

The 52nd Street Project Presents

Music To My Ears

FLYER ART BY JAYDEN ALVARADO

The 2024 Songmaking Concert

Songs written by young people that
are scored and performed by
adult musicians and singers.

Friday, November 1 - 7:30 p.m.
Five Angels Theater
789 10th Avenue





"MUSIC TO MY EARS" THE COMPANY

THE LYRICISTS

Diana Abrajan
Makiyah Gray
Grace V. Guity-Reyes
Julian Wilder IV

THE COMPOSERS/MUSICIANS

Avi A. Amon
Kat Cartusciello
Tess Edwards
Erika Ji
Jonja Leon Merck
James Powers
Sarah Slipp

THE SINGERS

Jenelle Chu
Major Curda
Neil D'Astolfo
Angel Desai
Kendal Hartse
Greg Hildreth
Betsy Hogg
Kirstin Louie
Tommy McDowell
Sahar Milani
Belén Moyano

MUSIC DIRECTOR

Avi A. Amon

SONGMAKING DIRECTOR

Garrett Kim

LIGHTING DESIGNER

Aaron Conover

ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER

Rook Shaw

STAGE MANAGER

Bri Weintraub

FALL 2024 INTERN

Anna Phillips

AUDIO ENGINEER

Rhys Luke

LIVESTREAM TEAM

Diego Caoili, Anna Phillips

THE CONCERT

HOT TUB TO ROLLER COASTER

Lyrics by Makiyah Gray
Music by Erika Ji
Sung by Angel Desai

SAD DAYS TO HAPPY DAYS TO SAD DAYS

Lyrics by Makiyah Gray
Music by Erika Ji
Sung by Jenelle Chu



LEFT SOCK PROTEST

Lyrics by Grace Guity-Reyes
Music by Sarah Slipp
Sung by Tommy McDowell

AN ACTUAL EMOTIONAL SONG

Lyrics by Grace Guity-Reyes
Music by Sarah Slipp
Sung by Belén Moyano

THE RISE OF THE CATS

Lyrics by Grace Guity-Reyes
Music by Sarah Slipp
Sung by Neil D'Astolfo

THIS IS MY LIFE

Lyrics by Diana Abrajan
Music by Tess Edwards
Sung by Betsy Hogg

ONLY MY MOM

Lyrics by Diana Abrajan
Music by Tess Edwards
Sung by Sahar Milani



MOTIVATION

Lyrics by Julian Wilder IV
Music by James Powers
Sung by Greg Hildreth

JUST LEAVE HIM

Lyrics by Julian Wilder
Music by James Powers
Sung by Kendal Hartse

TRUE POTENTIAL

Lyrics by Julian Wilder
Music by James Powers
Sung by Kirstin Louie
and Major Curda



THIS IS JUST PART OF THE PROGRAM!

Scan the QR code below to see the complete version, which includes **song lyrics and biographies and photos of the lyricists and the performers!**



Special Thanks

The Songmaking program has been established in collaboration with the **Graduate Musical Theater Writing Program** at **NYU's Tisch School Of The Arts**, and **Writing and Design for Musical Theater** at **BerkleeNYC**. We'd also like to thank **Fred Carl** and **Danny Larsen** at **NYU**, and **Tiffany Chen**, **Loudon Sterns**, **Stephen Webber**, **Connor White**, and **Julianne Wick Davis**, of **Berklee NYC**.

COMING UP NEXT:

The 52nd Street Project Presents

TO THE MOON!

Plays That Blast Off

8 young playwrights
8 original plays
8 veteran directors
1 gifted composer
16 seasoned actors

Friday, Dec. 13 - 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, Dec. 14 - 3:00 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 15 - 3:00 p.m.

Five Angels Theater
789 10th Ave. (between 52nd & 53rd)
Admission Free! Visit 52project.org
for information and reservations.

The 52nd Street Project is a non-profit community-based arts organization that brings children from the Hell's Kitchen neighborhood together with professional artists to create original art. The Songmaking program partners 52nd Street Project kids with adult composers to create original songs. Over the seven weeks of Songmaking, led by **Avi Amon** and Program Director **Garrett David Kim**, these young lyricists explore how their own words and ideas fit together with their composer's music to create songs. Near the end of the program, we bring in a company of singers to perform the completed songs, and share them with an audience.

The 52nd Street Project Staff

Kat Almirañez, Associate Artistic Director
Avi A. Amon, Musical Director
Ahmed Attia, Development Manager*
George Babiak, Director of Design and Production
Liz Bell, Clinical Consultant
Natalie Hirsch, Artistic Director
Garrett Kim, Program Director
Carol Ochs, Executive Director
John Sheehy, Director of Institutional Advancement
Ana Soto-Gonzalez, Marketing and Events Manager
Liz Sweeney, Director of Education
Caylyn Wan-Creager, Education Associate
Bri Weintraub, Production Manager
Yazzy Wilder, Operations Manager*
Iris A. Brown, Graphic Design Consultant

**Project Alumni*

The 52nd Street Project Board of Directors

Lisa Benavides-Nelson	Valerie Kay
Rachel Chanoff	Micah Kroeze
Cathy Dantchik, co-chair	Noël Mihalow
Carolyn DeSena	Carol Ochs
Louis P. Friedman, co-chair	Margaret Odette
Robert Goldberg	Willie Reale, founder
Stephen Graham, chair emeritus	Shirley Rumierk, alumni member
Annie Hausmann	José Soto, Jr., alumni member
Natalie Hirsch	Wendy vanden Heuvel
Korey Jackson	Alexandra Vassilaros
	Mark Whatley

Want to make a donation to The 52nd Street Project?
Just visit www.52project.org and click "You Can Help."

