

PROJECT UPDATE

VOLUME 11 OCTOBER 1992

Special Summer Re-Cap Issue

• The Seventh Annual One-on-Ones • Le Voyage au France • Graham Windham •

The Who's Who Summer Coup

This summer's 1992 One-on-Ones marks the seventh summer of the program where ten kids are paired up with ten actor/writers who then all go away for a week to the country. Our first trip was upstate in Poughkeepsie as part of New York Stage and Film's residency at Vassar College. Adults were housed by our gracious upstate hosts, Fran McDormand and Wendy Ettinger, and the kids stayed at the dorms, which, as Angela Golden eloquently told *PU* reporters, was "nice and exciting and grown up." *PU* staff would like to note that the quad was a superb spot for flashlight tag. Other kids who were "it" were the three Barbosas (no relation to the three amigos, although they would look cute in sombreros): Jill, Eli and Amy, Angela Golden, Raymond Harold, Danny Noonan, Fernando Ramirez, Victor Rojas, Mary Vamvoukakis and Eddie Zambrano, and Joanne Ramirez came along as junior counselor. Besides flashlight tag, other fun-filled activities were horseback riding, lots of swimming, and a totally tubular water slide.



Poughkeepsie Pixies: Amy & Jill Barbosa, Fernando Ramirez, Mary Vamvoukakis and Victor Rojas

Hey -- Did you catch the flyer for the November Cavalcade of Plays attached to your *PU*? No? Call for details or reservations (764-1379)

The second trip took place in August to Block Island. The kids were housed with host families and we all worked and chowed at the home of Dr. Cristina Biaggi, as we have for the past seven summers. For those of you who wonder what Block Island is really like, Joell Soto says "It's a paradise away from home, but the quiet is nerve-wracking." The other young participants were Erse Britto, Nyita Hanley, Darthula Harvey, Andre Parks, Lori Quinones, Omar Rose, Luis Santoni, Natasha Soto and Project vets Karen Myrie and José Soto participated as junior counselors.

A whole panoply of characters graced the Ensemble Studio Theatre's stage this summer including a bunny-beating psychologist, a mad scientist, a pipsqueak cyborg, a diner waitress turned TV talk show host, Cleopatra, a casting director/seaweed monster, two emperors (one eastern, one western), and Danny Noonan and Amy Barbosa as themselves. These and other unforgettable Who's Who moments are captured in the Who Wuz Who Quiz below....the answers you'll know if you saw the show.

Of course, there are hoards of people to thank for such a singular One-on-One summer: all 25 artist volunteers, Fred Carl and Henry Krieger who collectively wrote 27 songs, the astounding volunteer production crew, our indefatigable Stage Manager Katherine Lumb, and all the swell folk in Poughkeepsie, Block Island, and New York City who made our summer such a smashing success in every way.

In particular, *PU* would like to make a public retraction regarding Project volunteer Bill Wrubel. As you *PU* readers may recall, in Volume 9, Bill was perhaps inappropriately maligned as a less than formidable volunteer. However, Bill took the volunteerism bull by the horns this summer and not only helped put up the set in a pinch but teamed up with Project kid Luis Santoni to write and act with him in "The Emperor's New Laws" in which they both wore togas. Togas?! We could never have thought of a more (loose) fitting end to the story. *PU* apologizes profusely to Bill and we plan to offer him a by-line as recompense.



"Darthula Taking Minutes"

Who Wuz Who Quiz

- ① Who, playing a spelling whiz mistook for a Vegas entertainer, spelled garbanzo, "CHICK PEA."
- ② Who played Willie Reale's ten year-old alter ego in "Taking Myself to the Movies."
- ③ Who got the audience to sing along nightly "There's Nothing Like A Mommy."
- ④ Who said "Give me liberty or give me death."
- ⑤ Who took more double takes than is legally allowed according to the Schtick Code of Ethics, and is pictured above seated under an umbrella the first sunny day after four drippy rainy days on Block Island.
- ⑥ Who sang an ode to his tuna on rye sandwich? (Hint: he also belted "It's a Munching, Munching World" in last year's Ones-on-Ones).
- ⑦ Who played Sidney opposite Amy Barbosa and Carl Capotorto in "A Play For Three Actors."

