

THE 52ND STREET PROJECT PRESENTS

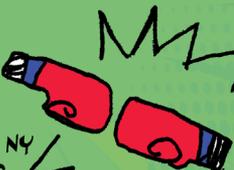
TAKE DOWN!

HIYAAA!

THE 2026 STAGE COMBAT PLAYS

ONE NIGHT ONLY!
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2026
@ 7:30PM

FIVE ANGELS
THEATER
789 10TH AVE. NEW YORK, NY
BETWEEN 52ND & 53RD



DS ME!

DON'T MESS WITH THESE GUNS!

He's so NONCHALANT!

TETO APPROVED!

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, NATALIE HIRSCH
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CAROL OCHS
ASSOCIATE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR, KAT ALMIRANÉZ
PROGRAM DIRECTOR, GARRETT KIM

ARTWORK BY SMART PARTNERS HANNAH & KENDALL

“TAKE DOWN” Production Staff

Class Volunteers

Raquel Chavez, Mat Hostetler,
Kirstin Louie, Tommy McDowell,
Ronald Peet, Aishling Pembroke,
Matthew Provenza, Anna Telfer,
& Sharmarke Yusuf

Set Designer

Burke Browne

Stage Management

Amy Tedeschi

Lighting Designer

Stuart Green

Sound Designer

Bri Weintraub

House Management

John Sheehy & Carol Ochs

Flyer/Program Art

Smart Partners Hannah & Kendal

Livestream Team

Director: Diego Caoili

Cam Ops: Naseem A. & Rebeca V.

Teen Counselor

Loyal J.

Stage Combat Intern

Jenna Lizasuain

The 52nd Street Project Staff

Kat Almirañez, Associate Artistic Director

Avi A. Amon, Musical Director

Ahmed Attia, Director of Development*

Liz Bell, Clinical Consultant

Diego Caoili, Production Manager

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, Director of Design and Production

Chyanne Pena, Operations Manager*

Charlie Zuckerman, Education Assistant

Iris A. Brown, Graphic Design Consultant

**Project Alumni*

And an extra special thanks to Sharmarke Yusuf,
Raquel Chaves, & Owen Kalmbach.

See the rest of the program!

Scan the QR code at right to see the full program,
which includes **biographies and photos of the
performers, volunteers, and the designers!**



TAKE DOWN: STAGE COMBAT 2026

Stage Combat Instructor

Kerry Warren

Program Director

Garrett Kim

AWARD THIEF

Fight choreography by Jaelannie R., with Aishling Pembroke

Ayla, pop artist..... Jaelannie R.

Wings, plus one to the Grammy's..... Aishling Pembroke

WAIT? HOW DOES A KID HAVE A GRAMMY

Fight choreography by LJ W., with Mat Hostetler

Zain, 7 y/o, watches too much anime LJ W.

Burglar, has no money, that's why he's stealing Mat Hostetler

LEMONADE STAND

Fight choreography by Grace G., with Kirstin Louie

Katie, a teenage girl who is desperate for money Grace G.

Sharron Debussy, very mean old lady Kirstin Louie

THE COMPETITION...

Fight choreography by Khloe C., with Anna Telfer

Skylet, co-captain for cheer Khloe C.

Amanda, co-captain for cheer Anna Telfer

SPACE BRAT, OR ALL FOR ONE, ONE FOR WIFI

Fight choreography by Milo P., with Tommy McDowell

Jack Richman, richest kid, spoiled brat, parents own spaceship Milo P.

Captain Sparkles, spaceship pilot Tommy McDowell

UNTITLED

Fight choreography by Nezai D., with Matt Provenza

Kobe, professional basketball player Nezai D.

Head Coach Greg, basketball coach Matt Provenza

THAT'S MY CAKE

Fight choreography by Darius B., with Ronald Peet

Leo, pastry chef Darius B.

Alex, pastry chef Ronald Peet

The 52nd Street Project is a non-profit organization that brings children from the Hell's Kitchen neighborhood together with professional theater artists to create original theater. **TAKE DOWN** is a Stage Combat show, one of our New Platforms series. In it, young members learned some of the basic moves of Fight Choreography and created short plays in which to frame them. Although the plays have the veneer of violence, the ironic twist is that the performers are trained to take care of each other and avoid harm of any kind. Tonight you are viewing the results of this training.

The 52nd Street Project Board of Directors

Lisa Benavides-Nelson
Rachel Chanoff
Billy Crudup
Cathy Dantchik, co-chair
Carolyn DeSena
Louis P. Friedman, co-chair
Robert Goldberg
Annie Hausmann
Natalie Hirsch
Korey Jackson

Valerie Kay
Micah Kroeze
Noël Mihalow
Carol Ochs
Margaret Odette
Willie Reale, founder
Shirley Rumierk, alumni member
José Soto, Jr., alumni member
Wendy vanden Heuvel
Alexandra Vassilaros

Mark Whatley



The Stage Combat program is made possible with public funds from The New York State Council on the Arts, with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York Legislature, 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.