Or make a gift via  @Fifty-Two-Project

HOT TUB TO ROLLER COASTER

Lyrics by Makiyah Gray

Music by Erika Ji

Sung by Angel Desai

Doot doo doo doo
Doot doo doo doo doo

I went to the water park
And ran to the hot tub
Hoo Haa the hot tub
I went to the water park
And ran to the hot tub
And my mom told me to get out
of the hot tub

And take my sister to the pool
My mom told me to get out of
the hot tub
And take my sister to the pool

So I got out and push her, push
her in the pool

She loved it

JK she hated it

But when I got back to the hot
tub

It smell like bleach with water
But not in a good way

And we are going to Coney
Island

But I'm afraid of roller coasters
But it's my sister's birthday and
my sister wants to go

We are going to Coney Island
But I'm afraid of roller coasters
But it's my sister's birthday and
my sister wants to go

Her sister was five and a half

And then she went on a dragon
roller coaster

And it was her first time
So she was at Legoland at the
dragon roller coaster

And then it was her dad
It was her mom, her sister and
her

It's the best day of my life!

I love it

I would come back
To the dragon roller coaster

I love it

I would come back

To the dragon roller coaster

It's the best day of my life!

So we are going to Coney Island

But I'm afraid of roller coasters

But it's my sister's birthday and
my sister wants to go

We are going to Coney Island

But I'm afraid of roller coasters

But it's my sister's birthday and
my sister wants to go

It had a big drop

It had a big drop

It was scary

It was scary

Doot doo doo doo

Doot doo doo doo doo

Hoo Haa the hot tub



SAD DAYS TO HAPPY DAYS TO SAD DAYS

Lyrics by Makiyah Gray

Music by Erika Ji

Sung by Jenelle Chu

I do not want to go to school
I wish I could stay home
I do not like school
Because my teacher calls on me
But I do not raise my hand
Ooh

Another reason why I don't want
to go to school
Because I have to get in the car
With my sisters and brothers
And they are annoying
Because they kick my legs
Ooh

Whoa hoo
I do not want to go to school
Whoa hoo

Never mind
My friends are coming to school
Because they don't really come
that much to school
I don't have to be sad anymore
I don't have to be sad anymore
Because my friends are coming
Oh whoa whoa

Never mind
My friends are coming to school
Because they don't really come
that much to school
I don't have to be sad anymore
I don't have to be sad anymore
Because my friends are coming
Oh whoa whoa

And my brothers and sisters
don't have to come in the car
Ooh
Because they are sick
But I feel bad for them a little bit
But I feel bad for them a little bit



LEFT SOCK PROTEST

Lyrics by Grace V. Guity-Reyes

Music by Sarah Slipp

Sung by Tommy McDowell

I remember that time when we
were together
It was a joy
Fighting off that stinky smell
We were strong
Please don't leave me
We were like a fifth melody

Left Sock Protest!

Don't tell me I'm dramatic!
I'm telling you, I miss you
We were a pair
Not one sock for themselves
We are not cavemen
Left sock protest!

Start a riot!
Set this place on fire!

(Spoken)

Uh...I mean, don't set the place
on fire...here's a piece of
advice.

Don't. Be. Nice. To. The.
Laundry. Machine.
You don't want to lose your
dreams, loved ones, etcetera

Left Sock Protest!

Don't tell me I'm dramatic!
I'm telling you, I miss you
We were a pair
Not one sock for themselves
We are not cavemen
Left sock protest!

The machine is something you
don't want to mess with
But guess what?
If you mess with right sock, you
mess with left sock too
That's just common sense
Let me repeat it again!
The machine is something you
don't want to mess with
But guess what?
If you mess with right sock, you
mess with left sock too
That's just common sense
Let me repeat it again!



AN ACTUAL EMOTIONAL SONG

Lyrics by Grace V. Guity-Reyes

Music by Sarah Slipp

Sung by Belén Moyano

Hmmm

La la la la la lalala la

La la la la la la

Do you remember playing in the
backyard?

Could play for hours

Don't matter if we got busted or
not

I'm telling you please!

We were meant to be

Don't leave me

You said we were besties!
(Besties!)

You don't even call or text me!
(Text me!)

Please tell me, I thought we
were BFFs

But you're just like my ex

Leave and move on

I don't even know what to say to
you anymore!

Hmmm

Don't play with my feelings
All I'm trying to do is just live my
life

Don't know when I'm gonna see
you again

I'm just young, dumb, stupid

Don't break my heart boy

I don't wanna miss you anymore

It's hard to take it all in

Just please don't mess with my
feelings

Just don't, it's hard to see you
again

You said we were besties!
(Besties!)