- A. Sidney was a cardboard cut-out to thwart Amy & Carl's play within a play.
- B. Victor Rojas
- C. The irrepressible Darthula Harvey
- D. We can't remember but we don't think it was a kid. (rim shot, please)
- E. Eddie Zambrano
- F. Raymond Harold
- G. Eli Barbosa

(Answers on Page 5)

New Drones In Project Hive

Due to an increase in honey demand, the Project staff has become a veritable swarm. We are happy to announce that two new staff members have joined the Project this fall. Michael Bernard, the associate artistic director, has been a volunteer with the Project for the last year assisting Daniel in the Playmaking Program. He recently graduated with an M.A. in Educational Theater from NYU and comes on board to oversee the Playmaking and Triple Threat programs. Daniel is very busy this year flying around helping replication projects around the country. Then he's going to France (copy cat!) In addition, Michael will assist Willie in managing all of our fabulous artist volunteers. This will free Willie up to also work on the Replication programs that are sprouting up and to spend more time cooking for the Executive Director (aka ED). This year he plans a richly sauced pheasant with pear confit. The ED (queen bee) has also been demanding profiteroles at coffee break.

Also buzzing in is Jerry McGill as Production Manger, replacing Jenny. A recent graduate of Fordham University, Jerry has worked with the Project for two years as both an actor and playwright. Jerry will be responsible for kid wrangling and production management. Some of you may remember Jerry who played Dreamer in the "Dream Theme" and Slick Rick the rapper in "This Land Is Whose Land?"

Michael and Jerry may be leaving messages on your machine asking you to do something. Please be nice to them, we'd like to keep them around for awhile.

Jenny has been promoted to the Director of Marketing and Development. She has been shopping shopping shopping for just the right wardrobe to schmooze the funders in (it will undoubtedly include a yellow jacket) She will assist Carol in fundraising efforts and help create a marketing plan for Replication. In addition, she hopes to expand our press coverage in the local papers - so keep your eyes open. If you have helpful hints about money or press, or just a good shoe store, please give her a call. She's a little sad that she doesn't get to call the volunteers much anymore, so she may need to hear from you.

Also the self-proclaimed "nubie" (new bee?) Eris Migliorini is here for the season as our intern. She's from Indiana, which for some inexplicable reason is where a lot of our interns come from, and she says that without infringing she'd like to know all about our lives. Huh.

We are thrilled that the organization is growing and that such incredible people are willing to work with us.

-- ED

The Franco File

We went to Fra-ance. We went to Fra-ance. Yup we went to France. Here's what it was like: LaTanya Godfrey, Deneka Peniston, Shamine Gibson, Alex Bess, José Soto, Paula Myrie, Peter Francis James, Pam Tyson, Lewis Black, Jenny Gersten, Carol and Willie all got out to JFK and hopped the Tower Air Flight to Paris with a connection to Marseille and were picked up by Bill and Jane Muddyman in a van and a station wagon and ridden up into the Provençal hills to the Garden of Eden also known as the Château De Berne. The moment we arrived we were shown to a big long table overlooking the pond and the formal garden with the vineyards rising in the background where the first in a long parade of unforgettable meals was served prepared by the Chateau Chef Françoise. Beautiful salads from the Chateau's gardens, fresh baked bread, ratatouille from the original fountain of ratatouille you name it. And then of course there was Monsieur Fromage or Mr. Mouse as we yanks like to call him. After every meal, a big covered ceramic plate came out with a statue of our friend Mr. Mouse on it. Just beneath were the daily cheese gifts from the benevolent rodent himself. Fueled by our ever-healthy dairy-heavy diet we rose very early each morning to the crowing of the platoon of roosters in the Berne chicken coop. Alex became the Chateau's eggmeister for the week making a daily pilgrimage to the hen house.

At the cafe in the nearby town of Lorgues Shirley Rumierk established herself early as the kid's spokesperson jumping in with the very first "je voudrais." The ever observant José Soto was quoted as saying "Man they got some serious, slammin, fly lookin' girls in France, or literally translated, "les jeune filles sont tres jolie en France." The kids were worked into the ground, fortunately there was a big pool in it. The crew from CBS Sunday Morning showed up and suddenly we got an invitation to go to the mayor's office where the Project was honored with a medal from hizzoneur himself. Let it be noted that CBS got 3 medals including one for Giovanni, the sound guy. Our new best friend the mayor swung it so that we could perform for two nights in a parking lot as kind of the opener for the horse show that was in town. By the second night word had gotten around that we were good and a crowd of about 250 locals congregated to hear the music. The kids with the ever electric Pam Tyson had the people literally dancing in the street before it was over. The week culminated with a performance of the play at the Chateau for an invited audience; we wowed 'em. Keep an eye on the mail for news of the New York production of the musical "Dark Secret." One final note: we had a layover in Paris and Project volunteers Peter Herdrich and Karen Trott (who weren't asked to come to France but were really good sports about it) underwrote a ride on the Bateaux Mouches (a boat ride around Paris). Along the way, the guide pointed out La Conciergerie, the prison where Marie Antoinette was decapitated, to which LaTanya Godfrey responded "Oh yeah, I think I saw that on cable."

