



PROJECT UPDATE

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HOLIDAYS IN THE SUN... ON BLOCK ISLAND

Okay, here's what happened in this year's One-on-Ones... What? You don't know what "One-on-Ones" are? Didn't we explain this just a year ago? Oh, all right! This past July we picked 10 kids aged 10-12 to perform 10 short plays with adult partners (who sometimes served as the writers, as well). We spirited the teams to Block Island for a solid week of rehearsing, eating, and frolicking in the surf and then returned to the big city to perform them at the **Ensemble Studio Theatre**, just down the block from the Clubhouse, on the weekend of July 22-24. Boy, were they great! All you play-missers out there are going to be mighty sad after reading these summaries.

Every writer was asked to use a holiday as the inspiration for their play (hence the name *Holidays in the Sun*). **Perry Daniel's** choice was Christmas, leading her to write *Just Desert*, the show opener that featured Perry and **Hera Andre-Bergmann** as a pair of wise women who trek through the dunes in search of a certain manger. They never find it, but are lucky enough to meet a "vend-her" of baba ganoush smoothies (**Amelia Whitney**). Next up was **Jennifer Ramirez** and **Lee Rosen** as *Snake-Eyes and Meathead*, written by ol' Lee himself. In it, an ace lockpick and her brawny, but dim-witted henchman tried to bust the notoriously rude mob boss Alfredo Fettucine (**George Babiak**) out of Riker's Island. In **Neena Beber's** *Holidays at Sea*, **Malik Velasquez** and **Angel Desai** roamed the seven seas, never knowing where they were going until they got there.

Have you ever felt like hunting down the criminal mastermind behind the cosmetics industry? Secret agents **Carla Olivia** and **Diana Rojas** did just that in *The Fierce and the Fabulous*. Their unseen nemesis, Dr. Revloni, sounded suspiciously like author **Reg Flowers**. Speaking of criminals, **Josh Lewis** stole liberally from the film *Reservoir Dogs* as he served up *The Hustle*, wherein Josh and **Bryant Acosta** played (what else?) criminals awaiting the arrival of their accomplices in a warehouse.

At this point the audience members leaped to their feet and foraged high and low for Flyer Bars. Their quest took rather long, but when the interminable mission was over, they returned to see **Stephanie Vamvoukakis** and **John Sheehy** as a pair of holiday giftwrappers in crisis in John's opus *The Unkindest Cut*. What holiday? Surgical Assistant's Day, natch. On their heels came **Sascha Paladino** and **Jason Gil** as another pair of secret agents, one deft, the other bumbling, in Sascha's *Suave, Smooth, Superspy*. **Li Cornfeld** was their considerate chief. Then came *A Snowflake's Chance in H-E Double Hockey Sticks* by **Erin Quinn Purcell**. **Samantha Toro** and **Melissa Jones** were Snow and Flake, two particles of frost who come to believe that Santa Claus is being held prisoner in the tropics.

Adam Felber's *Cleopatra James and the Curse of M'Hek'Na'Hay* brought us **Stephanie Marion** and **Sarah Petersiel** as a duo of archaeologists pursued (like so many other Project casts this year) by a tireless evil genius played by **Reg Flowers**. Closing the night was **Willie Reale's** *You Could Have Been Better*, which imagined the pearly gates as a rather bureaucratic portal. **Andrew Kelsey** was the wastrel seeking entrance and **Lordan Ulloa** was the harried official.

On hand for the holiday festivities were composer **Kim Sherman**, lighting designer **Greg MacPherson**, Goddess of Sound **Vanessa Valdes**, Costume Designer **Lora LaVon**, and stage manager **Allison Kyle**. A special truckload of thanks goes to our intrepid Block Island host families: **Sue Black**; **Nancy and John Doolittle**; **Josie Merck and Jim Stevenson**; **Theresa and Jack Sisto**; **Jennifer and Elliot Taubman**; **Ron and Judy Tierney**; **Joya Verde and Virginia Dare**; and our headquarters host **Dr. Christina Biaggi**. Thank you one and all! GB

...AND IN WAREHAM, MASS

Inspired by the excellent example of our Commander-in-Chief, we decided that when it comes to *Holidays in the Sun*, August is the best time of year. So we packed ourselves off to Wareham, Ma. , and the home of our dear friends **Helen, Peter** and **Christopher Randolph**, for another round of One-on-Ones. Then, after a week (as opposed to five) of singin' and swimmin', we returned to E.S.T. again to put on the show. And a fine show it was. It started in the ninth inning, with *Outfielders*, **Junior Chatman** and **Paco Tolson**, singing, dancing, alienating and bickering, as they chased down the occasional pop