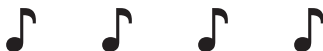
You don't even call or text me!
(Text me!)

Please tell me, I thought we
were BFFs

But you're just like my ex
Leave and move on

I don't even know what to say to
you...

Any more!



THE RISE OF THE CATS

Lyrics by Grace V. Guity-Reyes

Music by Sarah Slipp

Sung by Neil D'Astolfo

When I wake up in the morning
I remember that night
Chatting the night away
Talking about the heist
Angels in the day
Crazy in the night

(Spoken) Wait you might be
wondering what I'm talking
about. Welp. I got a little story
too, also. (Pause.) Wait you
might be wondering what the
heist is. It to steal milk from
the vault.

Band: (Spoken.) The fridge.

(Evil laugh.)

It was just something little they
say
I don't wanna lose you

We are the cats! (The cats!)
We are not rats! (Not rats!)
Bossy in the day
Sneaky at night
Don't underestimate us
We'll steal your socks at night

My name is Mister Sprinkles
My owner is Tyler Robin Steven
McChuck Ravioli

(Spoken.) I don't know why his
name is so long.

He gives me food but it's not
enough

Milk milk milk milk give us the
milk!

Milk milk milk milk give us the
milk!

Milk milk milk milk give us the
milk!

Milk milk milk milk give us the
milk!

We are the cats! (The cats!)

We are not rats! (Not rats!)

Bossy in the day

Sneaky at night

Don't underestimate us

We'll steal your socks at night

(Spoken.) Btw: My idols: Dr.
Bruce Oyster Fettucini (Does
a Spy Doctor Move.) He's
making pasta everynight.

Spy Alexander La Vida Gato
Nato. Also sorry y'all but Mr.
Sprinkles has tried really hard
to get to his idol Alexander La
Vida Gato Nato and bringing
the milk as a gift. Yippie! I did it!

(Note: he feels happy at the
end.)



THIS IS MY LIFE

Lyrics by Diana Abrajan

Music by Tess Edwards

Sung by Betsy Hogg

Walk into school
Go to class
I sit down but I hear a:
Beep! Beep! Beep!
On the loud speaker
My principal is doing the morning
announcements
This is my life

PRINCIPAL: (Spoken.) Good
morning. Today is Friday,
November 1st. I will be
announcing the specials that
is happening this week.

It is now lunchtime
I see my friends in the lunch line
Today for lunch there is chicken
tenders
I LOVE chicken tenders
This is my life

Sit down and take out my binder
I write down the science
homework for tonight
The teacher tells us take out our
binders
And go over yesterday's
homework
I'm so ready for class
I'm so ready for class
This is my life

My friends make life better in
school
My friends make school not feel
as boring as it already is
Sometimes school isn't boring
But usually it is
My friends are really trustworthy
And they make the happiness
bigger in me
This is my life

I walk out to the yard so I can go
home from school
Run to the bus with my friends
We get on and we start getting
home
This is my life
This is my life
This is my life
This is my life



ONLY MY MOM

Lyrics by Diana Abrajan

Music by Tess Edwards

Sung by Sahar Milani

My mom
Helps me with homework in
 need
She encourages me a lot
She encourages me to do
 anything in life
To never give up
Work through it all
To make it through

What makes my mom strong:
She makes people laugh and it's
 heartwarming
She continues to be stronger
 everyday

Thank you, Mom
Thank you, Mom
Thank you, Mom

What makes my mom strong:
Me, her family, doctors, her mind
Working out

What makes my mom strong:
She helps me in school
By putting me in a extra math
 help class
With other kids who need help
 too
She is a big helper and has a
 kind kind heart

She encourages me to do
 anything in life
To never give up
Work through it all
To make it through



MOTIVATION

Lyrics by Julian (L.J.) Wilder IV

Music by James Powers

Sung by Greg Hildreth

It's called the Waveball
Association
W B A for short
You use your tail instead of a bat
And it's underwater

I can't do it
I can't do it
What will I do?

(Spoken.) Wait! Wait let me
introduce myself.

Nico
I'm an orca
My tail is too small to hit the
pufferfish

I can't do it
I can't do it
What will I do?

C'mon you will make it Nico
You will make it Nico
I can do it
I can do it

All I need to do is practice and
work hard
But people tell me I can't do it

I should prove them wrong
My mom tells me to work on my
swings
But I'm gonna prove the haters
wrong first
By getting faster
By having a growth spurt
Or just getting my tail bigger

I can do it
I can do it
I can do it!



JUST LEAVE HIM

Lyrics by Julian (L.J.) Wilder IV

Music by James Powers

Sung by Kendal Hartse

Hi, I'm a warthog
Living on Saturn
My name is Kevin
I have nothing else to do
What do I do?
What do I do?
What do I do?

I have a pet
His name is Douglass
I think he's a real plant
But he doesn't talk
So I put googly eyes on him
I mean, he needs to see, right?
And I'm talking to you
Cause I have nothing else to do
WAIT!

(Spoken.) Is that an article about
Six Flags! ON EARTH!

I wanna leave
I want strange food
But I don't have a ship
I don't have a ship
What do I do?
What do I do?
What do I do?

