



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE 52ND STREET PROJECT

PROJECT UPDATE

ISSUE #92 • OCTOBER, 2023 • GEORGE BABIAK, EDITOR



CLICK THE SCREEN
TO VISIT THE NEW SITE!

**NEW
WEBSITE!**
**NEW
SCHOOL YEAR!**
**NEW
SHOW FORMATS!**

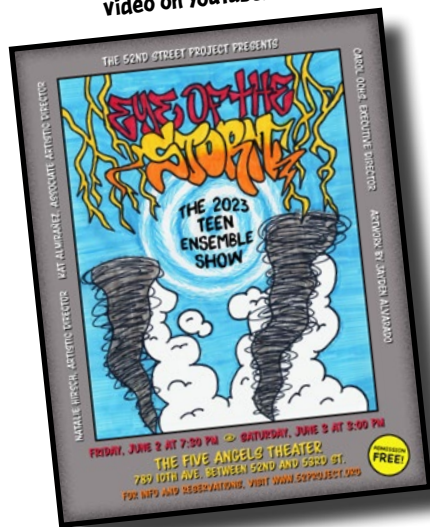
It's been at least a year in the making, but we've completely revamped our website! Staffers **John Sheehy** and **Ana Gonzalez-Soto** spearheaded the project, and for the website overhaul we contracted with our long-standing graphic design consultant **Iris A. Brown Design**. Iris partnered with web developer **Brian Gunzenhauser** from **Box & Pixel**, to help execute our vision. So check it out! It's a whole new image, but the same old address: www.52project.org. ♦



We kicked off the fall semester with a big orientation meeting. Members of all ages came to get reacquainted and engage in various goofy team-building exercises. Afterward, they posed for a group shot in the **Five Angels Theater**.

PROJECT UPDATE: YOUR OFFICIAL RECAP OF THE LAST 6 MONTHS OF PROJECT HISTORY!

Click the poster to see the video on YouTube!



TEENS MAKE IT THROUGH THE "EYE OF THE STORM"

This year's Teen Ensemble show was a series of scenes that charted the perilous course that teen-agers negotiate in our modern world. **Naseem Abdul-Majeed, Kylee Chester, Melanie Correa, Xavier Espinal, Amirah Hancock, Daniel Henk, Sarah Lopez, Aengus O'Donnell, Yovely Ramirez, Christian Santoni, Ahmed Shabana, Kass Sinchi, and Faith Villanueva** devised the piece over several months and performed the show on June 2nd and 3rd, 2023. **Kat Almirañez, Margo Gleberman, and Ana Gonzalez-Soto** directed the piece, **Ally Thomas** designed the costumes (with assistance from **Amirah Hancock**, and **Evan Schultz** did the sound. *Eye of the Storm* was a very serious show that frequently displayed a keen sense of humor. Here are some glimpses. ♦



Melanie



Ahmed



Yovely



Xavier



Faith



Amirah and Aengus



Naseem



Kylee and Daniel

STAGE! COMBAT!

Once a year, a few young Projectiles get to pretend they're knocking the stuffing out of someone while making sure that their victim doesn't get injured. That's the paradox behind our **Stage Combat** program, and this year's show on June 16 was fittingly named *Boom! Wham! Pow!* **Kerry Warren** was the Stage Combat Instructor, **Kendall Cafaro** was the Fight Captain, and **Garrett Kim** was the Program Instructor. ♦

► **Hannah Santos** and **Stephanie Linas** had a very New York-themed fight in a bodega in *The Big Apple Rumble*.



POSTER ART BY OLIVER TANNER
PHOTOS BY KAT ALMIRANÉZ

▼ It's been a while since we've seen gladiators on the Project stage. **Michael Propster** and **Logan Goicuria** gave us a Roman-style treat in *Battle of Battles*.

