

PROJECT UPDATE

VOLUME 20 OCTOBER 1995

DOUBLE PLAYS

Harold and Mimi = Dreamy

In the Project's first sponsorship coup, The Harold and Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust has underwritten the 1995 and 1996 One-on-Ones. Here's Michael Bernard with a report from this summer's sidelines:

Just when we figured out what number sunblock to wear, the summer ended. But not without the Project knocking out another set of whiz bang yee haw plays. Yes indeedly do, you just can't have summer without twenty new plays and two incredible trips from 52. "Double or Nothing - The Risky Plays" was this year's theme and the plays were *two good two* be believed. First, in Tyler Hill, PA, Eric Karpeles and Mike Sell hosted a wild week of swimming, horseback riding and plays plays. We saw guru's giving guidance, playing cards decking it out and trying to deal, Venutians learning about friendship, a Roman plumber and poet plumbing the depths of emotion and courage as well as a commode, two chefs who taught us a new meaning to the words "let's mix", and one wacky funeral director. The kids were Ahmed Attia, Dshana Hamid, Chris Hansen, Eric Hooper, Zsuzsa and Marcsi Mysak, Raymond Ocasio, Janice Santiago, Tony Santiago and Thomas Santoni. Some other highlights included making the human whirlpool in the Cobbs pool, star and moon gazing courtesy of Michael O'Gara's telescopes made from scratch, and having a bang-up fourth of July picnic at Naomi Dickerson's that featured fireworks and the finest barbecued chicken this side of the Allegheny thanks to Mark Keoppen (a.k.a. that guy with the good barbecue sauce — see related recipe on p. 3).

Next, the Block Island group, Judy Agosto, Jean Pierre Bernard Barthelemy, Yull Neri Borda, Ashley Dominique, Frank Hansen, David Harold, Kevin Hartwick, Jonsi Smith, Sahara Walsh, and the first second generation Project kid Charina Corbett also doubled the fun. We saw a fireman come to grips with his fear of fire, lizards standing up for their rights not to be dermatologically exploited as handbags, a swan who was not limited to others' preconceived notions of swans, movie stars a singin', and day lending night its sunny disposition.. Add to that our many, many beach days. In fact, this was the first Block Island trip that did not have a single beach day rained out...just our performance for all our Island buddies. Henry Krieger and first time One-on-Oner Rusty Magee wrote a total of 38 songs. Somebody call Guinness. (See 'Back at Biaggi,' on p. 4) MB

Ray Ocasio portrays Marcus Comodius Latrinus, an ancient Roman plumber, at the informal performance in Tyler Hill this summer.

PEPPY PLAYBACK/PLAYMAKING PREVUE

Aaaaannndd we're off! The 1995 fall Playmaking class is underway. We've got 10 new, bright, chipper (and don't forget adorable) children bein' taught by Michael Bernard with the help of six really cool adults at Hartley House every Tuesday afternoon. Lest we forget, the class was adapted for the Project by Daniel Judah Sklar from his book, Playmaking: Children Writing and Performing Their Own Plays. The culmination of these classes will be performances of these kids' plays in early December. Sorry to get you all excited and make you wait over two months, but it takes several weeks to learn how to become an accomplished playwriting genius. In the interim, however, we are pleased to bring you shows from our Playback series (brought to you by the Berrilla Kerr Foundation). This program is designed for older kids who have already done all of the other programs. Been there, done that, yadadayadada. Veterans Diana Rojas, Jed Clarke, Virginia Vargas, Jennifer Socarras, Raymond Harold, and Eli Barbosa amassed in Wareham, Mass. where hams amass, along with some Project staff and adults over Columbus Day Observed weekend. While resorting by the bay, they wrote the first half of an absolutely riveting play. Back in the city, the adults who worked with these geniuses — Michael, Carl Capotorto, Jerry McGill, Kathy Rossetter, Gina Torres and Willie — will write the second half of the play. The sneaky little catch is that the second half of the play reveals consequences of something that happened in the first half of the play. Tricky, right? "The Other Shoe Drops (Plays of Consequence)" will be in rehearsal for the next two weeks and presented to the public November 3-5 at Playwrights Horizons Studio Theatre. *See attached flyer.* Bound to be pure dyn-O-mite. So get excited and mark you calendars!
EVM



