed the knife to me when I was punching him. He told me all these lies that supposedly Mr. 52nd said," Twoey explained, crying.

"That's not true!" Fivey yelled.

"It is!"

A beautiful eight came in.

"It's true what Twoey said. Fivey did hand the knife to Twoey," Eighty said calmly.

4:15 p.m.: Twoey and Fivey were arrested. Twoey got fewer years in jail than Fivey. Twoey went to jail because he participated in the crime. As you can see, don't always trust those little guys. Don't trust Fivey and Twoey. 🤔



Christopher Ramirez: If this story shocked you, take it up with this guy.

ALEX TOMAS

NO FEAR IN MUSIC

BY MATHEW ORTIZ

I take piano lessons from Kim Sherman. She had me write a piece of music and Liz asked me to put it in *Fivey*. All I do is take bits and pieces of things I learn and combine them into my own creation. Whatever I learn I use it with other things. I don't know if I'll go pro 'cause that would be cool, but if I go on stage I might have stage fright. 🐸



CHRISTOPHER RAMIREZ

Taa - daa! Mathew ortiz

The image shows a handwritten musical score for a piece titled "Taa - daa!" by Mathew Ortiz. The score is written on four systems of two staves each (treble and bass clef). The first system is marked "MP" and includes a 4/4 time signature. The second system has a "F" dynamic marking. The third system features a sharp sign and a 4/4 time signature. The score concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots. The handwriting is clear and legible.

REMINISCING

BY JAZZY HERNANDEZ

Sitting here without you, wondering where you are.
You left me in such good hands, but your loss still leaves a scar.
It's been 10 lonely years now, and I still can't come to see...
Why is it that he took you...Why did he take you from me?
But it wasn't only me, there were 7 others.
3 older sisters with 4 older brothers,
"But if it doesn't kill you...
It will just make you stronger"
Now what do I do if I am your youngest daughter?
You know that we miss you but what else can we do?
He tore us all apart... he just snatched us away from you.
So, I'm going to end this poem with just a few words to say,
And that is that we miss you more and more every day... 🤝



JS

TRUE GHOST STORIES FROM THE CLUBHOUSE

COLLECTED BY CHRISTOPHER RAMIREZ

GUS ROGERSON

THE OPEN SHUTTERS

I used to work with a theater company in The Berkshires (Western MA). They were based at a summer estate called The Mount. This program was built by a woman named Edith Wharton, a great American writer that lived in the house at the turn of the last century, I think! Anyway it's an old, old house and it was her home, and it was abandoned for a long time. Then this new theater company Shakespeare and Company moved in and took it over and fixed it up. For 25

they were only there in the summer. So the house was not occupied in the winter. So there was a caretaker that took care of the house. I know this guy, a great guy, a real new Englander, not the kind of guy that would make stuff up. So he was taking care of the house.

This is a 4 story house, huge, a mansion. There were lots and lots of rooms, lots and lots of windows, and all the windows had shutters. So the caretaker went through the house and made sure that all the windows were closed and all the shutters were locked. He knew that there was a snow storm coming and he wanted the house to be closed, so the storm would not do any damage. So he closed the house and left, went home. The storm happened, that afternoon and evening with lots of snow.

So Gidge comes up the driveway the next morning. Pulls up in front of the house, long, long driveway, you know, big beautiful driveway, through the woods and it's all landscaped. Then he sees that every single shutter in the house was... there was nobody there, every single shutter was opened. All of them! hundreds of shutters were opened. There were no foot prints in the snow. Not a trace of anybody. Nothing was disturbed the doors weren't opened, they were still locked, nothing in the house was broken. Nothing! Just all the shutters, all over the house, were opened. MUHAHAHAHA-HAHA!

Gus, before and after the event in this spooky tale.

CHRISTOPHER RAMIREZ



years, it was their home. They lived there and their offices were there. The house was haunted.

They had a summer season, but there were people there in the fall and sometimes in the winter, but especially in the early years, when the company started,

MEGAN CRAMER THE MUPPET DREAM

One night, when I was about four years old, I had this strange dream.



CHRIS RAMIREZ

I was with the Muppets, with Miss Piggy and Kermit. Suddenly, this big, huge, hairy, big-mouthed monster came and grabbed Miss Piggy and Kermit and threw them into his mouth. Then he grabbed me by the leg, and I was next into his mouth. But the creepy part was that as the monster was pulling me up by the leg, I felt like I was being picked up from my bed. That is my strange dream.

JOHN SHEEHY THE MAN BEHIND THE DOOR

This happened to me once in college.