Left, The Block Island Teams, Top to Bottom: Perry and Hera, Jennifer and Lee, Angel and Malik, Diana and Carla, Bryant and Josh, Stephanie and John, Jason and Sascha, Samantha and Melissa, Stephanie and Sarah, Andrew and Lordan

At right, the Wareham teams, top to bottom. Junior and Paco, Drew and Mathew, Luisa and Nikki, Anikke and Pablo, Fifi and Liz, George and George, Catherine and Harlo, Catherine and Susan, Muhammad and Joaquin, and Carlo and Joyce.

fly on their way to victory. **Jay Reiss** provided book and lyrics. Next up was a creation myth, *It's Alive*, intelligently designed by **Drew Cortese** for himself and **Mathew Ortiz**. **Luisa Santiago** followed with her excellent Jennifer Lopez impression (no, not the singer/movie star; the forensic scientist/fashion designer) starring opposite **Nikki Phillips** in **Martha Plimpton's** *Dead-A-Porter*. Then **Pablo Maldonado** started an emotional uprising with the help of **Anikke Fox** in **Kate Marks' Viva La Revolution**. When they were done changing the world, **Fifi Fernandez** arrived to take us back in time in **Michael Bernard's Time Out**. **Elizabeth Canavan** went along for the ride.

After a refreshing pause, **George Keller** and **George Babiak** got us all revved up with *The Showdown*, in which a Harvard reunion of two motorcyclists led to the consumption of large quantities of non-alcoholic beverages. In **Catherine Mueller's** *Too Cool Pilots*, Catherine and **Harlo Ulloa** failed to find an obese feline but they did locate their mojo just before takeoff. It being the season, we watched another ballgame in **Jacquelyn Reingold's** *The Princess Plays Ball*, as **Susan McGinnis** coached **Catherine Fernandez** to victory. Then we moved to another arena, for **Joaquin Torres' Tommy The Trainer And His Kid Cruz**, as **Muhammad Cunningham** knocked out **Joshua Joya** in Round Ten. **Mark Gamero** made sure it was a clean fight. The curtain came down on **Joyce Cheung** and **Carlo Alban** as Lucy and Lucky, a pair of castoff (and castaway) siblings, in Carlo's *Permanent Vacation*.

Patrick Barnes, our Maestro, wrote the music that he played oh so sweetly. Costume Designer **Abby Taylor Redmond** made everybody look good, and our Old Faithful, Lighting Designer **Greg MacPherson**, made sure we could see everybody looking good. Stage Manager **Karen Munkel** made sure the lights came up on them, and **Mayleen Cancel** manned the booth for the first time and pressed all the buttons that sound designer **Andrew Kelsey** told her to press. Thanks to all of them, and to our Wareham hosts **Anne** and **Colin McNay**; **Emily** and **John Morgan**; **Suzanne** and **John Potts**; **Patty** and **David Strauss**; **Bob** and **Marina Whitman**; **Joe McNay** and the entire McNay family; and, of course, the wonderful **Randolphs**.

GR

PROJECT TEEN LASSES MEASURE UP

The 2005 Teen Ensemble took first New York City then France by storm with their recent production of Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*. **Leah Galimidi**, **Nadia Jabour**, **Christina Ramirez** and **Amelia Whitney**, each in multiple male and female roles, took the leads in the predominantly female cast. The stunning production was directed by former Associate Artistic Director **Megan Sandberg-Zakian** with support from adult ensemble members **Reg Flowers**, **Diana Rojas** and **Becky White**. Sporting a dazzling orange and green wardrobe courtesy of designer **Naomi Wolff** the cast wowed New York audiences at **The Axis Theater** in late June.

After closing in the West Village, the company headed to France, spending a whirlwind two days in Paris where they were warmly and generously hosted by **Jeanne**, **Alain**, and **Corinne Damlamian** (Megan's aunt, uncle, and cousin). The troupe took in the old church of Saint-Chappelle then dozed on a barge while riding along the Seine. On day two the company toured the Louvre, lunched in the gardens at the Musée Rodin, visited Notre Dame, and gazed at the city from atop the Arc de Triomphe. No trip to Paris would be complete without at least one evening of Parisian dining; we had *two!*

Finally, the team traveled via Nice to the beautiful **Chateau de Berne** in Provence to be feted by **Bill Muddyman** and his daughter **Jane** (see page 4 for more about them). The company gave yet another stellar performance before a mostly British audience, many of whom declared it was the first time they really understood one of Shakespeare's plays. Once the show was done the rest of the trip was spent shopping in outdoor markets, taking in the modern art collection at the **Mecht Foundation** in **St. Paul de Vence** and, of course, tanning by the pool.

