

PROJECT UPDATE



VOLUME 29 NOVEMBER, 1998

One Fat Article On One Slight Hitch

Once again, the Project summer revolved around the twin-barreled One-on-Ones. These are the shows that pair up one kid with one adult in a play written (usually) by the adult partner. This year's theme was **One Slight Hitch: The Caveat Plays**. For our July set, we boarded the ferry for Block Island, R.I. where we roomed, boarded, boogie-boarded, and cavorted with 10 kids and their partners for a week. Immediately upon returning to America, we presented the shows at the magnanimous **Ensemble Studio Theater**. What, you missed it? Okay, here's what happened.



WEING

Jayme Rosado and Jose Soto philosophize in the duck blind in *Beasley*.

The opening play, *What An Angel*, had Cupid, the young Roman god of love (**Peter Granados**, 10) switching mythologies and being promoted to the rank of guardian angel. **Gus Rogerson**, who wrote and directed, played the Archangel Gabriel while junior counselor **Jed Clarke** rendered a laid-back Lucifer. **Mona Lisa Barthelemy**, 11, was Shiver, a stylish penguin who convinces her formal igloo-mate Chatter (**Alison Eikerenkoetter**) to dress a little more "kazh" in **Donald Rothschild's** *A Penguin's Tale*. **Jacquelyn Reingold**

wrote and directed *Alone At Last*, in which **Christina Ramirez**, 11, portrayed a petulant princess who commands her wizard (**Ali Marsh**) to turn her family into barnyard animals and household objects.

Willie Reale's *Present Lives* saw **Lorraine Zambrano**, 13, and **Anne Torsiglieri** crossing the River of Forgetfulness to procure a nugget of Infinite Wisdom. In *Phil*, written and directed by **Michael Bernard**, **Isaac Trujillo**, 11, fought his criminal nemesis (Michael, of course) with poetry and got the girl (junior counselor **Annette Myrie**) in the bargain. **Jayme Rosado**, 11, and **Jose Soto** found out what it's like to go nose to bill with the ducks you're hunting in **Tim Nelson's** *Beasley*. **Vionel Ortiz**, 13, and **Wendy vanden Heuvel** slung jibes and pierogies in **Cindy Caponera's** *Little Poland*.

In **George Babiak's** *Remoral Dilemma*, a scavenger fish (George) attempted to persuade a young Great White Shark (**Michael Feliciano**, 10) how cool it really is to be a carnivore. **Russ Lees' The Great Explorer** took us back to the Age of Discovery to chart the relationship between an ambitious captain (**Candy Godoy**, 13) and her bumbling first mate (**Tanya Gingerich**). The evening ended with yet another play by the prolific Willie: *Condimentally Yours*. **Chanel Christiansen**, 11, and **Cecilia Arana** were rival princesses who wage war over how hot dogs should be garnished. They are now both seasoned actresses (heh-heh).

The Block Island production would not have been possible without the generosity and help of **Christina Biaggi**, **Pat Walsh** (not to mention twins **Noah** and **Aidan**), **Joya Verde** and **Virginia Dare**, and our wonderful chefs **Pat McQuade** and **Martha Velie-Gass**.

The Tyler Hill "Hitch" Batch

In August, we hitched up the wagon trains to 11 kid/adult teams and trekked out west to the green hills of Tyler Hill, Pennsylvania, where we spent a week with our excellent hosts, artists **Mike Sell** and **Eric Karpeles**. More rehearsing, more eating, but the boogie-boarding was replaced by a series of newly invented and patently absurd water games like the Please-and-Thank-You Relay Race.

As for the show, the evening was kicked off by **Liz Tuccillo's** *Roommate Wanted*, in which **Jaysunn Rosado**, 13, sought an affordable apartment share in New York City. The best he could do was **Wendy vanden Heuvel's** closet at \$800 a month. **Jennifer Jimenez**, 11, learned the true value of Beanie Babies and friendship from her stuffed bear **Denise Burse** in **Diana Son's** *Singing Out*. Cute little bunny **Matthew Jellison**, 12, on the other hand, employed the old friendship scam to get out of being eaten by omnivorous Frenchman **Michael Potts** in *The Life and Near Mort of Happy Lapin* by **Cindy Lou Johnson**. **Thom Babe's** *Ticket to Ride* explored 12-year old **Yazzy Troche's** dream of going to Hawaii and asked the audience to choose between her friendship (with **Jane Bodle**) and the vacation of a lifetime.