CHRIS RAMIREZ

I shared a room with a man named Steve. One night, I came home really late, and Steve was already in bed. Usually, when one of us was out, the other one would leave a light on so you could see when you came home. This night, when I came home, it was pitch dark in the room. When I opened the door, I could see that he was already in bed. So I moved to close the door very quietly so I wouldn't wake him up. As I was closing the door, I saw standing behind it a man pressed against

the wall, looking at me. I jumped! I was so surprised to see anybody standing there, wondering what somebody would be doing in the room with my roommate asleep in the bed. But when I looked back, he was gone. I realized that no one could have been standing against the wall, because there was a towel rack behind the door, sticking out from the wall. I guess it was a ghost.

LEE ROSEN

A PARTY WITH NO PEOPLE?

My friend went home from school one day. He opened the door and his parents



CHRIS RAMIREZ

weren't home. So, you know, he said, "Mom? Dad? Are you home?" Nobody answered. So he went up to his room, and he was hanging out. I don't know what he was doing. Then he heard people, lots of them. He also heard dishes clicking and he knew his parents weren't home having a party. So he looked down the stairs and didn't see anyone—but he still heard the people. As he went down the stairs, the noises were louder and louder. He looked everywhere and didn't see anyone... the TV wasn't on... nothing. When his parents came home, he told them about it and they confirmed they weren't having a party, So it had to be ghosts! 🧛

NOTES FROM THE HOS

Early this spring, Angel Silva spent a long time in the hospital. Here are so



GRB

ONE THOUSAND AND ONE NIGHTS

To get out of the hospital
I wish for 1,000 dollars
I could live in a big mansion
I wish I had a maid
I wish I could become a baseball
player and never make an error
I wish I could meet Fifty Cent
I wish I could go to Florida and go in
the pools and meet girls
I wish everyday was my birthday
I wish I were the President and I
would abolish school
I wish I had every game in the world
I wish I was a famous rapper
I wish there were no books because I
don't like to read
I wish I could go to Canada and go
snowboarding

I wish I had wings
I wish I could go to an island that
never existed
I wish I could be the king
I wish I was Spiderman to save
people

I AM

Fast as a cheetah
Cold like water
Hot as a camp-fire
Smart like a computer
Steaming like the sun
Intelligent like math
Handsome as my dad
Brilliant like my mom
Funny as my baby sister
Outgoing like my older sister
A good baseball player like on the
Yankees
Bright and cool like blue and the sky
Rich like money

THE BASEBALL STORY

First, practice.
If you want to be a short-stop,
practice being a short-stop.
Practice hitting.
They're not going to want you if
you're whacked!
You need a lot of practice to get good.
To be a good short-stop

HOSPITAL BED BY ANGEL SILVA

Some of the writings that were inspired by his stay. By the way, he's okay now.

don't miss any of the balls that come
your way,
don't make any errors,
throw to the right base,
and run to second base
so they can throw you the ball.
Baseball is fun; it's interesting.
I like to steal bases, to catch the ball,
both high pops and grounders.
I like it straight down the middle
and low and outside.
When it's low-outside,
you bring your bat down
and swing it up
and it's a homerun, probably.

BEING IN SCHOOL

is great
because
you get
to hang-out
with all your friends.

You get to do
cool stuff
like math
and reading.

And sometimes
you get to play
games. And then
you go to gym
where you get
to play

dodgeball,
basketball,
or baseball.

That's why
I think
being in school
is great.

TO ANGEL AT AGE 20

When I was 12, I liked to play a lot
of sports. The sports I like to play are
basketball, baseball, and football. All
those sports are fun. My favorite sport
is baseball.

I went to the hospital because I got
really, really sick. I didn't want to be
in the hospital. I wanted to go home
already. And I wanted to go back to
school to be with my friends.

My parents stayed in the hospital
with me. They were really supportive.
My family came to visit me. I liked
that a lot. I got a lot of stuff while I
was in the hospital. All the stuff is
really nice.

I wanted to be a baseball player.
Are we a baseball player yet? Do you
have a girlfriend? Where do you live?
Do you have any pets?

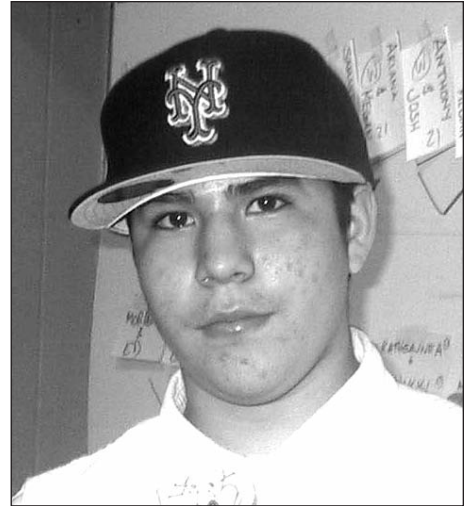
Good luck on your life.