We are so grateful for the opportunity to give these kids (and frankly ourselves) this experience which we believe transcends even the best offerings of cable. So many mercis to the Florence Gould Foundation, John Planco, Jayne Keyes, and the William Morris Agency, Joel Coen, Sue Phillips, Jeannine Edmunds and Mrs. Alfred Shawl. -WR



Rocking in Lorgues: - Shamine, Alex, Paula and Shirley perform in town. Cropped out of the picture is Lewis Black sampling the local pates.

Replication Update

Replication has begun in the northeast, the mid-atlantic states, and the south.

Daniel has developed a "Playmaking Intensive Workshop" for adults, as well as various forms of the Playmaking class for children. Daniel led intensives or taught kids at the following locations. He also gained some frequent flyer miles.

In a program sponsored by the Studio Arena Theatre, National Fuel and the Buffalo public schools, a group of 8 theater pros led by Melinda Adamz spent 19 weeks teaching Playmaking at P.S. #8, an inner-city elementary school in downtown Buffalo, NY. The result was 27 stellar plays produced by a professional company on the Studio Arena's main-stage in June.

A few weeks later in Roanoke, VA a project sponsored by the Junior League and the Deltas called VIDA, led by the spirited Becca Godsey also produced kid-written plays in cooperation with Jerry Hodgkin, artistic director of the Mill Mountain Theatre, where the plays were performed.

Most recently, Daniel and Michaela Murphy went to Macon, GA and helped to found the First Street Project. This newest replication, the brainchild of Suzanne and Tom Glennon, has taken over a beautifully reconditioned former recreation center of a "mill town" in cooperation with the Oglethorpe Public Housing Project and Macon's theatrical community.

In December, Daniel is going to LA to work with the practically famous Virginia Avenue Project and the newly formed Wilshire Boulevard Project led by Project volunteer Garrett Brown. -DJS

Future Project Projects

TRIPLE THREAT REDUX

The Project, in an attempt to emulate its friend and neighbor, EST, is holding a mini Novemberfest during the second week of said month. We've dubbed it the November cavalcade of plays -- catchy, huh? The first offering will be the premiere set of the 92-93 Triple Threat plays on Wednesday, November 11th. You'll recall, all you *PU* devotees, that last year we test drove the Triple Threat program with great results. This is the program in which the kids who take a more advanced class in playwriting and re-writes with Daniel produce 4-5 plays with their peers as actors, directors, designers and backstage crew. Due to popular demand, we are offering two performances of the Triple Threat plays, at 5:30 and 8:00 on November 11th. The featured writers for this show are: Jill Barbosa, Gemma Cooper-Novack Rachel James, Olaniyi Makinde, Annette Myrie, and Andre Parks. Two new artistic directors are breaking onto the Triple Threat scene this season, Michael Bernard and Wendy vanden Heuvel, so if you're interested in helping out, give 'em a call at the office.

PLAYBACK'S BACK

November 14th and 15th, we will perform the second annual Playback plays. Last year we performed these under the title "Sometime Later..." This year, in a traditional variation on a theme, the plays will be performed collectively as "First Things Second" in which the second act, written by an adult, takes place earlier in time than the first act which is written by the adult's kid partner. The line-up for this show includes Fran-Marie Fargardo, Kulondi Frier, Dawn Jackson, Richard Myrie, Ronnie Noonan, and adults Kathryn Rossetter, Carmen Rivera, Jim Ryan, Candido Tirado, Susan Vitucci, and Bill Wise.

PLAYMAKING'S IN THE MAKING

The Playmaking class began with ten new writers on October 1st with Daniel Judah Sklar at the helm of the class which lasts eight weeks and teaches kids the basic steps of how to write a play. In November, the kids will go away for the weekend and write their final play for two actors which will then be produced at New York Theatre Workshop's brand new home on East 4th Street. Performances will be Friday, December 11th - Sunday, December 13th. No theme yet, so send in your ideas (no, better not — Willie will feel threatened).