Photo: Stephanie Berger

BRAIN TRUST

Five smarty pants Project kids received the first ever "52nd Street Project Scholarship Awards" - over 500 bucks apiece. It's the Project's way of encouraging our alumni to go places. Speaking of going places, here are the winners and where they're going: Deneka Peniston - SUNY Buffalo, Joanne Ramirez - SUNY New Paltz, Shirley Rumierk - Harvard University, Cara Shultz - Fordham University, Jessica Soto - The College of Saint Rose. A reception was held at Willie and Jenny's house and a wheel barrel full of samoleons was raised for the next year's kitty. Special thanks to all those who contributed, especially Wendy Ettinger, Emily Grishman, Peter and Marsue MacNicol, Fran McDormand Laura Valeroso and indirectly that foundation in Chicago for funding the fund. We are hoping that one day in the future these young women will organize alumni golf outings at their respective country clubs to benefit future Projects kids. WR

BRAIN STORM

Hold on to your mortar boards! Michael Bernard, Chris Ceraso and Willie Reale have created an innovative new teen program that's guaranteed to hold the attention of distracted teenagers and make them want to read Shakespeare instead of watching shallow mean-spirited characters insult one another on mindless sitcoms!!!

Well, not really. In fact they haven't the slightest idea what they're doing. But they're not letting that stop them. Nosireee. The empty headed trio met with ten Project teens and everyone's agreed to explore a new program that will keep the kids interested and Michael, Chris and Willie off the streets. At the first meeting Jill Barbosa was heard to say, "Romeo and Juliet? People dying over love? Come on! Who could believe that? If it doesn't work out you just find someone else. There's plenty of fish in the sea if you know what I mean." The one element of the new program that has been established is that after every meeting the group eats a big dinner together. WR

PSST!...P.S.S.

This may come as a shock, but not everything the Project does is filled with lollipops and sparkles. Following the last performance of each group of shows, we strike the set, pack up all our stuff, and sweep. This is the glory-free, unfulfilling grunt work carried out by the real Project troopers who hang around to help. BUT NOW-Da Daa- we have introduced a soon to be tradition into this fun-n-games organization to entice even those with a clinical fear of the dust bunny: **Post-Strike Strikes**. Yup, a dream come true: Project Bowl-O-Rama. After busting grime, we head on down to Leisure Time. Leisure Time Lanes, that is, in the historic Port Authority (go inside the southern-most building, take an escalator up to the second floor and head straight back to paradise). Bowl, BOWL, BOWL! Don't tell the Board of Directors but every once in a while, we even hit the lanes on Friday around noon. So, if you're feelin' a bit rusty and want to get in a few frames before the next strike, give us a call at: SOG-1-DRY and join the lunchtime fun. The moral of this story: Don't be a turkey and split before strike. Total Party. EVM

WE COULDN'T GET BETTER HELP IF WE PAID FOR IT

Jeepers, do we get heavenly interns! Glen Brackenridge and Maura Griffin are two angels that graced our surroundings this summer. If you didn't have the pleasure of working with them, too bad, 'cause man were they super. Maura is a NYU grad student who is studying education through drama. She helped us out last Spring both in the office and in the Replay classes and picnic. She also traveled with us to Block Island for the One-on-Ones. Glen is a first year grad student in The New School's (how long until they call it the Old School?) acting program. He went with us to both Tyler Hill and Block Island. He is a most extraordinary kid wrangler, especially since he can hold about five of them at one time, and was quite the load-in/load-out trooper. Both of these fabulous folk served many a lunch duty and adult time kid watcher. We are very thankful for all of their assistance and their remarkably pleasant natures. Miss you Office Boy and Purple Girl. EVM

Ed. note: In a tiny, related article, here's Jessica Lissy, the Project's newest, still not-too-tired-of-us intern, to introduce herself to all you PU readers.