Sincerely, Angel at age 12 

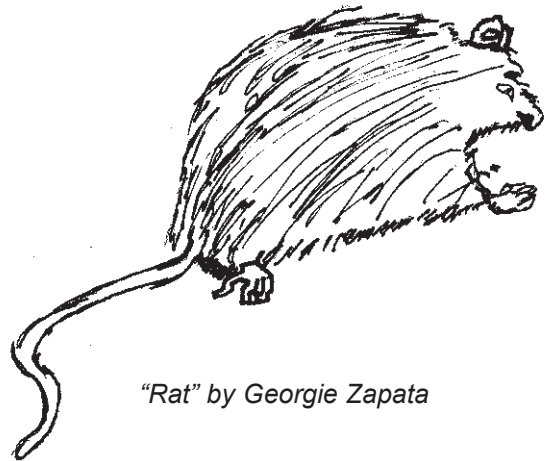
RATS

BY ADRIAN ZAMBRANO

It feels like I'm sleeping on a rough
wooden bench
When I hear something weird creeping
'round in the trench
I know what it is before I even look
They've already eaten everything that I
cook
They've eaten the bodies of my dead
friends
Who already met such horrible ends
I'm so frightened that I cannot sleep
All they do is creep, creep, creep
They're looking for something disgusting to eat
Even the gangrene on somebody's feet
If I take a nap, they'll chew on my eyes
They run around like killer spies
They scramble up the trench's walls
To hear them crawl makes my skin crawl
But I cannot easily crawl away
They're always there and they always stay



GRB



"Rat" by Georgie Zapata

CHANGE SUCKS

A SONG BY ANI KEHR

I've been stuck here for so long.
Time has been kind to me, there's
nothing left,
Nothing wrong.
But now a tidal wave is coming.
Down on top of me, I can hear the
crashes,
Can hear the motor humming.

Chorus

Now here I am, here I am,
Uprooted and confused.
Afraid of new surroundings,
I'm frightened and abused.
Don't leave me alone, I'm not a good
swimmer.
Don't leave, don't leave.

I've never stepped on the gas before.
Passing time behind the wheel, but
hardly steering,
Nothing more.
I liked it that way in my car.
Now there's others blaring their horns,
I don't want to leave, don't wanna go
far.

Chorus

Now here I am, here I am,
Uprooted and confused.
Afraid of new surroundings,
I'm frightened and abused.
Don't leave me alone, I'm a bad
driver.
Don't leave, don't leave.



JS

I know I need a reality check,
But please don't poison my routine.
(My pathetic frustrations abound)
When things turn all around,
It sucks, it sucks, it sucks so much,
When things turn out like this.

A tidal wave is coming
Down on top of me, I can hear the
crashes,
I can hear the motor humming

Chorus

Now here I am, here I am,
Uprooted and confused.
Afraid of new surroundings,
I'm frightened and abused.
Don't leave me alone, I'm afraid of
change.
Don't leave, don't leave.
Don't leave, don't leave. 🐞

THE NIGHT OF TERROR IN CHI-TOWN

BY ALADINO OLIVARES



ALEX TOMAS

It was the second weekend of June 2004 when it all started. My dad, uncle, aunt, cousins, brother and I went to Chicago for our cousin Monique's high school graduation. It was crazy sitting in a van for 13 hours, but not as crazy as the night I would have the next day.

Friday morning we went to the graduation and had a bar-b-q afterwards. Sometimes the South of Chicago can be really quiet, which makes it creepy. The bar-b-q was fun by the way, but back to the main focus of the story.

On Saturday I was chillin' with my cousins from Chicago, Monique, Dilia and their brother DJ. We were all in Monique's room telling jokes,

laughing and that's when my eyes came across the "Ouija Board." I asked Monique if we could mess around with it, not knowing the horror it could bring to a person. So we set the board up, lit some candles and sat in a circle. Before we began, we said a prayer just in case something went wrong or something was to happen. I was so nervous that my heart started to pound and my hands began to sweat. I was excited, but nervous.

As we began asking if there were any spirits that wanted to come through and say anything, we started to get strange messages that didn't make any sense. It was getting boring after a while, until the words "stop it" came up. I thought it was someone else other than a spirit, but everyone swore to God it wasn't them. I started to feel uncomfortable and then something else came up. "PIGS" then came up and that's when I realized this spirit wasn't playing, so we either had to quit messing around or get on its good side. I decided to ask more questions and get on its good side.

Sometimes asking a spirit questions can be frustrating and exhausting. I then asked it how it passed away and then realized that I went

too far. "HIM" was its answer. I became even more interested in this mysterious spirit and asked about the person he was talking about. A couple of seconds later, it came back with "BAD MAN," and that's when one of the candles blew out.