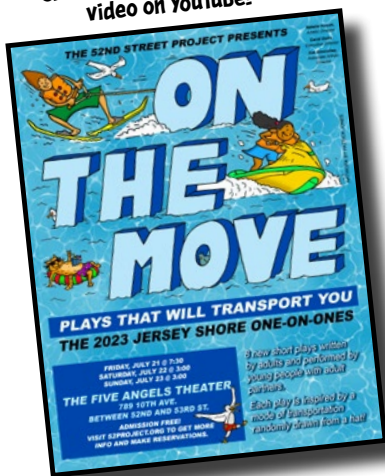
▲ **Ethan Cruz** and **Kyle Cameron** staged a classic jerk vs. nerd scenario in *High School*.

▼ In *I'm Better*, **Evelyn Myers** and **Lennox T. Duong** were rival gymnasts who got pretty physical with each other.

▲ The young people in the cast (who also did their own choreography) strike a combative pose. Standing: **Evelyn Myers**, **Ethan Cruz**, and **Adolfo Sinchi**. On ground: **Hannah Santos** and **Logan Goicuria**.

◀ **Adolfo Sinchi** was a hopeful lawyer and **Sebastian Arroyo** an energy healer in *Battle of the Crystal Shop*. Things were very tranquil until the fight started.

Click the poster to see the video on YouTube!



POSTER ART BY PATRICK JONES

THIS ONE-ON-ONE REALLY DID MOVE

Hurrah! For the first time since 2019, we took a group of kids and volunteers away to the country for an entire week. The beautiful home of **Carolyn DeSena** in **Rumson, New Jersey** was a brand-new destination for us, and it proved to be a magical place. Nine young people and their adult partners spent the week having fun and rehearsing adult-written mini-musicals. In addition to Carolyn and her family, **Kim Giblin, Sarah Rossbach and Doug Fleming**, and **Kim Walsh** housed adult staff members and volunteers. **Coco Forster, Kris and Don Bunnell, Irene and Tom Hall**, and **Deirdre and George Spiropoulos** hosted young members. We thank them all for their help!

On The Move was performed July 21-23 at the **Five Angels**. **Avi A. Amon** was the composer/music director, **Katie Bartz** lit the show, **Lara DeBrujin** created costumes, **Elizabeth Weidner** designed sound, and **Margo Gleberman** stage managed. ♦



Angel Drew Welsh tried to sell Farmer **Corey Jackson** a new-fangled Ford Model T in *T-Time*, written by **George Babiak**.



Katherine (Kat) Chauca and **Raquel Chavez** were a skateboarding lion and a musical otter in **Caylyn Wan-Creager's** *Shred of Destiny*.



Cody Wilson wrote *The Adventures of Jay and Weston* and performed the thrill-packed epic with **Jason Devoe**.



Precious Sipin and **Katty Lopez** were in *Pickle Spaceball*, **Nina Braddock's** mash-up of pickleball, space travel, and mythology!



Wiggle Bash, by **Jed Clarke**, was about a washed-up dance team (**Logan Centeno** and **Michael Propster**) who meet again.



José Luján was a space agent and **Andy Ingalls** a hapless nerd (and a super-villain) in **Garrett Kim's** *Somewhere in the Galaxy*.



Be The Monster, by **Sathya Sridharan**, cast **Kaileela Hobby** as a not-so-scary movie monster and **Evelyn Myers** as her director.



Neil D'Astolfo's *Pizza Friends*, *Mwahaha!*, featured **Mateo Santoni** as an escaped robot and **Neil** as his pizzamaking mentor.



Stephanie Jean Lane was a rather human-like whale and **Bella Galindo** a famous pop star in Stephanie's *Love is Like an Ocean*.

PHOTOS BY WINSTON RODNEY

NOW WE'RE TRYING SOMETHING NEW!

For our August show this year, we tried a completely different format: a "Place Play," a type of show that **Kat Almirañez** introduced us to. Using improvisation, five adult/kid pairs each developed their own storyline that unfolded over several separate scenes. The one thing all five of the stories shared was a location, the **Sir Sebastian Springfield Senior International Airport**. In its final form, the storylines took turns being unveiled on the stage. At certain moments, all the characters were united to help stitch the pieces together into one delightfully comedic quilt.