Let me look for some materials
to build one
Wait, I'm on Saturn
There's nothing here

Let me look for mechanics
But it's just me
Wait! I can swim through zero
gravity to get there
But my pet Douglass can't swim
Do I leave him or bring him?

(Spoken.)

You're supposed to say bring
him now...

(Wait for audience response.)

Wow! You are so smart! You
know what?

(Wait for audience response.)

Just leave him.



TRUE POTENTIAL

Lyrics by Julian (L.J.) Wilder IV

Music by James Powers

Sung by Kirstin Louie and Major Curda

Acorns are hard to crush
If you can, they will turn to mush
But if you can't, they'll turn into a big tree
That is also strong, like me
Shaq's hoops and dunks are out of this world
He'll push you out of the paint and put you in despair
Whining after the game
Yell at your coach, losin' fame

Find your true potential
Make your struggle better
Now you have scratched the surface of your true potential
Walk around see people struggle
Make their struggle better
Now you've seen your true potential
Now work on earning it

My mom is strong
And when she's mad
She awakes the beast
And when the beast is awake
You're cooked
Like my mom when she makes her famous rice
Same thing with my Dad, but this verse is for my mom!
(Sorry Dad!)
She brings us everywhere and she loves me so much
So I say it back
Te quiero mucho Mama!

Find your true potential
Make your struggle better
Now you have scratched the surface of your true potential
Walk around see people struggle
Make their struggle better

(CONTINUED)



Now you've seen your true potential
Now work on earning it

Love takes strength
And you need strength
To love something powerful too

Acorns are hard to crush
If you can, they will turn to mush
But if you can't, they'll turn into a
big tree
That is also strong, like me
Shaq's hoops and dunks are out
of this world
He'll push you out of the paint
and put you in despair
Whining after the game
Yell at your coach, losin' fame

Find your true potential

Make your struggle better

Now you have scratched the
surface of your true potential

Walk around see people struggle

Make their struggle better
Now you've seen your true potential
Now work on earning it
Now work on earning it
Now work on earning it



BIOGRAPHIES



Splash Playmakers.”

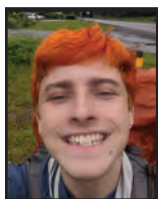
DIANA ABRAJAN (*Songmaker*) joined the Project in the spring of 2023 with her Playmaking debut, **TWO DIFFERENT PEOPLE WITH THEIR OWN LIVES**; with dramaturgy by Vanessa Porras and direction by Rachel Lin; with Sahar Milani & Alex Templer; as part of the production **A WHALE OF A TALE**, Plays That Make a



AVI A. AMON (*Music Director, he/they*) is a Turkish-American composer, sound artist, and educator. He has written hundreds of songs with the young people at The 52nd St. Project over the years and continues to be inspired each time he sets foot in the building. Outside of The Project, Avi is a sought-after collaborator in theater, film, dance, and experiential art. Recent work includes music, songs, and sound design for projects with: Ars Nova, Atlantic Theater, The Civilians, Disney, HBO Films, HERE Arts, Hulu, The Kennedy Center, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, New York Theater Workshop, The New Victory, PlayCo, Roundabout Theater, SoHo REP, Spotify/Gimlet, St. Louis REP, and Tribeca Film Festival, among others. Avi is the recipient of the Thom Thomas Award and a Jonathan Larson Grant. He is also a Dramatists Guild Foundation Fellow, a New Jewish Culture Fellow, and an inaugural fellow with **THE WORKSHOP**. Avi teaches a variety of collaborative art-making courses at NYU Tisch, where he received his MFA in Musical Theatre Writing. www.aviamon.com



KAT CARTUSCIO (*Band*) is a queer NYC-based composer, sound-designer, and multi-instrumentalist who works as Jason Robert Brown’s music assistant. She is a proud member of the TheatreNOW writing lab and has three musicals in development: *Nima* and the *Jen* (w/Thalia Ranjbar,) which appeared on Ramin Karimloo’s podcast *The Hang*, and was selected for the Rhinebeck Writers Retreat (7/23); *Hard Tack* (w/Jessie Field), which was selected for the Catwalk Writers Retreat (8/23); and *Then She Ran* w/ Alex Becker: (Theater Accelerator (5/23) Scranton Fringe Festival (10/22) *Feinstein’s 54 Below* (2/22) *New Studio on Broadway* (11/21) *AMDA* (8/21)). Other Recent credits include musical *The Tattooed Lady* (Music Associate, Philadelphia Theater Company); podcast *The Doctor is Dead* (Apple Podcasts), interdisciplinary dance-piece *2.5 Breaths*, (Chain Theater), and short-film *Heirloom* (Winner of Monmouth Film Festival & New York International Film Festival). Other original works include *Village Song* (Rattlestick Playwrights Theater); and *Walks of Life*, (Blindspot Collective/La Jolla Playhouse). She received her MFA from NYU Tisch School of the Arts (May 2021), and her BA (Music) from Columbia University (Departmental Honors) in 2016.