RF

MORE STUDENTS THAN EVER

On August 2nd, the Project held the **Annual Ron Black Memorial Scholarship Fund Party**. Once again taking up the hosting duties was invaluable Project Board Member **Jenny Wiener** with her husband **Jon Steingart** at the beautiful **Ars Nova** penthouse. The bash featured fabulous soul food, libations, endlessly entertaining chatter with ProjVols, family and supporters; along with the doling out of a record number of checks (sixteen this year) to students continuing their education past high school.



The M4M cast: Back row: Diana Rojas, Nadja Jabour, Becky White, Christina Ramirez. Front: Amelia Whitney, Reg Flowers, Leia Galimidi.

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Scholarship recipients qualify for scholarships in two ways – either by being a new student, or by being a returning student with a 3.0 grade point average or higher. This year’s recipients are **Anju Andre-Bergmann** (Sarah Lawrence College), **Amy Barbosa** (John Jay College of Criminal Justice), **Mayleen Cancel** (Brooklyn College), **Alex Cooper** (Swedish Institute), **Candy Godoy** (Cornell University), **Aisha Jabour** (Brooklyn College), **Matthew Jellison** (Eugene Lang, New School University), **Jennifer Tatum Jimenez** (Johnson & Wales University), **Natalie Musteata** (University of California, Berkley), **Diana Rojas** (Eugene Lang, New School University), **Jayne Rosado** (SUNY, Plattsburg), **Thomas Santoni** (BMCC), **Steven Vasquez** (Sullivan County Community College), **Jill Vanover** (Lehman College), **Amelia Whitney** (Union College), and the fund’s first graduate student **Nyita Hanley** (SUNY, New Paltz for MA in Sociology).



GRB

JS

SPACE: THE FINAL FRONTIER

The Project Clubhouse has reopened for the kids of The 52nd Street Project to receive Homework Help from our devoted volunteers, and the Smart Partners program kicked off with its annual Pizza Party on September 28th. But things will not be the same-old-same-old. With the ever-increasing popularity of both education programs, a serious need for more room has arisen. While our roots will remain at the Clubhouse, welcoming kids with snacks and smiles every afternoon, we’re fortunate to be movin’ on up like the Jeffersons, to our brand new space on the 4th floor of our building. What used to be the **Housing Conservation Coordinators’** office will now be home to The Project “Tree House.” We’re sharing the space with our good pals at the **INTAR Theater**. Supervised by Education Assistant **Mayleen Cancel**, the Tree House’s five small offices will be used by adult-kid pairs who want a quiet spot to study together, do homework, read, write or just chat during a Smart Partners meeting. There is also a large classroom, which will be the location of mentor workshops, *Break it Up!* workshops, now led by our new Education Liaison **Megan Cramer** (see right), and even some rehearsals. The Tree House is already a coveted spot. Every day at 4:00 pm (when everyone must start their homework) the kids have been scrambling to grab the nearest



GRB

Master of all she surveys: Liz Bell perches on the receptionist’s desk in the new 4th Floor “Tree House.” Inset: Outside one of the small study rooms.

volunteer to take them to the tranquil locales of **Wareham, Block Island, Tyler Hill, Kent** or **Clinton Corners**, because each of the small meeting rooms is named after a celebrated Project getaway.

So don’t be suspicious if a kid claims they were just in Wareham last week, working on a book report with their Smart Partner. They aren’t lying, really.

LB

FINALLY GOT ANOTHER MEGAN!

After almost two years of fearless volunteering, **Megan Cramer** has fearlessly joined the staff this fall as Education Liaison. “Education Liaison?” you ask, “Whazzat?” Good question. Megan will be the connection, the “link,” so to speak, between the theater and the education programming at the Project. She has been linking her acting and teaching work for several other organizations, such as **Opening Act** and **Off the Hook** in New York City, and the **Bristol Valley Theater** in upstate New York, but she is most ecstatic to be a part of the Project crew, and to become their “missing link.”