Graham Windham

"Mind Making" makes it to EST

On August 22nd, 23rd, and 24th, The 52nd Street Project presented "Mind Making" at EST; ten new plays from the Playmaking program at Graham-Windham. This is the third year the Project has been involved with this foster care facility in Hastings-on-Hudson. The Playmaking teacher for these 12 and 13 year olds this year was Judy Tate (great job, Judy). June Ballinger is still hanging in there as artistic director of the program, and Susan Willerman did a turn as the Playmaking teacher for *Replay*, involving last year's Graham-Windham playwrights. Both of the retreat weekends were held at the EST summer conference in Palenville, NY. Thank you Curt Demptser and Kirsten Sanderson.

A deliberately ambiguous theme, "Mind Making" turned out to have a heavy emphasis on fire. The last three plays of the evening made up a fire trilogy as a point of fact. Actors thrashed and heaved as they burned to death on stage. Could this be why, on opening night, the fire department decided to show up for an inspection exactly at curtain?

Another popular theme was LOVE. In Shannon Warren's play, "Diamonds are a Girl's Deadly Friend," realistic Myles (Leonard Stabb) holds his freshly shot, greedy, materialistic girlfriend Susan (Mary Beth Piel) and cries "I loved you so much but you're dead. I can't love a dead person."

In Jody James' play, *Depressed Dora* (Kimberleigh Aarn) gets over her grief of lost love and declares "so I'll make this cake and get on with my life."

"Lincoln Airport High," by Laticia Moore, concludes with teenage jet liner Steve (Will Badgett) coming to terms with his emotional blocks and panic at giving his heart and wings to girlfriend airliner, Kim (Cecilia Arana). "Wait Kim, wait. I thought I was afraid of crashing, but I'm really afraid of love." They are united in the friendly skies at the end. "I have three word to say. I love you and you are not a stupid person." "I have three words too. I love you forever." So who's counting? Plans are in the making to continue the project next year.

MERGERS & ACQUISITIONS

☞ Congratulations to Project volunteers Moira Driscoll and David Pence on their newly celebrated matrimony -- an excellent duo. Also warm thanks to them for asking that their wedding gifts be a donation to the Project. That gesture will more or less guarantee that any of David and Moira's children will automatically be enrolled in The 52nd Street Project, or the replication Project of their choice if they're otherwise located.

☞ Other weddings of Project pals that we'd like to congratulate: Oliver Platt & Camilla Campbell, and Rand Foerster and Jana McClure. Let's hear some big *PU* cheers for their marital bliss.

☞ Welcome *au monde* Gabriel Joseph Reale and Nellie Ann Kroeze-Ochs. While in France, Project muckety-mucks Willie and Carol got overseas phone calls from their siblings Rob Reale and Jackie Ochs reporting the arrivals of their respective nephew and niece. We bet they get married someday.

☞ Also congratulations to pal and staff member Daniel Judah Sklar on his distinguished book award from the American Association of Theater and Education for his book, "Playmaking." Speaking of distinguished, Daniel has recently cultivated a salt and pepper goatee -- *tres sportif!*

☞ After setting the record for living more consecutive days than any Project fish, Six faced the final flush. It was ick. We don't want to talk about it. Jenny is looking into the possibility of electronic fish.

☞ Many thanks to Minna Rose for sending Omar and Juanita Rose (no relation) to the musical "Cats" last month. Also thanks to the Young Playwrights Festival who allowed a group of twelve of our kids to see their productions of young people's plays. Thanks to Henson Foundation for the tickets to the Puppet Festival at Joseph Papp's Public Theater.

☞ Okay, all those of you who are out in California, just come back. You know who you are.

Funding News

National Endowment for the Arts	\$20,000
New York Times	\$10,000
Holland Lodge	\$1,000
MCJ Foundation	\$5,000
The Damann Fund	\$7,500
NYSCLA	\$2,046
Societe Generale	\$2,000

We don't know what we did to get in so good with the government (maybe we filed our taxes on time) but we're really grateful to all of the above organizations for their generosity towards The 52nd Street Project.



Good-Bye Bill

We mourn the passing of our good friend Bill Elverman. I remember we had ten of the kids up to Fran McDormand and Joel Coen's house upstate. Bill was working with Tina Vamvoukakis on her play for the Spring Thing (it was Bill's first time away with us). We had finished our cookies and cocoa and Bill helped me get the kids settled in their sleeping bags. Bill and I were alone for a moment in the kitchen surveying the kids who were all pretending to be sleeping angels until of course we were out of earshot so they could raise a little mischief. Bill was silent (unusual for Bill) for a moment, then turned to me and said, "This is why I wanted to be a priest." My strong sense is that Bill is now in a sleeping bag next to some other angels and when the coast is clear, he will lead them in the mischief. - WR