Now We're Here was created and staged in the course of six days at the Project Clubhouse. Kat directed with the assistance of **Caylyn Wan-Creager**, **Bri Weintraub** did the lighting, **Diego Caoili** rode the soundboard, our trusty summer interns **Francie Brewster** and **Yvanna Tassy** designed the costumes, and **George Babiak** did the props. And there was even a theme song, written by **John Sheehy** and composed by **Kim D. Sherman**! ♦

Click the poster to see the video on YouTube!



The *Now We're Here* company performs the theme song while waiting to board their plane. At extreme left is one of our terrific summer interns, **Yvanna Tassy**.



Magnetic amulets identified **Samaria Alkandi** and **Kendall Cafaro** as long-lost sisters.



Flight attendants **Rebeca Vanterpool** and **Jasmin Johnson** both wanted to work first class.



Hannah Santos was a celebrity hounded by superfan **Aida Kamen**.



Jessica Elie Pierre and **Molly Carden** were identical twins who swapped roles.



Betsy Hogg and **Logan Goicuria** were business types who were promoting a new, long-barrelled paintball gun.



Everyone finally made the plane to Miami! In the back row, seated alone, is our other wonderful summer intern, **Francie Brewster**.

ANNOUNCING A SPECIAL BENEFIT PERFORMANCE



**SEE THE HOT NEW ALICIA KEYS MUSICAL ON DEC. 13
...AND HELP THE PROJECT AT THE SAME TIME!**

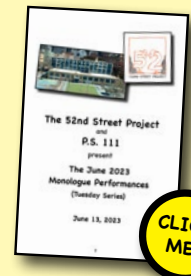
**Come see The Public Theater's new musical featuring the
work of an artist who grew up in the neighborhood we serve!**

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED!

**For details and pricing contact Ahmed Attia
at (212) 333-5252 or attia@52project.org**

**OR
CLICK HERE
FOR MORE
INFO**

MORE P.S. 111 MONOLOGUES



As reported in our last issue, this year we began a new initiative at P.S. 111, the public school that lies directly across 10th Avenue from our Clubhouse. Well, we returned later in the Spring to teach the fine art of monologue writing to a whole new batch of young students. To read the latest monologues in their entirety and see who helped with the shows and classes, just click on the program images above ♦

STARS AND TEENS COME OUT FOR CHARITY DAY

Each year on Sept. 11, **BGC Group** and **The Cantor Fitzgerald Relief Fund** commemorate a sad anniversary by hosting a joyful global fund-raising event for non-profit organizations. We are so very grateful to be one of their chosen causes. This year, no less than three of our well-known actor pals were there to support us and actually do some telephone stock trades for Cantor Fitzgerald. Long-time Projectile **Billy Crudup** (*Almost Famous*, *The Morning Show*, *Hello, Tomorrow*) was there, as were Project newcomers **Hank Azaria** (probably best known for his many voices on *The Simpsons*), and **Jeffrey Dean Morgan** (*The Walking Dead*). On hand to represent our young folks were teen members **Amirah Hancock** and **Kylee Chester**. Both are *Walking Dead* fans and nearly swooned when they met Jeffrey Dean Morgan. How much will we receive from Charity Day? Well, it will take a while to find out, but keep checking *Ahmed's Funding Update* box (see page 10) in upcoming issues. ♦



Hank Azaria plays stock trader and cuts a high-stakes deal. We're hoping he used the voice of **Moe the Bartender**.



Here are **Kylee** and **Amirah** hobnobbing with **Jeffrey Dean Morgan** and **Billy Crudup**. They were cool, and our girls felt pretty cool.



Then they met SNL's **Kenan Thompson**! He wasn't there for us, but he was also cool. Ladies, did you ask if he would be in a Playmaking show?

The Board of Directors of The 52nd Street Project invite you to save this date...