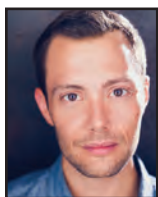
AARON CONOVER (*Lighting Designer*) is a freelance lighting designer and digital performance technician based in New York City. He is so grateful to be working again at The 52nd Street Project on TUNE IN! His designs last graced the Five Angels stage during Penny for Your Thoughts, the 2022 Playmaking production.



JENELLE CHU (*Singer, Sad Days to Happy Days to Sad Days*) At the Project: INFINITY & BEYOND, *The Ultimate Plays*, in *Becoming A Manager*, by Arden; STUFF & NONSENSE, *Plays From The Prop Closet*, with Thiana in *Sweet Tooth Goes to Candyworld*, by Christina Quintana; GOOD VIBRATIONS, *Plays With Sound Foundations*, with Melanie in *How to Survive*, by Michael Walek; TAKE IT FROM THE TOP, “Goodbye” lyrics by Antonella, music by Lydia Breckon; *It All Started with Coffee and Tea*, Pandemic Playmaking, by Sarah; SMOKE & MIRRORS, *The Tricky Plays*, in *Mokina & Cupy*, by Jessica; THICK AS THIEVES, *The Relationship Plays*, with Lanai in her play *Peeps & Pulitzers*.



MAJOR CURDA (*Singer, True Potential*) is a multi-disciplinary storytelling artist who has appeared & collaborated on various projects for Theatre, Tv/Film, and Voiceover. Recently, Major finished filming “You Don’t Belong Here” a new horror film with Shane West (SAG-AFTRA IA), had their Off-Broadway debut as Romeo in NAATCO’s off-broadway production of *Romeo & Juliet*, and showed off their live-camera skills in the Original Broadway Cast of KPOP! Major can be seen in the CW’s hit series RIVERDALE as Dilton Doiley, and in Netflix’s ATYPICAL as Arlo. In addition to other Broadway, touring, regional, and developmental theatre credits, Major has recurred on multiple Nickelodeon shows, starred in web-series, and hosted an AwesomenessTV game show. Major is a recent graduate of the Carnegie Mellon School of Drama and a member of One Year Lease Theatre Company. Instagram: @Majorly.MC. Website: MajorCurda.Art



NEIL D’ASTOLFO (*Singer, The Rise of the Cats, he/him*) is an actor, writer and comedian who relishes each and every moment he spends at The Project. He most recently spent three seasons as a series regular on Comedy Central’s Emmy-nominated *Stephen Colbert Presents Tooning Out the News* and recurred as Anthony Fauci on Showtime’s *Our Cartoon President*. Other TV and film credits include Max’s *And Just Like That* and Hulu’s *Fire Island*, *High Fidelity* and *The Path*. His critically-acclaimed solo show, *Mister Miss America*, premiered off-Broadway at Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, and earned Neil an Off-Broadway Alliance Award Nomination for his performance. Other theater credits include Classic Stage Company’s *The Comedy of Errors*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* and *Macbeth*. Neil is a house performer at The Upright Citizens Brigade (UCB) and his

short film series, *NORA...*, was a recipient of Film Independent's Fiscal Sponsorship. As a screenwriter, Neil's work has been acknowledged and awarded by the Austin Film Festival, Nashville Film Festival, LaunchPad Screening Writing Competition, etc. Neil received his MFA from Columbia University, and now serves as an adjunct professor at Pace University's BFA Acting Program for Film, TV and Voiceover (FTVC). He has been a proud volunteer at The 52nd Street Project since 2017. WABWAGA!



ANGEL DESAI (*Singer, Hot Tub to Roller Coaster*) has been a volunteer with the 52nd St Project since 2002. Her recent TV credits include “Poker Face”, an upcoming Amazon series, “Blue Bloods”, “Law and Order” (reboot), “For Life”, “NCIS: NOLA”, “FBI: Most Wanted”, “City on a Hill”, “Bull” and many others. Film includes: “*Peas and Carrots*” (upcoming), *klutz.*, “*Lady Apsara*”, *The Oh-Gees*, *This Time Next Tuesday*, *The Clique*, *The War Within*, *Heights*, *Black Knight*, *Robot Stories*. She is the voice of Dana Singh in Hulu's 2nd season of “*Dicktown*” and First Minister Jinn in “*Gears of War*” 4 & 5. Broadway: “*Company*” (2006 Revival). Off-Broadway: MTC, MCC, NYTW, CSC, Playwrights Horizons, The Public/NYSE, The Women's Project, Ma-Yi Theatre Company. Regional: Yale Rep, George St. Playhouse, Berkshire Theater Festival, Old Globe, McCarter Theater, Cincinnati Playhouse, Long Wharf, Arena Stage, Playmakers Rep. Angel co-founded the Asian American Performers Action Coalition, AAPAC, which won a 2020 Obie and a 2022 Tony Award for excellence in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.



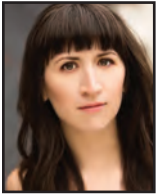
TESS EDWARDS (*Composer/Band, team Diana*) is a second year graduate student in NYU's Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program. This is her first time volunteering with The 52nd Street Project! She is incredibly grateful for the opportunity to work with young people and create music to accompany their marvelous words and stories. She is incredibly excited for the Project Members' hard work to come to life on the stage and hopes you enjoy the show!