Five minutes had passed and we didn't have any more questions because we were all nervous. My cousin Monique asked it if we could help it in any way, knowing that there was nothing we could do. "NO," it came back. Because I was so curious I asked this spirit if it was in Hell. There was dead silence for about 30 seconds. Then the words "I'M HERE," came up and my heart just dropped. We then realized that the fun was over and we needed to stop before something wrong happened.

With all of this fear inside of me, I asked the spirit if we could stop with the interview and get back to our lives ... and death. It replied with an "OK SEE YOU." I thought

that was really strange.

In a quickness, we all blew out the candles, turned on the lights, and threw the Ouija board back into the closet. At that point we were still shaken because of what just happened. We just sat there for a moment in silence and then went crazy. It was a thriller, but it was also kind of cool, to be honest. There were a lot of "what if?" questions going through my head, like what if that spirit was trying to scare us, or what if this spirit was still trapped in our world and was trying to make its way to the afterlife? I don't know, but that night was the most terrifying and craziest night I've had yet. 'Til this day I still think it was all a dream. I don't think I'll ever mess with a Ouija board again... well, maybe I would.

THIS WAS A TRUE STORY 




THE ENCOUNTER WITH OLIVER PLATT

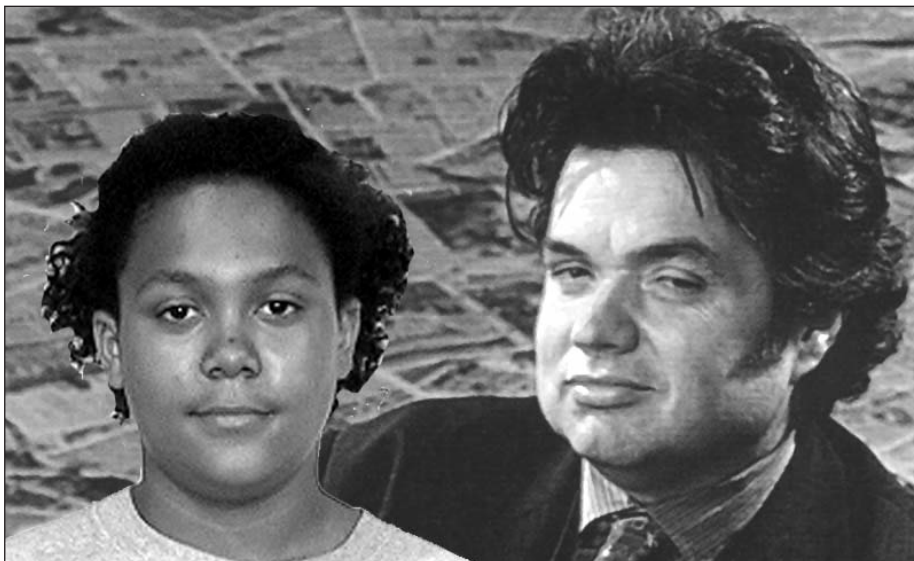
BY ANTHONY MEJIA

The encounter that I will not forget is when I met Oliver Platt. It was very memorable because I never thought I would encounter THE Oliver Platt at The 52nd Street Project, which happens to be a theater program I go to in my neighborhood. Oliver Platt is a big-time movie star that played in the following movies: *The Three Musketeers*, *Lake Placid*, *Ready to Rumble*. He is also starring in the new Showtime series *Huff*. He usually plays good guys in movies. The types of movies that he plays in are sometimes scary-ish funny, like *Lake Placid*.

