

PROJECT UPDATE

VOLUME 5 DECEMBER 1990



The Project experienced its first computer breakdown while trying to put this Newsletter together. Without the help of John Greenleaf, MacEmporium and the indefatigable Iris Brown, we wouldn't have been able to bring you this bundle of holiday cheer. So thank you all!

Our Christmas, Hanukkah, Holiday Edition - bigger than the Rockefeller tree, brighter than the snow at Radio City, warmer than the outside - and all conveniently sized to fit in your mailbox. So put a hold on all the wrapping and dradel spinning - it's time to get updated!



THE DREAM THEME

A new guest artistic director, new playwrights, new director/dramaturgs, new actors and a new volunteer system, each helped to make The Dream Theme, well, new and a dream. The Playmaking classes began on September 18th (under the direction of Daniel Judah Sklar and with the help of Polly Adams, Claudine Jellison and Susan Willerman) and for 8 weeks following, 8 kids (aged 8 to 13) came once a week to learn how to write a play. On Friday, November 2nd, the Dream Theme kids (Eli Barbosa, Wendell Borrero, Yolanda Maldonado, Ronnie Noonan, Eric Santoni, Jessica Soto, Samona Squire and Jamar Williams) were joined by the Dream Team adults (Pam Berlin, Billy Carden, Delroy Lindo, Kate Long, Reinaldo Povod, Kirsten Sanderson, Daniel Sklar and Susan Willerman) to form the Dream Theme Team. Together they journeyed upstate to spend a weekend working on the Dream Theme plays. Work on the plays was leavened with a horseback riding excursion and lots of good eating supplied by the Dream Theme cooks, Willie Reale and Meg Scott (who doubled as the Dream Theme stage manager). On Sunday afternoon, everyone gathered to hear the plays read for the first time. Characters as diverse as Freddy Kruger, the Devil, a furry blue monster named Dimitri, Ms. Haagen Dazs and Jesus came to life for the first time in the dreams, and sometimes nightmares, of the kids' imaginations. These characters, and more, became fully dimensional through the talent and love of the Dream Theme actors: Polly Adams, Cecilia Arana, Leon Addison Brown, Paul Carlin, Chris Ceraso, Leigh Curran, Bill Cwikowski, Paul

Eckstein, Lyn Greene, Peter Francis James, Macia Jean Kurtz, Jerome McGill, John Rainer, Marcell Rosenblatt, Judy Tate, Lili Taylor and Pamala Tyson. These actors were joined by Karen Evans-Kandel and Peter MacNicol who were finally able to perform Richard Myrie's play, "The Realtor and The Ratking" which had originally been scheduled as a part of "HumanNature" last June. Our new backstage system involved enlisting volunteers to act as crew heads, thereby alleviating some of the pressure from the Project staff of 2 1/2, and hopefully making the volunteer experience more interesting and challenging. We're happy to say it worked wonderfully and we can't wait to try it again. Everyone involved in "The Dream Theme" made a could-be-nightmare into a dream come true. Special thanks to our guest artistic director, Don Berman, who expanded on the versatility he first exhibited as the "Tannersville" butler in "The Butler Did It!" this past summer. Don picked the theme, gathered our artistic volunteers, critiqued the scripts-in-progress, horseback rode, supervised rehearsals and took the kids on much needed energy-reducing walks. He brought to the Project many new faces and an incredible energy and enthusiasm, that helped us remember why we're all here. It was a grand experiment and we are happy to report it was a success!



THEATRESPORTS

The Project's TheatreSports team, 52 Comes Through, took second place in a Junior Varsity Tournament on Saturday, December 8th at the Marble Collegiate Church. We were defeated by only one, small point (Lew Black will be glad to know that the kids did beat the point spread and the smart money made a killing in Vegas), but everyone there will testify that all of the kids who competed were winners. Project kids who attended weekly training sessions and then competed in the Tournament included Fran-Marie Fargado, Kulondi Frier, Mikey Lugo, Karen and Richard Myrie, Ronnie and Danny Noonan, Lori Quinones, Samona Squire, David Stephens, Jessica Soto, and Tina Vamvoukakis. They made us proud. Thanks to TheatreSports New York for making it all possible and especially to our coaches Kenn Adams, Ellen Mareneck and Yvonne Opfner.



T.V. SHOTS

Shirley Rumierk and Karen Myrie aired coast-to-coast on a recent episode of "Law and Order". The girls rapped and danced their lines to the detectives and looked very tough with their make-up and hair-dos and street-wise attitudes on full. Both Karen and Shirley donated 10% of their paychecks to the Project. We are very proud.

PLAYBACK

Our new program, PlayBack, was initiated in October when Daniel Sklar and Jan Buckaloo spent the Columbus Day weekend with Shamine Gibson and Danielle Ferrin at Jan's home in East Hampton. There, the two PlayBack teams worked on plays that will appear, with others, under the title, "Sometime Later..." The idea is that after having decided on the two characters in the play (who will be played on stage by the child playwright and their adult counterpart) the kid writer writes the first act, leaving act two to the adult. This program effectively combines our One-on-Ones with our Playmaking program and challenges our veteran actor/writers one more time. On the weekend following Thanksgiving, Carl Capotorto and Laura Maria Censabella were joined by Latanya Godfrey and Paula Myrie for a PlayBack weekend up at the National Theatre Colony in Tannersville. Next up are Leigh Curran with Jessica Soto and Sybil Rosen with Jessica Cordero, who will be spending a weekend together in February.