MAKIYAH GRAY (*Songmaker*) joined the Project in January, 2024 with her Playmaking debut *The Best Friends*, with dramaturgy and direction by Kaileela Hobby, and starring Christy Escobar and Shaunette Renée Wilson; as a part of A BREATH OF FRESH AIR, *The Breezy Plays*. She made her acting debut at the Project with OFF THE MAP, the July 2024 Place Play. Makiyah can also be heard on the PROJcast, Episode #50 Playmakers Provide A BREATH OF FRESH AIR.



GRACE V. GUILTY-REYES (*Songmaker*) joined the Project January, 2024 with her playwriting debut, *KFC, YOU HAD TO BE THERE*, dramaturgy & direction by Olivia Gilliatt, with Erin Neuffer and Carl Hendrick Louis; as a part of *A BREATH OF FRESH AIR, The Breezy Plays*. Grace can also be heard on the PROJcast, Episode #50 *Playmakers Provide A BREATH OF FRESH AIR*.



KENDAL HARTSE (*Singer, Just Leave Him*) loves The 52nd Street Project and couldn't be happier to be here tonight! Credits include Broadway/National Tours: *The Band's Visit* (Iris), *Summer, Cinderella*, *On a Clear Day...*, *Cabaret*. Select Regional/NYC: *Once* (Reza), *Hedwig and The Angry Inch* (Yitzhak), *Pericles* (Thaisa), *Taming of the Shrew* (Baptista/Lucentio), *Cabaret* (Sally Bowles).

Kendal has developed work with Vineyard Theatre, Roundabout Theatre Company, New York Stage and Film, and Center Theatre Group. She has a BFA from The Boston Conservatory and was a student of Michael Howard.



GREG HILDRETH (*Singer, Motivation*) first started volunteering at The 52nd Street Project ten years ago when he played an electrical outlet who had gas in *Spring Playmaking* 2014. Since then he has participated in playmaking four other times as well as many other programs at the Project. He was a Shakespeare coach at the Project for the Teen Ensemble production of *A Midsummer Nights Dream*

in 2015 and *The Comedy of Errors* in 2017. Greg has multiple credits on Broadway, film and television.



BETSY HOGG (*Singer, This Is My Life*) has been an enthusiastic volunteer at The 52nd Street Project since 2019. She's been in class with Playmaking, Dancemaking, Artmaking, and Stage Combat; in production as a crew member and stage manager; and on stage as a dancer, a fighter, a harried assistant, and an ancient/formerly magical snowy owl, among other juicy roles. Outside of the Project,

she is a professional actor who's been seen on Broadway, TV, Film, and at regional theaters across the country. Betsy's thrilled to be part of this show & proud to be Samaria's Smart Partner.



ERIKA JI (*Composer/Band, team Makiyah*) began her adventures at The 52nd Street Project with Songmaking in Fall 2020, composing music for "Night Time Snacks" by Aiden. In Spring 2022, she was delighted to return as composer and music director for the eight Playmaking plays of "Penny For Your Thoughts." She's had a blast writing with Makiyah this fall, and she's excited for you to hear two

of Makiyah's incredible songs tonight! Thank you to Makiyah for being a fantastic creative collaborator, and to Lora Lee, Angel, Garrett, Avi, and The 52nd Street Project team for bringing these songs to life!



GARRETT KIM, (*Program Director*, he/him) is a theater-maker and educator based in New York City. He joined the staff in 2015 after interning and volunteering at The Project. He has taught at First Stage Children's Theater in Milwaukee for their Theatre Academy and their Next Steps program for students on the autism spectrum. As a playwright, Garrett has developed work with Ars Nova, Rattlestick Theater, The New Harmony Project, The Parsnip Ship, Leviathan Lab, and Piper Theatre Company, to name a few. When he's not involved with theater-related shenanigans, Garrett can be found tending his plants, cooking, or playing tabletop games with his friends. B.A. Fordham University.



KIRSTIN LOUIE (*Singer*, *True Potential*, she/her) is overjoyed to be returning to the Five Angels Theater for her second program with The 52nd Street Project, premiering this original song by Julian & James. She was previously seen sharing the stage with Jai-Lyzz in *THE THRILL OF THE FIGHT*. Other New York credits include diplomat Lulu Chen in Broadway's *LIFE OF PI*. Many thanks to The 52nd Street Project for playing a special role in making Hell's Kitchen feel like home



RHYS LUKE (*Sound Engineer*; he/they) is super excited to be returning to The 52nd Street Project for *Music To My Ears*. He was a summer 2024 intern at the Project, working on *Off the Map* and *Look Who's Talking*. He is beyond proud of all of the Project members this week and is looking forward to seeing their journeys here at the Project continue.

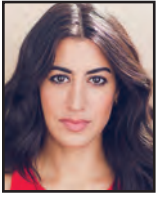


TOMMY MCDOWELL (*Singer*, *Left Sock Protest*) is elated to be performing in his third (!!!) Songmaking concert at The 52nd Street Project, following the [untitled] Songmaking concert of 2017 and *JELLY OF MY JAMS* in 2022. The 52nd Street Project is one of his absolute favorite things to do in NYC, both as a performer and as an audience member. Other select credits include First Us National Tours of: *American Idiot* (Swing), Roundabout Theatre Company's *Cabaret* (Max/Herman, Cliff u/s), The 50th Anniversary Tour of *Jesus Christ Superstar* (Peter), and *A Year With Frog & Toad* (Snail). Big thanks to Garrett, Avi and the rest of the AMAZING team at 52nd Street!