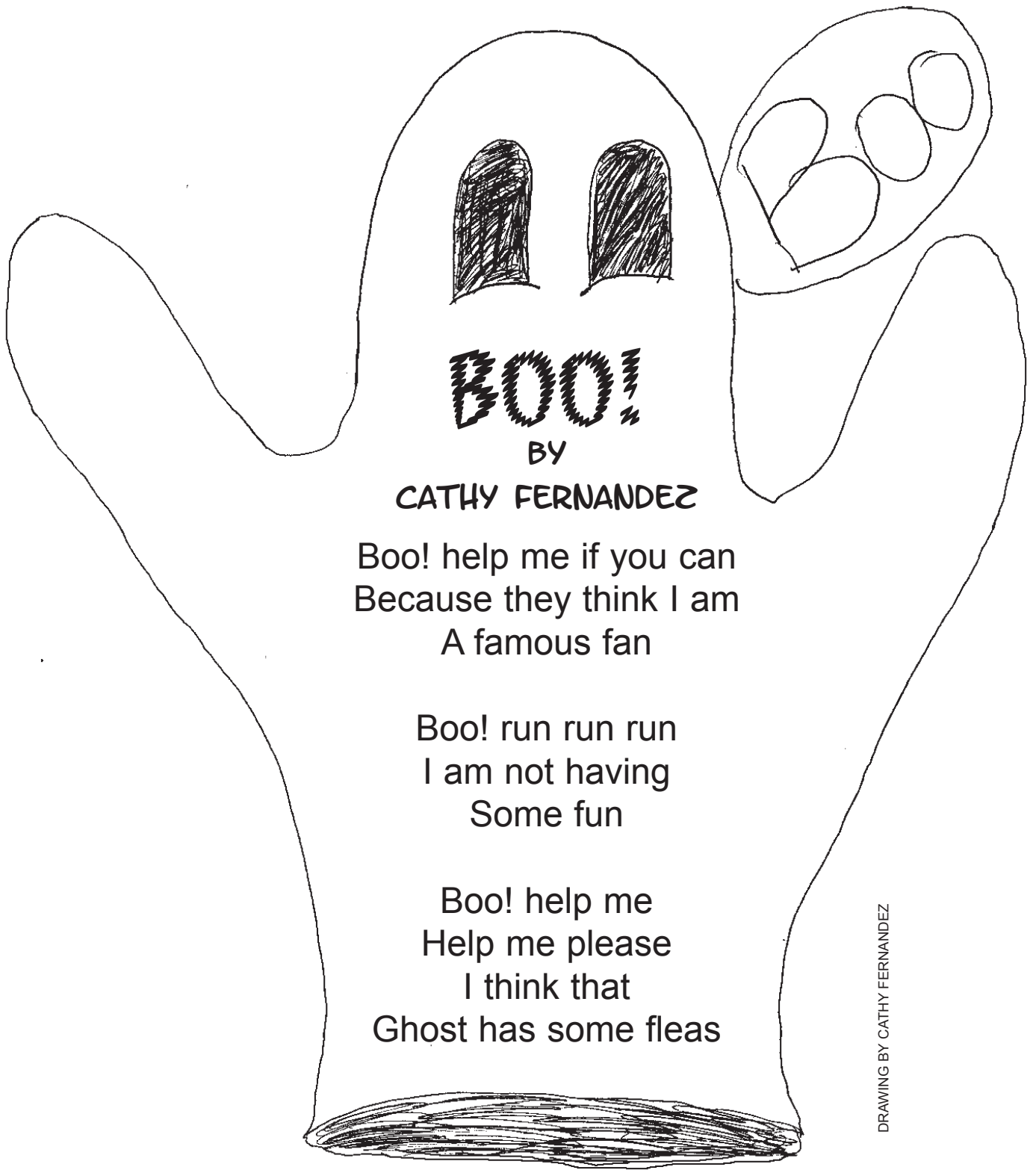
When I shook his hand it felt like I was shaking the hand of giant, and it seemed like it lasted forever. He is six foot four and weighs about 200 pounds. That was the first time I shook a celebrity's hand, and it felt good. It felt like I knew him for a long time, like I was a close friend with him or something. Man, I felt stupendous that day!

I would have never thought I would find Oliver Platt in a neighborhood like mine because where I live doesn't look like many famous people would live close by. Not only did I meet him, I got to

act with him on stage in front of 450 people. It felt awesome, like no other feeling I have felt before. 



COLLAGE BY GRB



BOO!
BY
CATHY FERNANDEZ

Boo! help me if you can
Because they think I am
A famous fan


Boo! run run run
I am not having
Some fun

Boo! help me
Help me please
I think that
Ghost has some fleas

DRAWING BY CATHY FERNANDEZ

FEAR IS NEAR LIKE A SHADOW

BY MICHAEL FELICIANO

Fear is near like a shadow.
Follows me every where I travel.
Try to run but I trip and fall.
You either get up or not at all.
I'm scared to fall, I can't succeed.
I try to yell, but I cannot scream.
Promised to die like a kid smoking,
But I'll face my fears like Joe Rogan. 




GRB

MISTAKES

BY NICOLE FARGARDO

You had an abortion at the age of sixteen,
Didn't get to see the world I shoulda seen,
You shoulda learned from your first mistake,
Having unprotected sex made pregnancy a higher stake.
Never took responsibility for anything you do or did,
I coulda been the nicest little kid.
Your mistakes made me suffer and left me undiscovered.

Why did you do this to me?
Even with my eyes closed I could see
That you and him weren't gonna be.
You knew he was gonna have sex
with you and leave.
You shoulda saw all the tricks up his sleeve.
Unprotected sex made
pregnancy a higher stake,
Just promise me that you won't ever make the
same mistake. 