THREE MINUTES FROM BROADWAY (THE STORY OF THE 52ND STREET PROJECT)

On October 27, 1990, this documentary about The 52nd Street Project, which had been in the making for two years, was screened at the Alliance Francaise to two full-houses of Project and Dream Team (not to be taken for the Dream Theme) supporters. This 30-minute film, which was directed by Lyn Greene and produced and written by Lyn and Josephine Dumas, brings back many special Project memories. Currently being considered for the P.B.S. series, P.O.V., we are keeping our collective fingers crossed. In the meantime, keep your eyes open for future screenings. Congratulations to Lyn, Jo and everyone who worked to bring this labor of love to life and for capturing so many special moments on film.

NIGHT ON THE TOWN

Fracaswell Hyman, now appearing in "Oh, Kay!" arranged to give ten tickets to the Project for this Broadway extravaganza. Fran-Marie Fargardo; Annette, Karen, Richard and Paula Myrie; Victor Rojas and Artiba Fortune were invited to attend. The show is full of glittery dresses, slapstick comedy and big tap numbers that keeps everyone on the edge of their seats - dying to dance in the aisles. Thank you Cas.

PROJECT'S CHRISTMAS LIST

- *A new T.V. show for McCrane and McDaniel about singing firemen.
- *A letter from Bill Cosby begging for a position on the Board.
- *A contact in the paper industry.
- *A contact in sporting goods.
- *A contact in contact paper.
- *A really big house within 2 1/2 hours of the city (really).
- *A room full of wealthy people who are affable and have nagging social consciences (really).
- *More free chocolate from New Jersey.
- *More free duds from Bloomingdale's.
- *More fun than a barrel of monkeys.
- *Peace on earth and mercy mild (really).

Peter MacNicol was speaking to Kristen Bess and told him that when Marsue's make-up runs she can look like a racoon, to which Kristen quipped, "Better than a Jersey Cow". In these troubled times, our cautious holiday wish for the dear readers of the "Update" is that your holidays are warmed in the company of loved ones and that your new year is somehow better than a Jersey Cow.



KULONDI SPEAKS

TheatreSports is improv. Improv is where you just make up things on the spot - where you ad lib. There are games that we play with it and we have tournaments when they plan it. We had a tournament a couple of Saturdays ago. There were two teams (their names were 2 x Fresh and the Rheedlen Midtown Crew) that were challenging us at the tournament. It was a good match, but 2 x Fresh won by one point! What a match. TheatreSports is really fun and I love to do it.

FUNDRAISING NEWS

Recent donations include:

D-B Trust:	\$ 3,125
Educational Fdn. of America:	\$40,000
The William & Mary Greve Fdn:	\$ 5,000
The James A. Macdonald Fdn:	\$ 500
The Marquis George Macdonald Fdn:	\$ 500
Morgan Guaranty:	\$ 3,000
Ronnie Eldridge's Office:	\$ 4,000
The Threshold Foundation:	\$12,000

Thank you one and all !



HALLOWEEN AT BLOOMINGDALE'S

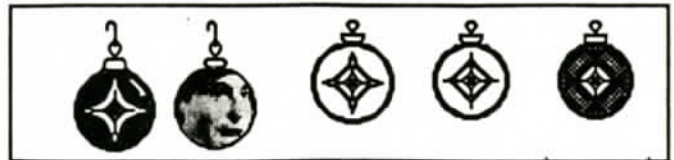
What do you get when you add a unicorn + candy + perfume salespeople + screaming pumpkins? Halloween at Bloomingdales, of course. Bloomies, remembering how great the Project kids were on The Today Show, called with an amazing offer. Would it be possible to gather 10 kids to participate in a show

modeling Halloween costumes that they then get to keep? We of course said yes and rounded up the kids which, needless to say, wasn't hard. Lori, Ronnie, Danny, Tina, Mary, Samona, Mikey, Fran-Marie, Kulondi and Nyita were treated like kings and queens as they were chauffeured by limousines to first pick out their costumes and then to the actual show on Saturday, October 20th. Suddenly, Batman, the Queen of Hearts, a Unicorn, a Princess, a Ninja and many more were parading through the store along with a magic clown and a juggler all dancing to a Halloween tape. Through the whole experience, Carolyn Toronto, Laurie Griffith and the rest of the Bloomingdales staff were absolutely wonderful!



SABBATICAL CORRECTION

Willie is not on sabbatical. He is delegating responsibility so that he can attend to other duties. If you haven't noticed, he is busy appearing in various holiday symbols all over this newsletter. If you can count all the Willies on the newsletter you are eligible to enter the "Count the Willies on the Newsletter Contest". (I'm getting the willie's just thinking about it). To enter, just count all the Willies on the newsletter and send a postcard with your name, address and phone number and the number of Willies that you think are on the newsletter. Qualifying postcards will be placed in the fishbowl that Sparky, the formerly alive Project goldfish, used to live in. The lucky winner will get the aforementioned fishbowl and free tickets to the next Project show! Enter now, enter often.



1991

1991 looks to be as busy as 1990 with many new projects planned. There will be several Playmaking programs that will reach first-time writers, as well as our 30-some veterans. Work has already started on the Project's 10th anniversary singing and dancing extravaganza. Look for your flyer in late-Spring. The One-on-Ones will return for their fifth season, and September should see the first PlayBack production. We are also well on our replicating way having already received two-thirds of the budget for the initial work to be done. The scripts have been gathered and edited by Mary Kane, designed by Iris Brown and Bernhardt Fudyma, and Barbara McCrane is busy typing them into the computer. Rob Reale has found all of the music from shows past, and Emily Grishman and Elise Bretton Miller have begun transcribing and copying it. Daniel Sklar and Willie are poised to write their respective manuals and Kevin Roach is creating blueprints for the set and furniture modules. If all proceeds apace, we should be ready to begin sharing our materials with individuals and organizations across the country interested in starting their own versions of the Project by the end of the year. Other than the above, it should be pretty slow and you'll probably find us sitting around the office playing checkers.