Willy Holtzman's *Liberty 2* pitted New York and New Jersey against one another in a bitter dispute between rival Statues of Liberty. **Zaida Natera**, 11, and **Kelly Taffe** played the giant monuments while **George Babiak** simply directed. In *Joe Bob and the Bull Frog*, by **David Schwab**, **Michael Castro**, 14, played an arrogant rodeo cowboy who gets his comeuppance from an ornery frog, wartyly played by **Peter Jay Fernandez**. The award for most original use of the show's theme goes to everyone's favorite criminal nemesis, **Michael Bernard**, who wrote and directed *One Slight Hitchhiker* for **Mayleen Cancel**, 13, and **Jane Bodle**. In it, a deranged (yet appealing) hitchhiker changes the life of a troubled motorist for the better.

In what has become an annual ritual, **Jerry McGill** returned from Oregon to script a show. This year's offering, *The Dons*, had Jerry showing the greatest (but least educated) swordfighter in Mexico (**Peter Ventura**, 13) that if you study hard you can win big cash prizes on a TV game show hosted by Pat Sajak (**Ray Ocasio**). Lessons abounded in this production. In **Adrienne Shelly's** *About Face*, gorgeous Dr. Love (**Isha Rodriguez**, 13) taught the breathtakingly beautiful **Eris Migliorini** that pretty girls don't have to be miserable. In **Adam Felber's** *What Our Dead Daddy's Deed Done Did*, the evening's only antebellum epic, **Aisha Jabour**, 12, and Adam saved their plantation from the clutches of an unscrupulous Yankee creditor (**Thom Babe**).

The last show of the summer was **Willie Reale's** *Winging Away (A Thinly-Veiled Metaphor)*. Some of you

may still be trying to figure out what metaphor Willie was veiling with his play about an angel-wing repairman (Willie) who must tell a youthful client (**Jonathan Villanueva**, 12) that he is leaving his noble profession. Well, folks, it was actually about Willie himself, who selfishly used poor Jonathan to gain some closure. The Project staff is exploring ways of making things up to this fine youngster.

As if this article weren't long enough already, attention must be paid to the incredible **Patrick Barnes**, the composer for both shows. Patrick penned the music for no fewer than 39 songs while the rest of us boogie-boarded and competed in Please-and-Thank-You Relay Races. Thank you. *GB*

And In The Hopper...

Here it is, fall all over again. It gets cold, the leaves fall, kids go back to school, and the Project machine gears up to grind out another big season of theater. Coming up in November, some of the Project teenagers will bring you **Play-back**. Over Columbus Day weekend seven kids who somehow

survived three or four grueling years with the Project will jump in a van with some adults and head off to the home of **Peter, Helen, and Christopher Randolph** in **Wareham, Mass.** for the three-day weekend. Each kid will write a play based on the theme **There and Back: The Round Trip Plays**. When we return to the city, an adult partner will then write an answer play. When the two plays are performed together... well, if you want to find out what happens then you better come see the shows. Look for the flyer enclosed with this newsletter for all pertinent information. The Project veterans currently attached to this production are: **Judy Agosto, Ahmed Attia, Ben Barthelemy, Luis Anthony Maldonado, Joseph Mohamed, Mary Vamvoukakis, and Sahara Walsh**.