JONJA LEON MERCK (*Band/Percussion*) is a music director, pianist, composer, and conductor from Berlin, Germany. His music direction credits include *The Silver Child*, *An Artist Now*, *Promenade*, *Rent*, *Songs for a New World*, and *Show & Tell*. As a composer, his work has been featured at Joe's Pub, Soho Playhouse, and the Fisher Center at Bard. Jonja holds a BA in Jazz Piano Performance and Theatre & Performance from Bard College, and an MFA from

NYU's Musical Theatre Writing Program. He is also the recipient of the Margaret Creal Shafer Prize in Performance and Composition. @jonjamerck



SAHAR MILANI (*Singer, Only My Mom*) is thrilled to be back at the Project performing another one of Diana's genius pieces. Sahar acted in Diana's play "Two Different People with Their Own Lives", a riveting tale of the bonds of friendship, part of 2023's A WHALE OF A TALE!, *Plays That Make A Splash*. Other Project credits include JELLY OF MY JAMS Songmaking Concert and JUST CHILLIN', A *Very Cool Benefit*. Recent NYC credits include productions at The Public Theater, Ars Nova, Joe's Pub, PAC NYC, and the Noor Theater.



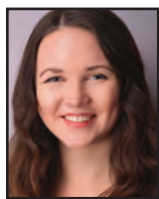
BELÉN MOYANO (*Singer, An Actual Emotional Song*) is super excited to return to The 52nd Street Project! She last appeared live in 2019's Songmaking Concert: TAKE IT FROM THE TOP, performing "Spirit Skeleton" by Antonella & Lydia Breckon. The song still lives rent free in her mind, especially after reprising the song in the 2020 Virtual Gala: GAME CHANGERS. In the 2021 Virtual Gala: HIDDEN GEMS, she sang "I Don't Want You to Go, You Can Go," by Jai-Lyzz & Julio Vaquero Ramos. Belén is thrilled to make more magical memories with the vibrant imaginations of young composers, and to acquire another earworm that she'll undoubtedly hum for years to come.



JAMES POWERS (*Composer/Band, team Julian*) is a composer, lyricist, Hamilton T-shirt seller, DnD player, rule follower (sometimes...), and performer who tells audacious and emotional stories about what it means to be human. His work has been performed at Theatre Untitled, Hamlet Isn't Dead, and the Broke People Play Festival at NYU. As an educator, he has also worked with the Play Group Theatre to create shows for young actors and audiences. He holds an MFA from the Graduate Musical Theatre Writing Program at NYU and BFA from the University of Montevallo. Shout out to LJ for being a rock star!



ROOK SHAW (*Lighting Assistant, they/them*) is absolutely thrilled to be making their debut at the Project! A recent college grad who moved to Brooklyn from the Bay Area just last year, they have been touched by the warm welcome they've received from the NYC theater community. When not holding a lighting plot, you might also find them writing fiction, drawing cartoons, going on late-night walks, and eating stir fry directly from the pan.



SARAH SLIPP (*Composer/Band, team Grace*) is a composer, orchestrator and music teacher from New Brunswick, Canada. She holds a Bachelor of Music in flute performance from Acadia University and an MFA in Musical Theatre Composition from NYU Tisch. Sarah has written the music for a variety of productions, most notably for *Bend Toward the Light* with collaborator Bryce Palmer (2025 Syracuse New Works, New Voices Festival). This is Sarah's debut with The 52nd Street Project, and she felt drawn to the Songmaking program specifically as she loves working with young writers who often use their imagination without hesitation. Sarah has learned so much from working with her incredible partner, Grace, and she is so excited for you all to hear their work.



BRI WEINTRAUB (*Stage Manager*) has been working in theater since she was in 2nd grade. She completed her MFA in Technical Production in spring of 2020 and has worked in educational theatre throughout her career. Prior to moving to New York, Bri worked in dance, concert production, events, and theatre, and is excited to come back to her ultimate goal of creating theatre while working with young people.



JULIAN WILDER (*Songmaker*) joined the Project in the fall of 2023 with his playwriting debut *NOT MY SPRINKLES*, dramaturgy and direction by Nolan Doran, with Omar Metwally & Bill Camp; as a part of *FOOD FOR THOUGHT*, *The Scrumptious Plays*. Julian can also be heard on the *PROJcast*, Episode #48 *Playmakers of FOOD FOR THOUGHT*.



The Songmaking Program is made possible with public funds from The New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. The 52nd Street Project is a member of Art/NY and Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for the American theatre.