Megan was born and bred in Atlanta, GA, where she developed a great love for cheese grits and barbecue, and continued her southern education at **Wake Forest University** in Winston-Salem, NC. She graduated in 1999 with a BA in Theater, and moved to New York City in the summer of 2001. Her acting work in the city has led her to play: an enchanted fairy, a merry wife, an angry Greek goddess, a lonely Roman matriarch, a desperate German housewife, and a murderous high schooler, among other sundry and sordid roles. When not acting — or at the Project — Megan is addicted to karaoke, plays the nose flute expertly, has developed a great love for grape pie, and has been known to crochet scarves for all her friends.

So come join in the fun! You can catch Megan in the upcoming Playback shows in October, or most afternoons in the clubhouse. If you have any great ideas for workshops or Break-It-Up week themes, let her know. Special skills and odd talents are welcome.

MC

IT’S COMING... IT REALLY IS!

Don’t be scared! *Fivey* #7, *The Fear Issue* is on the way. It will be jam-packed with spine-tingling, hair-raising, nerve-racking, gut-wrenching, knuckle-whitening, teeth-chattering excitement. Drop by the Clubhouse and pick up an issue. Every issue comes with a free set of heebie-jeebies.

LB



JOHN SHEEHY'S
FUNDING UPDATE

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.

BLYTHMOUR CORPORATION	\$4,000
CARNEGIE CORPORATION	\$50,000
CLINTON SEED FUND	\$25,000
HOLLAND LODGE FOUNDATION	\$4,000
NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS	\$10,000

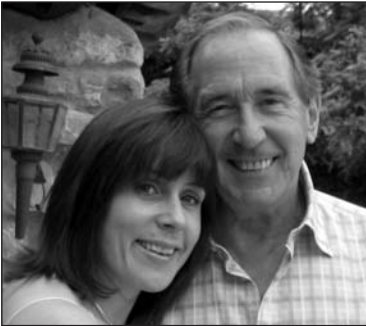
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JOHN L. SHEEHY

It's amazing how well she plays the piano with those mitts. Composer Kim Sherman during our week on Block Island. See page 1.



DIANA ROJAS



What they do for the Project: Bill (sometimes known as "Big Toad") and his daughter Jane have hosted five teen productions at the Chateau de Berne in Provence, France.

Occupations: Bill: "I think I'm a builder. Making money doesn't interest me, but building things does." Jane: "Visionary."

Places of Birth: Bill: Fulham, London. Jane: Kingston, England.

Habitat: Bill: Chateau de Berne. "I think I live in paradise. And it's very difficult for an Englishman to say that. We're supposed to be very reserved." Jane: New York City.

Most recent accomplishments: Bill: "Letting go of the football club (that he used to own). I resigned after 45 years." Jane: "Today – not coming off the quad bike at 40 mph on a 3 foot wide path at a 1/6 downhill incline."

Books they like: Bill: *The Road Well Traveled*. Jane: *Ask and it is Given: Learning to Manifest Your Desires* and *Obsession: Interviews with Serial Killers*. "These are like the two different sides of my personality."

Best 52nd Street Project Memories: Bill: "Once I was sitting by the pool next to a young man who was dangling his feet in the water. I'll never forget this: he turned to me and asked me, 'Is there any way you can be my father?'"

Favorite thing about the Project: Jane: "That there's enough safety and respect created that they can really stand up and be who they are."

On Flyer Bars: Jane: "They snuggle my cookies."



PETER DINKLAGE

▲ Erica Schmidt and Peter Dinklage surprised us by eloping to Las Vegas and tying the knot on April 16. This picture was taken on that very day - you can just make out the Chapel of Love in the background.

▼ Board Member Noël Dawkins Mihalow and her husband Joe Mihalow welcomed 8 lb., 3 oz. baby girl Fallon Dawkins Mihalow on Thursday, August 11th at 12:22 a.m. Don't let the look on Fallon's face fool you. The whole family is having a great time together.



JOE MIHALOW



VICTOR ROJAS

▲ Staffer Diana Rojas quietly took a day off on Sept. 20 to pick up her associate's degree at LaGuardia Community College. She ain't satisfied, though. She's now going for her bachelor's at Eugene Lang College at the New School for Liberal Arts. You go, Dee! But please stop wearing that weird flat hat around the Clubhouse...

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The Project mourns the passing of our dear friends Ileen Getz and John Seitz. Our hearts go out to their families.