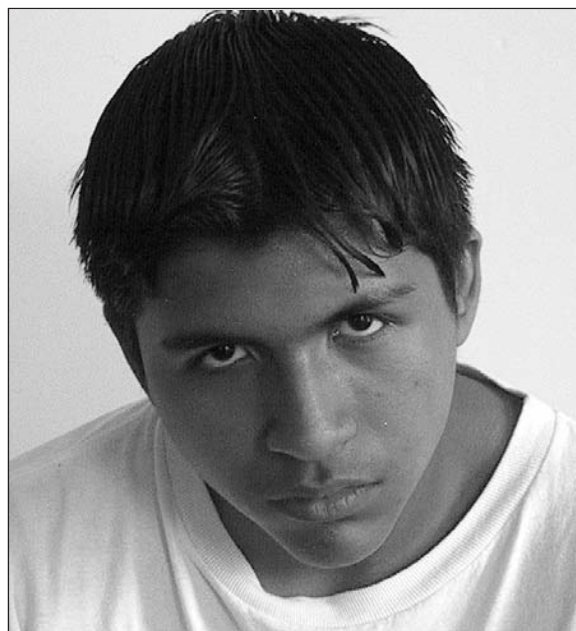
ALEX TOMAS

WHAT IS LOVE?

BY MARK GAMERO

What a life. There are so many things that happened throughout my life and I'm only 14. Why is this life so hard to go through? The only people I can trust are my friends and family. But my friends are all leaving me and my family is splitting apart and also dying, one by one. When I try to like a person that person wants to separate and when I try to love someone that person doesn't love me back. My father was right. You can't trust nobody but yourself and only yourself. I used to love but ever since my first girlfriend, I stopped. I gave her all she wanted emotionally. When she cried, I gave her my shoulder. When she wanted to talk, I was there to listen. If she had a problem, I was there to solve it. But at the end, she went with another man and that broke my heart. Even though we both said we loved each other, I guess only I meant it. After three months of thinking about it, I realized that the phrase "I love you" is just words. You don't have to mean it, but it lets the person you tell it to feel happy or feel overwhelmed. But as for me, I don't believe in that anymore. If my whole family wants to believe it then I won't stop them. And one day, they will all feel how I felt, but until that day comes, I will attend my brother's wedding to see how false love makes him so very happy... but a part of me is still trying to find it. I don't know why, but I want to also find out: what is love?

R.I.P. Father 




GRB

THIS IS INSANE

BY LUISA SANTIAGO

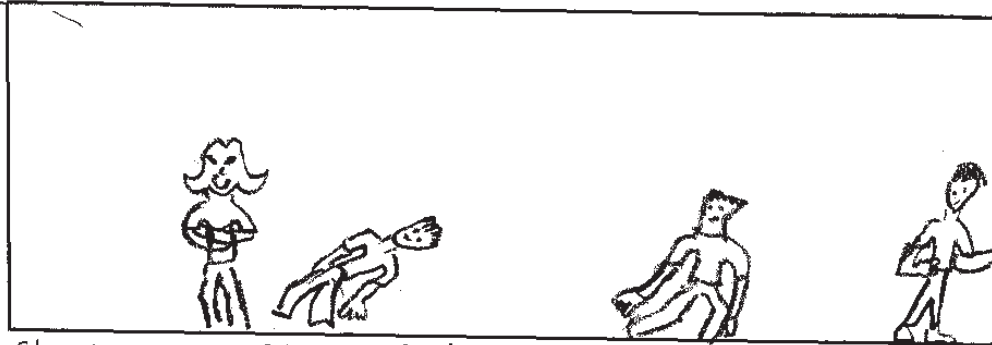
My name is Jowsie. I'm 10 years old. My mom tells me to baby-sit my little sis Jan. So my parents leave and I'm alone, but with my little sister here. Now she is asleep, thank God! So I'm sitting on the black soft couch and I feel heavy breathing on my left ear. So I turn my head. Ok, it's just my imagination!

Ok, so now I'm scared to death! I ran to my room and shut the door. I ran back to the front of the door and left it unlocked so my parents could come in. So now I'm in my room. I turned off all the lights and went to sleep, until something woke me up. I heard a loud "Shut!" It was the bathroom door. I heard all this laughing, voices, crying, whispers, heartbeats and wet footsteps trailing to the kitchen. I tried to turn on the light but the plug was so far away. I was too scared. So I turned my head and saw a girl. I got scared to my death. That's when I died in a blink of an eye. Better watch out or you'll die. Wasn't that insane? 

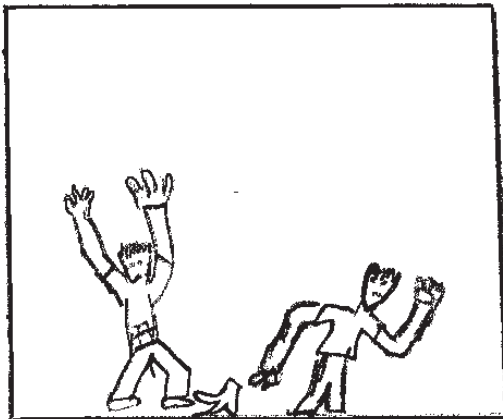


Computer art by
Luisa
Santiago.