The strange new voice on the telephone belongs to Jessica Lissy, the Project's current intern. Jessica, who is blessed with a chameleon phone voice, is often mistaken for Jenny, Carol, or even Eris' dulcet tones, though never yet for Michael or what'shisname. She is excited to be helping out with the Project's programs, and thanks the PU for giving her this opportunity to write about herself in the oh-so-whimsical third person. JL

MARK'S KEOPPEN'S KICKIN' BARBECUE SAUCE

2 qts. chili sauce
1 qt. crushed tomatoes
4 lg. onions
1/2 cup peanut oil
2 heads of garlic, finely chopped
8 oz. dijon mustard
1/3 cup light soy sauce
3 tbsp. dark soy sauce
4 oz. honey
24 oz. papaya sauce (available at most bodegas)

Spice Mixture:
1 1/2 oz. chili powder
3 tbsp white pepper
4 tbsp cumin seeds, lightly toasted and finely ground
2 tbsp oregano
Cayenne to taste

Combine chili sauce, crushed tomatoes, and one head of garlic in a large sauce pan and bring to a very slow simmer. Saute onions and one head of garlic in peanut oil till browned. Add onions and garlic to the sauce along with the honey, papaya sauce and spices. Simmer fifteen minutes and remove from heat. Let cool. Store in fridge for several days to meld flavors. Makes one fat, mouth-waterin' gallon of sauce, which will keep in the refrigerator for several months.

Mark recommends marinating chicken halves in vinegar, lemon juice, soy sauce and garlic at least one day before cooking. According to Mark, not only does this marinade "add pizzazz" but it expedites cooking time.

SPACED OUT

You may remember that in the last *PU* we announced that the Project would be moving by the end of August. Well, we lied. We were hoping to move into a city-owned space on 53rd Street. That fell through. The good news is that the City has come up with an alternative solution on the corner of 10th Avenue and 52nd Street, steps away from Sonny's, which is the candy store that all the neighborhood kids use - location location location. It is a large space which will be able to have a classroom, offices and lounge; a good place to hang out and chat with your pals, do some homework, beef up your computer skills, or read some cool books. We are currently in negotiations with the City, and as soon as we have a move-in date you'll all be the first to know. In the meantime, thanks to the kindness of Stephen Schofel and Williams Real Estate, we are staying at 220 West 42nd Street — same bat phone, same bat place. Of course, the best news of all is that we may actually have an address on 52nd Street, and we won't have to change our name. More to come, so stay tuned to the same bat *PU*. CO

IN KIND WE TRUST

As you *PU* readers are probably well aware, The 52nd Street Project is sustained by the monetary gifts of foundations, corporations, government agencies and individual donors. However, every year the Project receives thousands of dollars of in-kind donations. It is to these unsung, in-kind heroes that we would like to pay a moment's homage.


Stephanie Berger, for example, has been the Project's most splendid archivist over the past, keeping the Project in the black (and white)...and hey, did you catch the one page photo essay about the Project by Stephanie in *The New York Times Arts & Leisure* section in August? It was excellent. With our imminent move, many kind folks gave us in kind donations of book shelves, fax machines, trash cans, cubby holes, and even a CD player — thank you Becky Browder and Ted Neustadt, Joanne Comerford, Jose Dominguez & Amy Waldman, and Kevin Roach. Over the summer, both David Sneddon of Fairway and Larry Wolhandler of Painters Tavern donated food for the One-on-Ones. And while we're on the subject of the One-on-Ones, there are all the wonderful host families on Block Island and in Tyler Hill who donate their homes to us for the week. Sheila Kehoe just donated a bunch of costumes to The Costume Collection, so we get to rent some costumes there for a few of our upcoming productions courtesy of Sheila. That suits us fine. And Beth Clancy also just acquired some costumes for the Project. David Baron donated a very useful keyboard last year that Henry Krieger played in Tyler Hill this summer. And let's not forget all the Off Broadway theaters who donate their spaces and resources to the Project six weeks a year, and Neil Mazzella and Hudson Scenic, who built the Project set *gratis*. *Gracias*.


BIKE UPDATE


For those of you following the travels of Vanessa Valdes and George Babiak, two Project volunteers who set out to bicycle around the world, we have good news, scary news and thankfully more good news. The good news: The couple easily made their first destination, Vanessa's hometown of Calgary, Canada three months after they left NYC. The


scary news: While passing through an avalanche tunnel in British Columbia, both were the victims of a hit and run accident. The thankfully more good news: Neither was seriously injured (thanks to the fact that they were wearing helmets - kids) although their bicycles were totalled. They rested and headed to Utah where they had a revelation (as one is wont to do in the Southwest). George and Vanessa realized that they missed the Project so much they had to return to New York. While we are sad that they won't complete their journey, the City is richer for their return. MB

TID BITS

 The New 42 and Project mom Cora Cahan gave Shirley Rumierk and Fran-Marie Fargado jobs, which helped both of the young ladies pay in part for college. And Jessica Lissy, scored a temporary gig for LaTanya Godfrey at High 5, an organization which provides \$5 tickets to high school aged students.