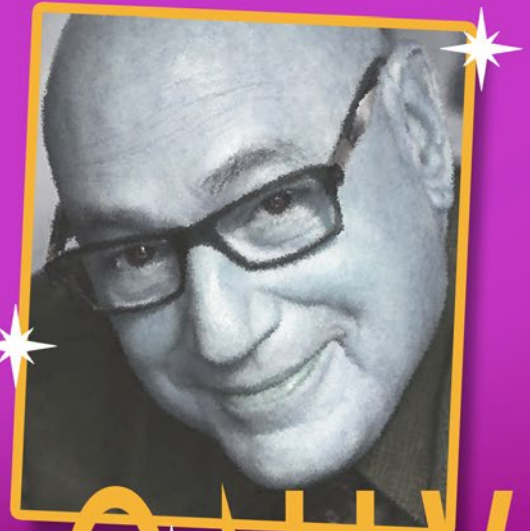
The Annual 52nd Street Project Benefit Gala

Monday, February 26, 2024 - 6:30 p.m.

The Edison Rooftop, 240 West 47th St.

For details, contact Ahmed Attia

at (212) 333-5252 or attia@52project.org



ONE NIGHT ONLY

A tribute to composer and Project volunteer Henry Krieger

THE SPORTS PAGE



As always, Project Board Co-chair **Louis Friedman** played with great panache.



GOLF, GOLF, GOLF!

On May 18, the **Quaker Ridge Golf Club** in Scarsdale hosted **The 52nd Street Project Annual Golf Outing**. It was an amazing event and everyone got several holes-in-one. Okay, maybe that part's not true, but the weather was great and we raised some cash and some divots for the Project! ♦



Ahmed and Kristina gave out the popular new quarter-zip pullovers and the golf carts were out in full force.

WE ALL BELONG, WE ALL PLAY PING-PONG!

Yes, that was the cornball name George gave to a casual 4-day series of table tennis sessions for adults and kids. Some participants learned to play for the very first time while others simply developed even more viciously diabolical serves.

Seen here are **Angel Desai** and **Ethan Cruz** doing their best to keep the ball in play. It all happened in the dog days of summer, Aug. 14-17. ♦



SUBSCRIBE TO "THE PROJCAST"

Did you know that we have a podcast that features the writing and voices of our young members? Well, we do!

Just click on the logo at right to start downloading these fascinating nuggets of info and entertainment! The most recent episode features a Smart Partner interview between Project member **Logan Centeno** and former member **John Manolis**, reviewing their first year as SP's. ♦



MEGABITS • MEGABITS • MEGABITS



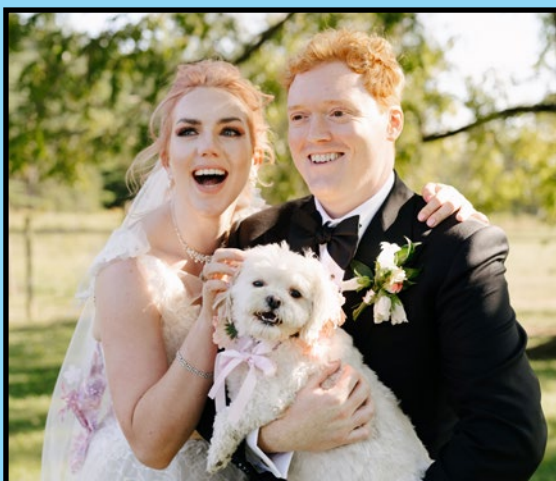
Former ProjKid and long-time vol **Jed Clarke** and his wife **Alena** have a second child! Her name is **Joya**, and she was born on Sept 27, 2022. **Keziah** loves being a big sister and the two girls are best friends, too.



Here are **Ken** and **Christina Robinson** with their newest child **Trace** (born August 1st) and his two older siblings: **Bennie**, who is almost 2 years old, and **Marilyn**, who is 11.



On July 24, **J. Mallory-McCree** and **Angela Lewis** had a second child named **Jupiter**! He is seen here with his folks and his big sis **Brooklyn**.



Morgan Everitt got married to **Rob Law** in Stockton, NJ at a llama farm called **Woodsedge** on Sept 16th. We're pretty sure the animal they are holding is NOT a llama.



