

# PROJECT UPDATE

Volume 46; July, 2004

Editor: George R. Babiak

## Project Invents Camera-Free TV

The bold-faced names were out in force at the Project's annual party on Monday, May 10, 2004. *THE PROJECT SHOW with Jon Stewart*, lived up to its subtitle, *The Most Important Annual Benefit for The 52nd Street Project, Ever!* **William Curran** and his catering crew made sure that **Capitale** glowed like a TV tube. The literati glittered and the glitterati littered the place with glamour, as the Project took a cutting-edge look at that cutting and edgy take on the media known as *THE DAILY SHOW with Jon Stewart*.

Over 450 guests got their news from Senior Correspondents **John Cuevas**, **Christopher Ramirez**, **Jennifer Ramirez** and **Johanna Vidal**. Also reporting for duty were **Lewis Black**, **Rob Corddry**, **Edie Falco**, **Tim Blake Nelson** and our anchorman **Jon Stewart**. The show was written by **Willie Reale** and **John Sheehy**, and was directed by **Jonathan Bernstein**. The set was designed by **George Babiak** & **Kevin Roach**, the lighting by **Greg MacPherson** & **Jason Wells**, the sound by **Tom Morse**, and the costumes by **Crystal Thompson**. The stage was managed by the stalwart **Hank Meiman**.

The event was a ratings bonanza, due in part to the delicious donation from **Diageo Chateau & Estate Wines**. Newsworthy donors at the event were **Arthur Dantchik**, **Cathy Dantchik**, **Wendy Ettinger** & **Derek McLane**, **Louis** & **Patrice Friedman**, **Cathy** & **Stephen Graham**, **Jenny Wiener** & **Jon Steingart** and **Jeffrey Yass**. The guests received gift bags donated by **Kenneth Cole** and filled by **Benefit Cosmetics**; **Bourjois Paris**; **Bumble and bumble**; **Entertainment Weekly**; **Jive Records**, a division of the **Zomba Music Group**; **Lucky Magazine**; **Micro Touch/Finishing Touch Trimmers**; **Molton Brown**; **MOP Cosmetics**; **Newman's Own**, **Noggin/The N**, **Sesame Workshop**, **Terax**, **John A. Vassilaros & Sons Coffee** and **Watkins Inc.** The event was also made possible in part by generous in-kind donations from **Iris A. Brown**, **Capital Printing & Ron Kastner**, **Pharma Print/Omni Graphics** and **Wendy Stulberg**.

JS

## "Dream On" Keeps Audience Awake

During a truly fantastic weekend away in Kent, Connecticut (at the beautiful home of **Stephen** and **Cathy Graham**), the nine young playwrights of *Dream On: The Fantastic Plays* penned their first pieces to be performed publicly (at The Women's Project Theater April 2, 3, and 4). Just like the best of dreams, the plays were full of wild adventure, lifelong friendship, and a deer who lives over subway tracks working as a mechanic.

The evening's first playwright, **Carlos Muentes**, quite literally put pen to paper in *The Clumsy One*, the tale of a Pen (**Marsha Stephanie Blake**) and a Key (**Joel de la Fuente**) who get into a bowling accident and say nasty things to each other. In the end, however, they conclude that "it's mean to be mean." Next up was **Angel Silva's** *The Guy Who Lived in the Street*, in which the titular

guy (**Stephan Kolbert**) robs a portly jeweler (**Ephraim Lopez**), then makes nice to him by buying him a blue Jaguar. In *The Dead Mother and the Lonely Girl*, **Arielle Velasquez** told of an unlikely friendship between a lonely girl (**Lizzy Cooper Davis**) and an orphaned ant (**Jessica Walling**) living in her garden. *Zoe and Phoebe – Friends Forever* was **Janiece Aponte's** tale of a bird trapped in a cage (**Deirdre O'Connell**) and her uncaged friend (**Jenny Bacon**). After some initial angst, the birds get the bright idea to employ a chainsaw, which takes care of the cage P.D.Q. The act closed out with **Lily Houghton's** *Friends and Siblings*, the story of the break dancing Charlie Supertop (**Ed O'Blenis**) and his tap dancing sister (**Anita Flanagan**). Our kid crew (**Kayelani Silva**, **Nicole Fargardo**, **Zebulon Santiago**, **Anthony Mejia**) made a memorable cameo as the "cool kids" who almost succeed in driving the siblings apart – but not quite. After a delightful intermission during which the audience could stop dreaming about Flyer bars and actually consume