COMIC STRIP BY A.J. WELSH AND ERIK BOWIE
(A LITTLE BIT)



Stan is a jock. Stan is afraid of nerds, numbers and killer gnats.



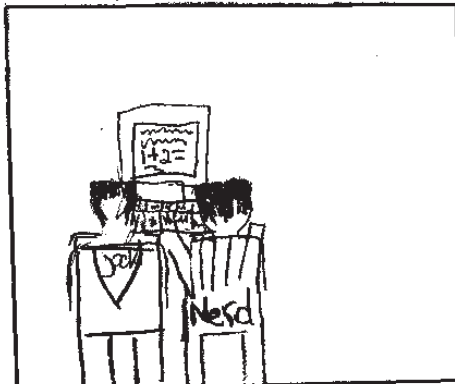
Day after day the nerds chase him through the school.



Stan gets so afraid, he hides from the nerds.



He hides but the nerds always find him.



Stan is no longer afraid of nerds or numbers, but he is still afraid of killer gnats!

UNKNOWN

BY KAYELANI SILVA

As I stand in this room I visualize everything and everyone. There are kids of different shapes, sizes and colors. I guess that's what makes everyone unique in their own way. People are always saying how conceited I am and how I'm this way and that way, but not once have I ever told myself who I really am. I mean yeah, I might walk the way I walk or talk the way I talk but that still doesn't make me any different from anyone else. All my life I have lived upon many, many rumors and people have said many, many hurtful things about me, but that still doesn't bring me down. I mean yeah, I've had some boyfriends and yeah, I've liked many boys at once, but call me what you want, this is who I am. I have been through many things in life. I mean, the old me used to think that I was a fighter. I mean, I used to want to fight everyone, but I grew up and I grew out of that. I'm glad that I changed because I feel as if I changed for all the right reasons. I mean yeah, I still might be conceited and still want to fight anyone who tries to get on me, but I can't help it. See you guys might think, oh, this is just typical me, writing a poem about myself. But I really want people to graduate knowing who I am, and not the lies but the real me. Ya'll might think I'm crazy because I'm telling ya'll the most sacred things about me, but I don't care anymore, because truth be told, Kayelani is who I really am and Kayelani is who I'll always be. I'm glad I finally found the real me. See, all it took was a little bit of confidence to let out a poem like this. 🧙‍♀️



Tribal design by Mark Gamero

BABIES!

BY JANIECE APONTE

Babies are cute
Babies are soft
When they look at me they make me cough
Babies are loud
Babies are in the crowd
Babies are bad
When they look at me they make me sad
Babies are glad
But when they cry they yell, "Dad!"
Babies are nosey
But when they are asleep they are cozy
Babies are funny
But when they are hungry they want honey!
Babies are blue
But they say, "We belong in a zoo!"
Babies are crazy
But hey they are so lazy!
Babies are so annoying to me
I'll lock them up with a key!
Now all the babies are not here
Let's relax and have a good year 🍀



VOLUNTEER BABY PICTURES COURTESY OF PROJECT UPDATE NEWSLETTER



FUTURE DROP OUT

RAP BY MICHAEL FELICIANO

Chorus

I guess you're next to a future murderer / Next to a future convict
 'Til the day I black out / You'll be next to that future drop out
 Public school, private school, summer school, high school,
 night school, I don't like school/ You would think what I think if
 you see what I see / If the teacher loves teaching let them work
 for free

I know I'm not gonna make it through, that's my word / I been in ninth twice, I'm
 going for my third / I think I know what I need to know / because I know
 where I need to go


They say if you drop out / It's like three strikes, you just got out / but that's not
 true / you could still be smart but school isn't for you / but why they have
 school to mess up your childhood / public school mixes up kids civilized and
 kids from a wild 'hood / They say if I drop out I'll be a killer or a robber / but I
 don't need to do that I spit rhymes like they were lava / I don't even have to
 cry tears / to get some ideas / But I'm scared of my tears

Chorus

I guess you're next to a future murderer / Next to a future convict
 'Til the day I black out / You'll be next to that future drop out
 Public school, private school, summer school, high school,
 night school, I don't like school/ You would think what I think if you see what I
 see / If the teacher loves teaching let them work for free

Dear teacher thank you for teaching me what you can / Now I have to show you
 that I'm a man / Put my words together and make them rhyme, that is my
 plan / Now leave, that's a demand

The future is not far to come / but the future is hard for some / because some
 got to duck the gun / and duck and run / to make it without an education you
 just have to be a lucky one / and you could never cruise the ride / it's either a
 book or bullet you choose the side / from this problem you know how many
 dudes will die / they got confused so it just kills them inside