Also up and running is the fall 1998 **Playmaking** class. Ten unsuspecting children, naïve and untainted by the horror and suffering connected to the theater, have signed up to learn the grueling playwriting process. Over the next two months they will be molded into what can only be described as "kids who've just learned how to write plays over the last two months." At that point, each kid will be matched up with a dramaturg/director and then it's off for a weekend writing retreat. When we return, the plays will be pro-



Aisha Jabour and Adam Felber almost lose the plantation in "What Our Dead Daddy's Deed Done Dld."

duced at the **Ensemble Studio Theater**. Keep an eye on your mailbox for the flyer. For those of you who do not have the luxury of a detachable eye, just check your mail as you go in and out of your house. *MB*

BRAINS TO GO

Ordering: one scholarship party and make it to go! Every year we raise money to help Project alumni become college alumni. This year, due to a scaffolding snafu, the **Fourth Annual 52nd Street Project Scholarship Party** had a last-minute change in venue. The party was graciously hosted at the clubhouse by our Chairwoman **Fran McDormand**. Fran also helped clean up afterwards, making her the only Charwoman-Chairwoman in town.




STEPHANIE BERGER

Dawn Jackson, back in the 80's

Featured at the shindig were delicious Flyer chocolate soufflés made by **Claude-Alain Solliard** of **Raoul's** in Soho.

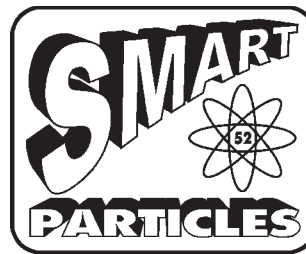
The Scholarship Fund provides grants to kids just off to college and to returning college students who have maintained a 3.0 or above average ('cause there still ain't no such thing as a free lunch). This year's awardees were returning scholars **Kulondi Frier** (Shaw University), **Dawn Jackson** (Bard College), **Richard Myrie** (Berkeley College), and **Joanne Ramirez** (SUNY New Paltz), and first-timers **Victor Rojas**, (NYU) and **Jeffrey Zambrano** (New York Technical College).

It's never too early to contribute to next year's scholarship fund. If you'd like to do so, contact **John Sheehy** at (212) 333-5252. *JS*

JOHN SHEEHY'S  The following foundations, corporations, and government agencies recently made generous grants to the Project. We are grateful to them for their support as well as to the many individuals who help sustain the Project's programs year-round.

FUNDING UPDATE

Barker Welfare Foundation	\$5,000
Chase Manhattan	3,000
Colgate-Inner City Fund	2,000
Fan Fox and Leslie R. Samuels Foundation	5,000
The Good Neighbor Committee of the Ford Foundation	15,000
National Endowment for the Arts	20,000
NYSCA	8,480
The Presidents Committee on the Arts and the Humanities' Coming Up Taller Award	10,000
Travelers Foundation	2,000



*Brought to you by
Boylan's beverages!*

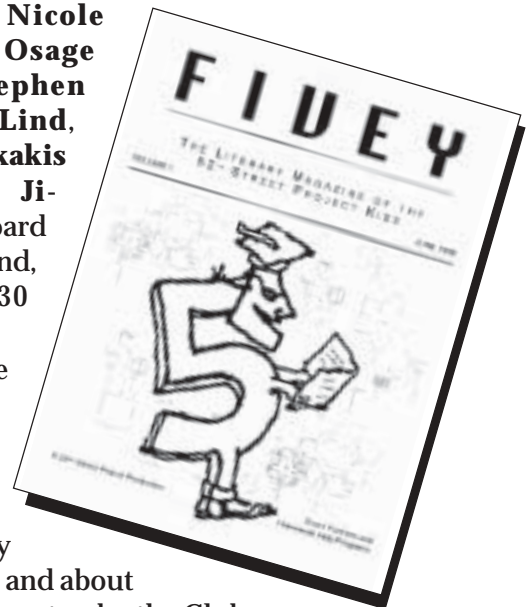
Just days after the school year began, there were Flyer Bars and Boylan's Soda for all at the Smart Partner Fall Kick-off bash. Sugared-up with pencils poised were veteran couples **Gloria Trejo** and **Anne Garcia-Romero**, **Hakim Latimore** and **Robin**

Morse, **Isaac Trujillo** and **Jason Valk**, **Jaya Rosado** and **Willie Reale**, **Joseph Mohamed** and **John Bedford Lloyd**, **Luis Anthony Maldonado** and **Gus Rogerson**, **Ray Ocasio** and **Stephen Haff**, **Steven Vasquez** and **Camilla Platt**, **Tanika Parson** and **Alison Tatlock**, and **Yazzy Troche** and **Jilian Gersten**.