WENDY STULBERG

*Johanna Vidal learns the fine art of schmoozing from the master himself.*

Come see "Location, Location: The Location Plays"  
(Better known as the Block Island One-on-Ones)  
**FREE OFFICIAL FLYER ENCLOSED!**



The new Champeen: **John Sheehy** and **Kevin Geer** in "The Boxer and the Dancer."

them, the show resumed with *The Boxer and the Dancer* by Dale Fetterman. Played respectively by **Kevin Geer** and **Nancy Giles**, the pair found solace from their loneliness in each other – but only after a cataclysmic boxing match! **Emilio Delgado** and **Chris McCann** played *Best Brothers and Good Friends* in **Muhammad Cunningham's** play about two boys who are glum about the state of their family, but then realize they appreciate what they have and "deal with it." **Hera Andre-Bergmann** took the theme quite literally in *Dream of the Yankees*, in which a teenager (**Brienan Bryant**) realizes her fantasy of playing on the Yankees – until she wakes up. Her dream team mate, *Dazed*, was played by **Katherine Wallach**. The evening came to a raucous close with **Pablo Maldonado's** *Comet and Bud's Adventure*, where the aforementioned deer mechanic, *Comet* (**Edie Falco**), befriends Bud, a flower who works as a male model (**Nate Corddry**). An unfortunate incident (involving the natural fact that reindeer like to eat flowers for dinner) reminds them that "a pal is just as delicate as a picture frame: when you touch it it breaks." Luckily *Comet* and Bud's pal-ship remained intact, and their final dance number was certainly the stuff that dreams are made on.

We wouldn't even dream of attempting a big Playmaking show like this without these fantastic people: our dramaturg/directors **Glynis Rigsby**, **Joe White**, **Sonia Manzano**, **Liz Bell**, **Jessica Bauman**, **Mary Pat Walsh**, **Drew Cortese**, **Michael Potts**, **Erica Schmidt**, and **Alex Draper**; composer **Joel Derfner**; musical director **Patrick Barnes**; stage manager **Karen Munkel**; costume designer **Crystal Thompson**; sound designer **Maury Schott**; lighting designer **Greg MacPherson**; and weekend-away hosts **Sam** and **Lynn Waterston** and **Oliver** and **Camilla Platt**. Thanks! And sweet dreams. MSZ

### **Big Fights Break Out in Project Workshop**

Incendiary title, no? And it's all true...except that the fights were fake! The bogus battles were part of *Fight Week*, the latest "Break It Up" program for kids who had

some time off from school from April 5th through the 9th. **Tom Schall**, fresh from choreographing the spectacular man-crashing-through-window stunt that opened Broadway's *Sixteen Wounded*, acted as our Sultan of Swats, our Pasha of Punches, and our King of Kicks. Tom was assisted by the formidable **Lee Rosen**, our Ayatollah of Aiii-yaahhs (alright, enough alliteration already). **Stephan Kolbert**, **Ed Vassallo**, **Sarah Kay**, and **Megan Cramer** were also on hand as "combaturgs," a word we invented for the occasion (we expect to make big bucks from the royalties).

Tom and Lee started the week by teaching a wide variety of slaps, falls, rolls, and hair-pulls. Our kids never looked happier, especially when they practiced their very realistic moves on their combaturgs.

As the days progressed, the kids divided into teams of two. Each team learned a long combat sequence that had to be incorporated into a scene that the kids created improvisationally. Finally, the kids presented their skills and scenes before an invited audience of friends and vols.

In the show, **A.J. Welsh** and **Angel Silva** acted out a schoolyard spat, **Christopher Ramirez** and **Anthony Mejia** played a pair of Mafia brothers who disagree on their preferred smuggling route, **Jennifer Ramirez** and **Matthew Ortiz** were rival climbers disputing the ownership of a mountain stronghold, and **Kayelani Silva** and **Mordecai Santiago** told the story of a bank robber who gets his come-uppance from a teller. The stunner was a curtain call that devolved into a donnybrook.