Our pal **Lara DeBruijn** has been designing costumes for us since 2011 (see page 4 for a look at her latest Proj Show). She married **Mark Cotroneo** on May 21 at **Grounds For Sculpture** in Hamilton, New Jersey. A Scavenger Hunt was part of the celebration!



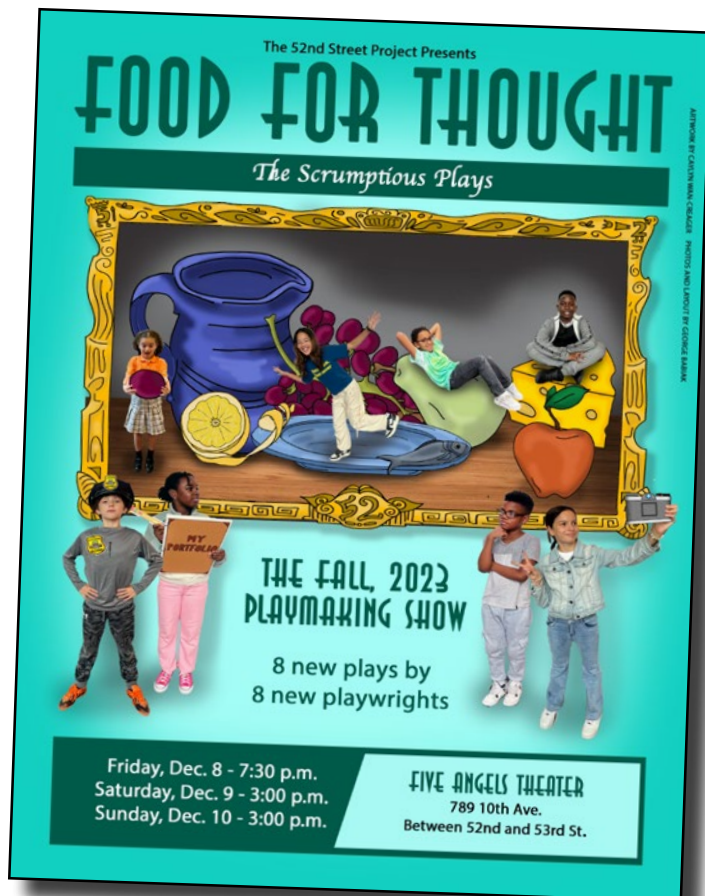
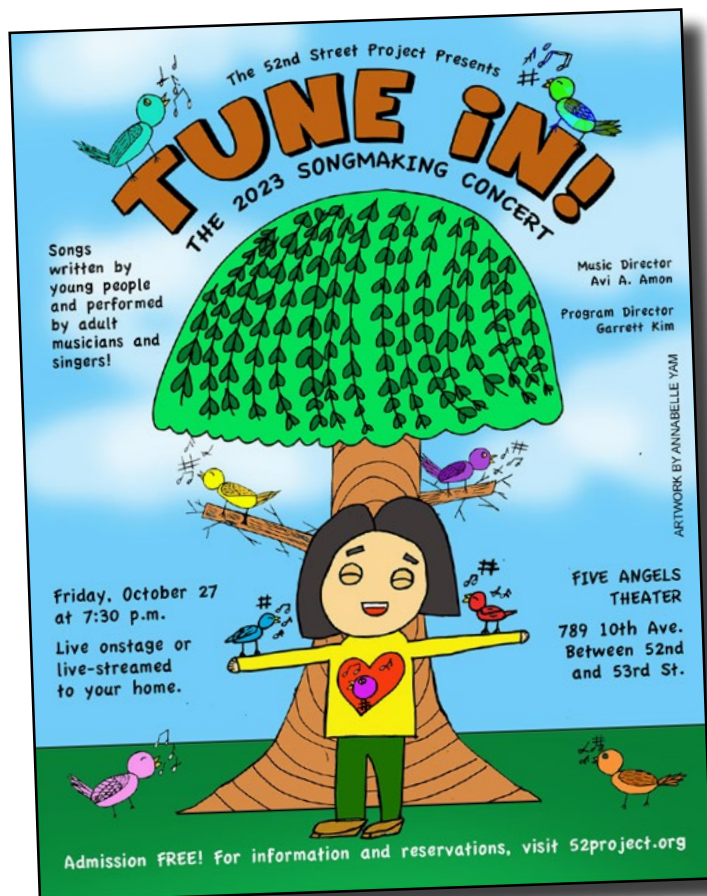
Kate Gulden and **Greg Scheiber** had a beautiful wedding on October 7 at **Saint Mary's Church** in Branford, Connecticut. It was rainy, but no spirits were dampened in the least.