I guess you're next to a future murderer / Next to a future convict
 'Til the day I black out / You'll be next to that future drop out 

GOODBYE, PLAYMAKING TEACHER

BY CHRISTOPHER RAMIREZ

Goodbye, teacher
You showed me to write
Goodbye, teacher
You made me a great actor
Goodbye, teacher
You were my official playwright teacher
Goodbye, teacher
Now he has come
To take your place
But it won't be the same
Not seeing that 20 inch smile
When I come in
Goodbye, teacher
You've gone to another state
No communication
No games
No slang Spanish
I have to say
Goodbye
To all of that,
Goodbye 🇺🇸

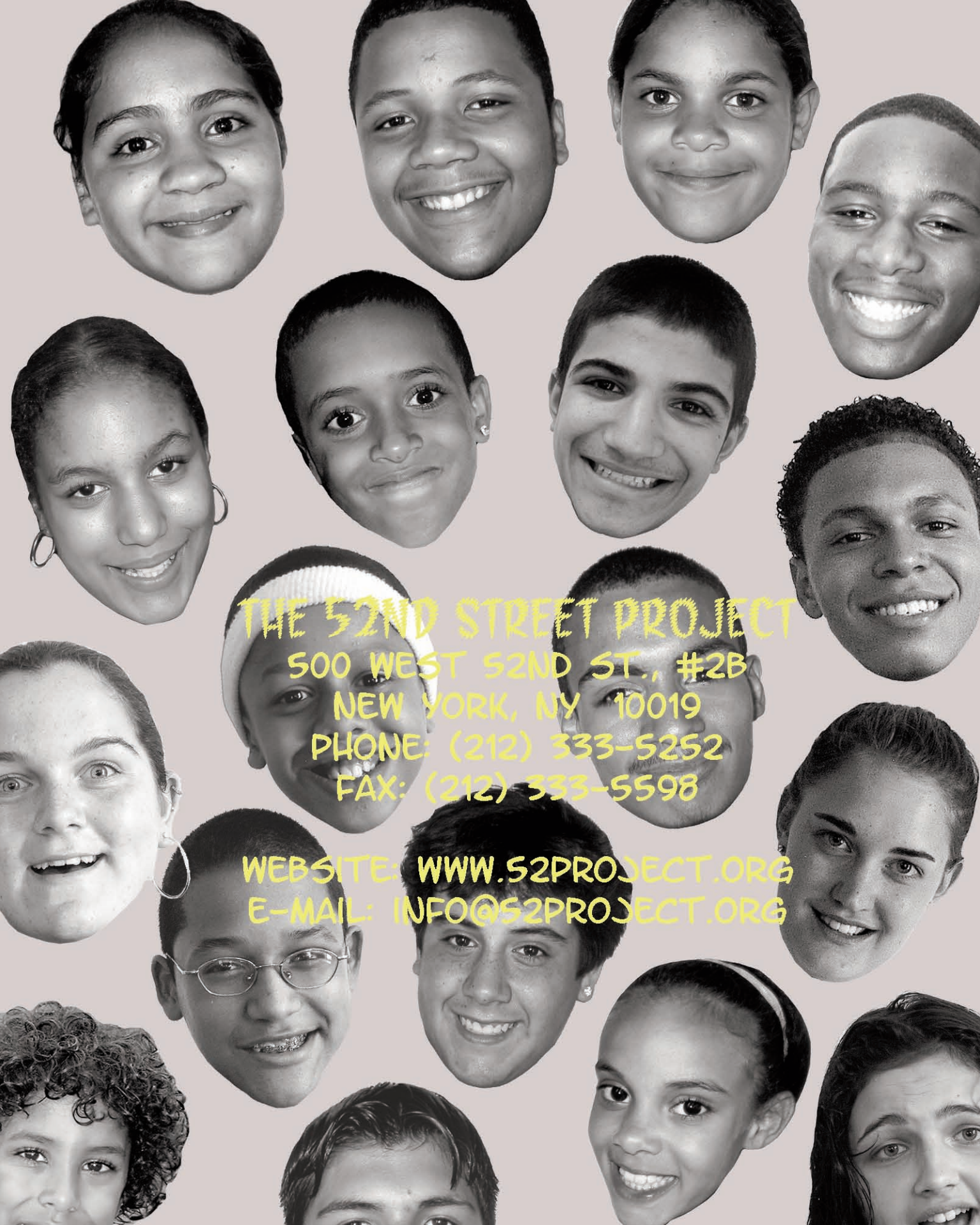


GRB

Megan Sandberg-Zakian left the Project this year to find her fortune in Providence, Rhode Island. We will all miss her, but Chris will miss her the most.



JOHN SHEEHY



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