All in all, it was an action-packed week. One that we're certain to repeat in the future... and we'll take on anyone who disagrees! GB



The Following Foundations and corporations 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.

American Media	.5,000
Bloomberg	.5,000
Department of Youth and Community Development	.3,500
Holland Lodge Foundation, Inc.	.4,000
JKW Foundation	.6,000
Lloyds TSB Bank plc	.5,000
Lucille Lortel Foundation	.5,000
The Ann M. Martin Foundation	.5,000
The New World Foundation	.2,500
Newman's Own	.10,000
Noggin/The N	.5,000
Quadrangle Foundation	.2,500
Sesame Workshop	.5,000
Stranahan Foundation	.10,000
The Surdna Foundation	.30,000
Tobak-Dantchik Events	.15,000
John A. Vassilaros & Son, Inc.	.5,000
Weiner Family Foundation	.30,000
Yorke Construction Corp.	.2,000

## The Atkins-Approved Scholarship Party



A Daisy Mae pulled pork sandwich at graduation.

No doubt a lot of you think that as soon as we've taken our oldest kids to Europe and forced them to do Shakespeare, BAM!, we give them the boot. Not so! One of our best-kept secrets is the **Ron Black Memorial Scholarship Fund**, specifically created to give our kids a leg up in college. But it doesn't run itself! Oh, no! We need your help! That's why we hold our annual **Scholarship Party**. Come celebrate our 10th edition of this important fundraiser by joining our host **Jenny Wiener** at the deluxe **Ars Nova** penthouse. We'll salute this year's academicians with barbecue-style food from **Daisy Mae's** of Hell's Kitchen. Not only is it fun and fattening, but your admission goes right into the kitty for next year's awards. The suggested donation is \$25.

Here's the lowdown on the highlife: The event happens on **Tuesday, July 27th at 6:30 p.m.** The **Ars Nova** Complex is at 511 West 54th St., between 10th and 11th Ave. Check your calendars, loosen your belts, and call **John "Porkfat" Sheehy** at (212) 333-5252 to book your spot at the trough. *GB & JS*

## IN RE: REPLAY



The kid playwrights of *Replay*, '04.

On Monday, June 21st a stellar group of directors and Projectors (another term we just coined) gathered at **Jenny Wiener** and **Jon Steingart's Ars Nova Theater**, fittingly located in the omnipresent **Ars Nova** Complex. There they realized the theatrical visions of the latest crop of kids to complete the second step in the Playmaking process — **Replay**. Among the highlights were **Michael Stuhlberg** as **Harlo Ulloa's** time-traveling fortune-hunter; **Bruce MacVittie** and **Abigail Lopez** as Merfolk in love, from the mind of **Luz Maldonado**; and **Frances McDormand** as Pink Girl 1 and **John Conlee** as Blue Man 1 in **Stephanie Vamvoukakis'** aptly titled *Colormania!*

Other company members included **Kenajuan Bentley**, **Chris Ceraso**, **Kate Forbes**, **Liz Giamatti**, **Julia Gibson**, **Maria Goyanes**, **Maile Holck**, **Robert Jimenez**, **Mario Quesada**, **Seret Scott**, and **Malinda Walford**.

Budding playwrights **Erica Arce**, **Isaac Goodman Boyd**, **Steven Castellanos**, **Nicole Fargardo**, **Aladino Olivares**, **Jennifer Ramirez**, **Jason Peterson Ridge**, **Andrew John Welsh** and **Skye Blue Welsh** blossomed into a dramaturgical bouquet. Ultimately, **Matthew Ortiz** presaged the entire evening by entitling his play *Circus Is Pure Evil*.