Also seen together were returning Smart kids with new partners: **Judith Agosto** and **Clare Tattersall**, **Isha Rodriguez** and **Jenny Wiener**, **Jayme Rosado** and **John Sheehy**, **Jaysunn Rosado** and **Michael Bernard**, **Lorraine Calderon** and **Michaela Murphy**, **Lorraine Zambrano** and **Nedra Gallegos**, **Noel Polanco** and **George Babiak**, **Vionel Ortiz** and **Anne Torsiglieri**, and **Thomas Santoni** and **Larry Nathanson**.

Eight new brain trusts have joined the ranks: **Aisha Jabour** and **Nikola Smith**, **Anissa Albarron** and **Kate Ryan**, **Johnathan Roldan** and **Beth Janson**, **Jonathan Villanueva** and **Tom Schall**, **Justin Aponte** and **Ed Vasallo**, **Marlene Moran** and **Beth Gardiner**, **Michael Feliciano** and **Nicole Smith**, and **Osage Lewis** and **Stephen Graham**. **Joel Lind**, **Mary Vamvoukakis** and **Jennifer Jimenez** are on board so by October's end, there will be 30 teams in all!

This summer we launched the spring inaugural issue of **FIVEY**, the new literary magazine by, for and about project kids (if you stop by the Clubhouse, you can pick up your very own copy). Smart Partners are already making submissions for the upcoming edition. A special thanks to **Barbara Fisher** and **Richard Spiegel** from the **Waterways Project of Ten Penny Players, Inc.** for printing special pocket-sized versions of the winter playmaking plays and fanning the flames of our publishing craze. *JF*



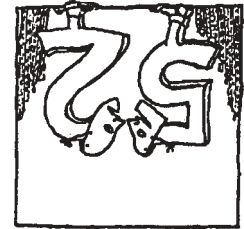


WEING

The Great Explorer: Candy Godoy

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 Editor-In-Chief: George R. Babiak



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Vanessa Valdes

Occupation: Physical Therapist, Acupuncture student, and the Project's Goddess of Sound. (She designed and ran sound for both One-on-Ones this summer).

Hobbies: Scuba diving and cycling.

Last book read: *A Manual of Acupuncture*. "It had me on pins and needles."

Most Recent Accomplishment: Went on a night dive in Cozumel, Mexico and saw 6 octopi. That's 4 dozen tentacles!

Credo: "Sleep, schmeep. You can sleep when you're dead."

Advice to the Kids: "Always put your tapes and CD's back in their correct boxes."

On Flyer Bars: "They're good. Are they cheaper if you buy bulk?"

Pictured: V.V. in the Goddess of Sound Nook on Mount Olympus



GRB

Don't wait for a Project show to get a Flyer Bar! We always run out, anyway. Call 1-800-CANDYBAR.

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Somebody must've slipped a little love potion into the Project water cooler. Ex-staffer **Sally Bock** finally got **Dr. Mark Wurfel** to use the stethoscope on himself and, having heard the tell-tale pitter-patter, asked the appropriate diagnostic question. The prognosis is marriage.

In an effort to elevate himself to pantheon status, **George Babiak** suggested that **Vanessa Valdes**, goddess of sound, take a mere mortal as mate. She acquiesced, sending shock waves through Olympus. "I'm tired of the gods" said her luminance, "just give me a guy that's handy around the house."

Still more! **Julie Feldman** takes a little Hawaiian vacation with her sweetheart **Mauricio Abe** and returns with a husband of the same name. They tied a Kauai knot. Kauai not?

Noteworthy love birds not on the payroll include Project volunteers **Alex Draper** and **Lorraine Tobias** who are now fully engaged. Longtime volunteer **Paul McCrane** met **Dana Kellin** (a really cool jewelry designer) and exchanged promises at **Dean Martin's** hacienda outside of Santa Barbara. They are honeymooning at **(Uncle) Gene Reale's** summer place in Italy. And if that isn't cozy enough for you, Paul's sister **Barbara (McCrane)** and Willie's brother **Paul (Reale)** announced the birth of their daughter **Hannah**. Whew!