 Every so often, The 52nd Street Project gets invited to cultural or sporting events, that groups of kids and adults attend. We call this informal program "Night On The Town." Over the summer, two such invitations cropped up: 15 kids and adults saw a sizzling dress rehearsal of the musical "Chronicle of a Death Foretold" thanks to our pals at Lincoln Center Theater; and Eileen Cowel at Scholastic asked a group of very eager kids to see a screening of author/Project donor Ann Martin's "The Baby Sitter's Club" movie. (You'll all be relieved to learn that the word club does not refer to a wooden club with which the sitters keep their charges in line but rather to a sorority). So thank you former and future producer friends and the like who keep "Night On The Town" in mind.

 The 52nd Street Project has hired a new part-time staff member that just goes to weddings and showers. These are the most recent nuptials and other love-filled events: Adrienne Lobel to benefit director "Sparky" Mark Linn-Baker; benefit co-chair and advisory committee member Karin Barry to actor/set-schlepper Tom Schall; former Project staffer Mina Hammer to Project brother Tom Reale; staff graphic designer Iris A. Brown to Project actor/dramaturg/director Joe White; former Project intern Tracy Reese and Paul Lastrapps; underwater archaeologist Jillian Nelson to Project actor/dramaturg/director Peter Francis James (*PU* scooped by Lois Brady - drat!). Speaking of nuptials, Jeannette and Sam Black, Lew and Ronnie's parents, just celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. To prove their love, Lew and Ronnie sent them abroad on the QE2. Speaking of filial love, Project pals Judy Tygard and Mitch Weitzner recently gave birth to Tess, who, by their account, has "hair like Don King."

 Eric Karpeles, who hosts the Project in Tyler Hill, PA, has created a room-sized painting entitled the Sanctuary Project, created in response to the presence of AIDS in our lives and our communities. The Project was on display in Chicago this Spring, and will be in Los Angeles beginning in December sponsored by APLA. Look for Eric and his painting on "CBS Sunday Morning" this fall. Not surprisingly, the word is that Eric's painting has twice the emotional range and depth than CBS' entire fall line-up.

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FUNDING UPDATE

The following foundations, corporations and government agencies recently made the following generous grants to The 52nd Street Project:

The Barker Welfare Foundation	\$5,000
The Berrilla Kerr Foundation	\$5,000
Chase Manhattan Bank	\$1,500
Consolidated Edison	\$1,000
The Department of Youth Services	\$2,425
The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation	\$25,000
Morgan Guaranty Trust Company	\$5,000

We are grateful to these companies for their invaluable support, as well as to the many individual who continue to sustain the Project's programs.

BACK ON THE BLOCK AT BIAGGI'S

All the kids remember the big white farm house on the bluff, our Block Island home every summer since 1987. Last year, due to difficult scheduling, we were forced to stay in a crummy house that we even had to pay for. Thanks to Dr. Cristina Biaggi and the warm hospitality of Pat Walsh and her "Double or Nothing" twin sons Aidan and Noah, we got to go back home this summer. WR



Flyer CANDY BAR PROFILE



Name: John Ethan Phillips

Place of birth: Rockville Center, Long Island

Occupation: Alien (okay, Ethan currently portrays Neelix the alien on "Star Trek Voyager")

Best thing about his job: It's the first time in my career that I get the girl, and in addition to the girl, I get one of her lungs.

Last book read: Newcombe's Guide to Wildflowers.

Most recent accomplishment: Developed a taste for okra.

Advice to the kids: Never eat anything covered by gravy unless you know what's under it.

Hobbies: Goes to Star Trek conventions, reminds the audience that the theater can cure the world's ills, talks about the Project, auctions off autographed photographs of the "Voyager" cast and gives us the money. He also collects jokes which he can recite for seven hours without stopping.

Favorite Flyer bar: Don't make me choose!