*JS & GB*  
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The Smart Partner Report  
brought to you by Boylan's Beverages

As all good things must come to an end, so must the fantastic 2003-2004 year of the **Smart Partners** and **Homework Help** programs. On Friday, June 18 our group of 36 — mostly made up of some rowdy kids! — journeyed downtown for a fun-filled celebration at **Pier 25**. While most of us took the

boring train route, **George Babiak** rounded up his brave troupe of bikers and bladers to tear up the bike path along the water. And then there was the unfortunate minority stranded for an hour in a sauna on wheels with the meter running. Good times.

Once there, we had plenty to do. **George** volleyed the ball with about half the group on the sandy courts, while **John** organized the rest to putt around the miniature golf course. For others, the sprinklers and the sandpit were a welcome respite from the



Liz Bell with fellow gang-members Mordecai, Angel, and Jennifer.

breezeless, humid day. We all enjoyed a picnic of cool lemonade, burgers, hotdogs, chips, cookies and ice cream. For the kids and the volunteers alike, it was the perfect ending to an intense year. On the return trip, I decided to jump on the famed "Interncycle" and join the kids' biking brigade, terrorizing all pedestrians and even crashing — literally — the date of a couple enjoying a romantic picnic on the water!

The final official activity of the year will be the publication of the latest issue of **FIVEY**. Kids have spent the last few months writing and creating images for **FIVEY6: HELL'S KITCHEN SINK, The Everything Issue** coming out this month!

And now, I leave you with an update on my own **Smart**



Partner and predecessor, **Julie Feldman**. She and her husband **Mauricio**, dad **Eli** and dog **Spepy** love Santa Monica! She is thrilled to be training future teachers as the Director of Elementary Teacher Education at **Mount St. Mary's College** in Los Angeles, but she misses her Project pals! She would love you all to stay in touch at: [julie@alumni.brown.edu](mailto:julie@alumni.brown.edu) and to know that, "We love visitors!"

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CRYSTAL THOMPSON



**Nate Corddry** as a flower/male model and **Edie Falco** as a deer/mechanic (see page 1).



COMEDY CENTRAL

**Lewis Black**

**Occupation:** Stand-up comic, actor, writer.

**Place of Birth:** Washington, DC.

**Habitat:** New York apartment.

**Why he does what he does:** "Cause I can't do anything else and don't want to."

**Hobbies:** "I used to build model airplanes but I had trouble with the glue."

**Most recent accomplishment:** "My HBO special BLACK ON BROADWAY."

**Last Book Read:** "I haven't been able to read a book since they put the scroll on CNN; now my ADD has ADD. Are there really still books?"

**Best 52nd Street Project Memory:** "Martha Plimpton and Sahara Walsh performing in my play CIAO for the BI One-on-Ones in 1995."

**Credo:** "Everybody has one funny story to tell. If not, get a new life."

**Advice to kids:** "Pursue your dreams because nothing else really matters, not even family."

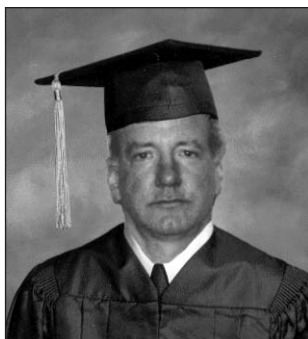
**Favorite thing about the Project:** "That it actually works."

**On Flyer Bars:** "Since I don't sleep well, I usually like to eat them around 4 in the morning when I will feel no guilt and I won't hear someone screaming, 'Atkins! Atkins!'"



**Hudson Flynn Harris** was born April 6 at 6:55am to **Julie Boyd** and **Michael Harris**. He has his mom's blue eyes and the rest of him is pure Dad.

The Project would like to congratulate our board chair, **Stephen Graham**, on his brand-new doctorate of English and Comparative Literature. Below you see our Photoshop conception of Dr. Graham at his commencement (thanks to **Alex Tomas** for the use of his grade-school cap and gown).



On May 15, **Katherine Freedman** and **Brian Beirne** were delighted with the arrival of **Genevieve Simone Freedman Beirne**.

Here's a nice picture of **Claire Ann Reale** and her very excited big sister **Emma**. Claire was born to genuine "Project Couple" **Mina** and **Tom Reale** on March 15. Willie's brother and sister-in-law now reside on that other, slightly sunnier, coast.



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