Jiehae Park and her husband **Artie Pesh-Imam** welcomed **Jaemin Park-Peshimam** to the world on April 20th at **NYP/Cornell** on the East Side.

COMING UP ON OUR STAGE!

We've got two great events coming to Five Angels Theater!
For more info and tix, click the pix to visit our reservation page.



Hi, P.U. Readers! I'm Ahmed, and I manage this box nowadays! The following foundations, corporations, and government agencies recently made generous grants to The 52nd Street Project. We are grateful to them for their support as well as to the many individuals who help sustain the Project's programs. ♦

The Anonymous Fund at the Community Foundation of Sarasota County.....	\$5,000	New York State Council on the Arts (Capital Grant).....	\$50,000
Carol M. & Stephen E. Canter Family Foundation.....	\$7,500	P.S. 111 Adolph S. Ochs	\$1,000
The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation	\$30,000	Jeffrey Seller Family Foundation.....	\$75,000
The Henlopen Foundation.....	\$5,000	The Shubert Foundation.....	\$20,000
		Susquehanna Foundation	\$15,000

(Gifts received April 27, 2023 to September 30, 2023)



WANT TO DONATE TO THE 52ND STREET PROJECT?

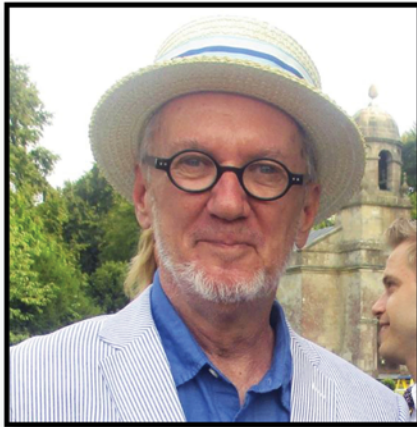
It's as easy as 5 + 2!

Just click [HERE](#) to get to our donation page.



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FLYER BAR PROFILE



MICHAEL PIATKOWSKI

What he does for us- We know Michael as a costume designer. His first show with us was our Teen Ensemble version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which he did in 2015 with **Viviane Galloway**. Since then, he has designed multiple Project shows. We are always impressed anew by his artistry, patience, and generosity.

Occupation- "Retired."

Why he does what he does- "Love having such an amazing creative outlet with a wonderful group of people and such wonderful kids."

Place of birth- "Newark, New Jersey."

Habitat- "Upper West Side, New York City."

Hobbies- "Drawing, painting, traveling, spending time by the ocean."

Last books read- "*Page Boy* by Elliot Page."

Most recent accomplishment- "Posting my drawings and paintings and sharing my work with all."

Best Project Memory- "So many, but I love it when I see the child playwrights' faces when they see the characters they created come to life wearing the costumes I created. Also reading the wonderful plays they have written for the first time."

Credo- "Art is Art is Art."

Advice to kids- "Let your imagination flow and share it with others."

Favorite thing about the Project- "The incredible kids and staff I have met and gotten to work with."

On Flyer Bars- "So yummy and love when I find one one in my bag uneaten!!!" ♦

SUMMERSNAPZ!

Boy, were we thrilled to go on our first week-long summer trip since 2019! Here's some shots from our One-on-One retreat in Rumson, New Jersey ♦



Kat, Kat, and Katty had a thrilling river tube ride!



The *On The Move* company, standing still for just a moment.



Mateo, Angel, and Jose were fearless on the beach.



Tired of the river and the sea? There's a pool.



John knocks out the Eggs-in-Holes.



The first performance!