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

Or make a gift via



@Fifty-Two-Project

WHAT'S COMING UP?

THE 52ND STREET
PROJECT
PRESENTS

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR
NATALIE HIRSCH

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CAROL DESS

PROGRAM DIRECTOR
GARRETT KIM



ARTWORK BY LYNN MARIE ROSENBERG

SAY
THAT
AGAIN

THE 2026
REPLAY
PROGRAM

ADMISSION FREE!

52PROJECT.ORG
FOR TICKETS & INFO

FIVE ANGELS THEATER

789 10TH AVE.
NEW YORK, NY
BETWEEN 52ND & 53RD

STAGED READINGS ON **FRIDAY,**
FEBRUARY 20TH, 7:30PM

COOL STUFF ON SALE IN THE LOBBY!

Flyer Bars	\$ 2 . 5 0
Boxed Water	\$ 2 . 5 0
Vassilaros & Sons Coffee	\$ 2 . 5 0

Project Gear

Ear-Things™ (New!)	\$ 10 . 0 0
Mugs	\$ 10 . 0 0
Thermal Mugs	\$ 15 . 0 0
WABWAGA T-shirts	\$ 15 . 0 0
Sweatshirts	\$ 35 . 0 0
Adidas Quarter-Zip Athletic Shirts	\$ 40 . 0 0

BE ON THE LOOKOUT FOR INTERNS!

If you know of any college or graduate students who might enjoy working and playing with us for a semester, please have them contact Caylyn Creager (creager@52project.org). We are currently looking for interns for the Summer and Fall of 2026. Thanks!



BIOGRAPHIES



Darius B. (*Project Member*) joined the Project in September 2024 with his playmaking debut, *CORY & MICHEL TOGETHER*, with dramaturgy by Michael Propster & directed by Marchánt Davis, starring Grantham Coleman & Paton Ashbrook, as a part of TO THE MOON, *Plays That Blast Off*. Darius made his acting debut in *PURPLE IS THE FASTEST COLOR*, with Ronald Peet, who also wrote and directed as a part of ONE OF A KIND, *The Quirky Plays*, the 2025 One-on-Ones. Darius can also be heard on the PROJcast, Episode 53, “Playmakers Go TO THE MOON.”



Khloe C. (*Project Member*) joined the Project in the fall of 2022. Her first play was *DREAM COME TRUE*; dramaturged by, directed by and starring Krystal Lucas, with James Yaegashi, as part of the production OFF THE WALL, *The Zany Plays*, in December 2022. Khloe debuted as a performer with her piece “*The Reopened Circus*,” with Stephanie Lane, as a part of WITH THE FLOW, Dancemaking 2024. She starred in Kerry Warren’s *BIRD HAUS*, which Kerry also directed and co-starred in for ONE OF A KIND, *The Quirky Play*, 2025 One-on-Ones. Khloe can be heard on the PROJcast, Episode 41, “Zany Playmakers.”



Raquel Chavez (*In-class Volunteer, Team Jaelannie*) is an actor, director and accordion-dabbler from the Bay Area. Most recent Project shows: performer, PUNCH IT UP, Stage Combat 2025; actor, A BREATH OF FRESH AIR, The Breezy Plays, spring Playmaking 2024. NYU Grad Alum. Co-producer of the ongoing Verbatim Salon at Theatre Row @verbatim.theatre. Currently in Antigone, This Play I Read in High School at the Public Theater. So excited for Jaelannie !!



Nezai D. (*Project Member*) joined the Project in January 2025 with his Playmaking debut, *DREAMS*, dramaturgy and direction by Christian DeMarais, starring Michael Braun, Marinda Anderson, & George Babiak, as a part of ON TOP OF THE WORLD, *The Triumphant Plays*. He made his performing debut in Sathya Sridharan’s *MIKEY MASHBURN RUNS THE FLOOR*, directed by and costarring Mitchell Winter as a part of ONE OF A KIND, *The Quirky Play*, the 2025 One-on-Ones. Nezai can also be heard on the PROJcast, Episode 55, “Worldly Playmakers.”