The 52nd Street Project gratefully acknowledges the support of the following foundations & corporations: Alliance Bernstein, Bank of America, Bulls Head Foundation, Inc., Cantor Fitzgerald, Carol M. & Stephen E. Canter Family Foundation, Consolidated Edison, Corcoran Group Cares, Estee Lauder, Flagstar Bank, Frederick Loewe Foundation, Howard Ashman Trust for Theater Arts, Jeffrey Seller Family Foundation, JPMorgan Chase, Maxine and Irving Castle Foundation, Morgan Stanley, P.S. 111 Adolph S. Ochs, Ruth Nelson Family Foundation, Susquehanna Foundation, The Feldstein Foundation, The Henlopen Foundation, The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, West Side Community Fund, The Shubert Foundation, The Walt Disney Company, Tiger Baron Foundation. We also acknowledge the following individual donors (over \$200) to The 52nd Street Project:

Beth & Ray Abbott	Jeannie & Jim Gaffigan	Carol Ochs
Sandra and Murray Abeles	Tina Galley	Jacki Ochs & Jan Kroeze
Peter Ackerman	Rose Gasner & Larry Chertoff	Margaret & Peter O'Brien
Jesus Alvarez	Liz Giamatti	Rachel O'Connor
Elisa Atti & Evan Handler	Glen Gillen	Margaret Odette
Anne Bacon	Emily Giske & Annie Washburn	Anne O'Sullivan
Becky & Dylan Baker	Claudia & Wagner Gomez	Sara Paar
Beth Barry and Daniel Sussman	Judy Gold	F. Richard Pappas
Jessica Bauman & Ben Posel	Tony Goldwyn & Jane Musky	Courtney & Lowell Pettit
Carol Bell	Kelly and Lou Gonda	Ira Pittelman
Lisa Benavides & Tim Blake Nelson	Shari Goodstein	Sue Poulin
Gavin Berger & Craig Berggren	Stephen Graham	Karen Powell
Judy & Sam Berger	Kimberly Grigsby	Christopher Randolph
Stephanie Berger & Paul King	Karen Hauser & Warren Leight	Helen & Peter Randolph
Elizabeth & Eric Berman	Annie & David Hausmann	Andrew Reynolds
Lewis Black	Jessica Hecht & Adam Bernstein	Peter Robbins
Buzz Bovshow	Todd Herman	Lynne Rosenberg
Matthew Brewer & Kevin Lynch	Helen & Patrick Herssens	Mary Ann and Steven Rosenberg
Becky Browder & Ted Neustadt	Amy Herzig	Laura & David Ross
Denise Burse & Peter Jay Fernandez	Jane Hirschmann	Mary Beth Roth
Bettina S. Buschel	Tara Hobby	Shirley Rumierk & Armando Riesco
Carl Capotorto	Vicki & Craig Holleman	Laura Sametz & Anton Fig
Chris Ceraso	Katy Homans & Patterson Sims	Gail Samuel & William Christian
Lauren & Tony Cesario	Kathleen Hughes	Karin & Tom Schall
Jill Chalsty	Nancy Jacobs & David Peterkin	Sylvia Shepard & Willy Holtzman
Rachel Chanoff	Andrea Johnson	Dr. Silk and Mrs. Cerdeiras-Silk
Kyung Choi & Peter Bordes	Laura Jones	Valerie Simmons
Rob Cohen	Matthew Jones	Jenny & Jon Steingart
Ruth Cohen & Bob Usdin	Katie & Douglas Jordan	Andrew Stockel
Sherry Cohen	Douglas Kabel	Irwin and Mary Stockel
Marya Cohn & Tjebbo Penning	Cynthia Kaplan & David Froelich	Neil Stockel
Bill Condon	Eric Karpeles & Mike Sell	Robert Stockel
Flanders Cook	Eileen Katz & Jordan Siev	Susanna Styron
Jace Cook	Mary Kong & Sol Reischer	Jenni Swan
Megan Cramer	Alan Krevis & Gary Horowitz	Richard Sweren
Billy Crudup	Micah Kroeze	Mary Lou Teel
Cathy Dantchik	Ellen Kroll	Edith Thurber & Kevin O'Rourke
Carolyn DeSena	Florence Lau	Merritt Tilney & Douglas M. Kaden
Daiva Deupree	Jen� LeBlanc & Willie Reale	Cynthia Vance-Abrams
Billy Dreskin	Dr. David Lee & Dr. Daniele Huntington	Laura Valeroso & David Seidman
Rebecca & Richard Dresser	Kara Lentz	Wendy vanden Heuvel & Brad Coley
Patty Dryden & Brian Siberell	Marsue & Peter MacNicol	Alexandra Vassilaros
Michaelene & Jonathan Durst	Jane & Greg MacPherson	Sarah Vigoda
Chrysti & David Eigenberg	Mitch Marois	Susan Vitucci
Wendy Ettinger	Frances McDormand & Joel Coen	Mary Pat Walsh
Kyle Fletcher	Josie Merck	Vicki & Mark Whatley
Karina Fox	No�l & Joe Mihalow	Brenda Wehle & John C. Lynch
Angelina Fiordellisi & Matt Williams	Roseline Michael Neveling	Lauren Weiner
Lindsay Fram & Mason Pettit	& Dennis Neveling	Frank Wood & Kay Gayner
Sally Froelich	John and Marjorie North	Carole Yass

List current as of April 5, 2024