Grace G. (*Project Member*) joined the Project January, 2024, with her play, *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 was a Songmaker in 2024 for the concert MUSIC TO MY EARS. She partnered with composer Sarah Slipp on the songs, “Left Sock Protest,” originally sung by Tommy McDowell, and reprised at our 2025 gala by Jin Ha; “An Actual Emotional Song,” sung by Belén Moyano; and “The Rise of the Cats,” sung by Neil D’Astolfo. She made her acting debut in the summer of 2025 alongside Molly Carden in the full-length devised piece, GOING, GOING, GONE, *A Place Play*. Grace can also be heard on the PROJcast, Episode #50 Playmakers Provide A BREATH OF FRESH AIR.



Stuart Green (*Lighting Designer*) is an Actor, Writer and Director. He was recently seen at The 52nd Street Project in various roles and on the crew for the December 2024 Playmaking production, TO THE MOON, *Plays That Blast Off*. He is delighted to be back working with this wonderful group! Fun fact: Dominick Dunne once said Stuart reminded him of Keanu Reeves. www.Stuart-Green.com



Mat Hostetler (*Performer, Team LJ*) is thrilled to be back at the Project with his favorite people in the world! Recent Project: *Actor, SWAMPY FRIENDS*, by Nicholas: ON TOP OF THE WORLD, Playmaking Spring 2025; In-class volunteer, SETTING THE TONE, Character Workshop 2025; *Director/Dramaturg, DREAMS COME TRUE* by Walter: FOOD FOR THOUGHT, Playmaking Fall 2023. Education: MFA, National Theatre Conservatory. BA, University of Kansas. Mat lives in Hell’s Kitchen with his wife, Ali and their adorable dog, Mia. Mat is a member of Actor’s Equity Association.



Loyal J. (*Teen Counselor*) joined the Project in 2019 with his debut play BULLY TO NERD, with dramaturg/director Cody Wilson, starring Sullivan Jones and Margaret Odette, as part of OUT OF THE BLUE, *The Unpredictable Plays*. His next play was ENEMIES 2 FRIENDS, with dramaturg/director Christian DeMarais, starring Annabelle Cousins & Conor Proft as a part of our Pandemic Playmaking over zoom. Loyal’s performing debut was his own spoken-word piece “Flashback!” directed by JJ Wilks, in FLYING SOLO 2023. He starred in his own play *THE FLIGHT*, with dramaturgy/director, co-starring Marchant Davis, as a part of SKELETON IN THE CLOSET, Playback 2024. He can be heard on the PROJcast Episode 49, “Writers & Performers of SKELETON IN THE CLOSET.”



Garrett David 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 written several plays for The Project, and he has developed work with Page 73, 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.



Jenna Lizasuain (*Crew*) This is my first show with The 52nd Street Project, and I am beyond excited to be a part of it! It has been amazing to see each group progress throughout the program and see all of the ways the Project encourages individuality and growth. I cannot wait to see the stories each group comes up with and all of the creative ways they incorporate the Stage Combat choreography into their scenes and their individual characters!



Kirstin Louie (*Performer, Team Grace*) is overjoyed to be returning to the Five Angels Theater for her third program with The 52nd Street Project, sharing the stage with Grace this time! She was previously seen performing with Jai-Lyzz in THE THRILL OF THE FIGHT and delivering LJ's original song in MUSIC TO MY EARS. She is a proud resident of Hell's Kitchen and is grateful to The 52nd Street Project community for making the neighborhood feel like home.



Tommy McDowell (*Performer, Team Milo*) is ecstatic to be volunteering for his fourth time (!!!) at The 52nd Street Project, following the [untitled] Songmaking concert of 2017, JELLY OF MY JAMS in 2022 and MUSIC TO MY EARS in 2024. The 52nd Street Project is one of his absolute favorite things to do in NYC, both as a performer and as an audience member. Big thanks to Garrett, Kerry and the rest of the AMAZING team at 52nd Street!



Milo P. (*Project Member*) joined the Project in January, 2024 with his playwriting debut, *THE HIDDEN SCIENTIST*, starring Forrest Malloy and Emma Ramos, dramaturgy and direction by Michael Propster, as a part of A BREATH OF FRESH AIR, *The Breezy Plays*. He made his performance debut with his own piece “Zeke,” a 15 year-old hunter, in SETTING THE TONE, Character Workshop 2025. He choreographed and performed “Goofy Enemies” alongside Bito Boucher as a part of TWIST & SHOUT, Dancemaking 2025. Milo can also be heard on the PROJcast, Episode #50, “Playmakers Provide A BREATH OF FRESH AIR.



Ronald Peet (*Performer, Team Darius*) is a marathoner, meditator, and SmartPartner. Recently wrapping up a critically acclaimed run of Nazareth Hassan’s *Practice* at Playwrights Horizons and recognized by the American Theater Wing with an Obie Award for his work in Raja Feather Kelly’s *The Fires* at Soho Rep, he can currently be seen on Apple TV Plus’ *Bad Monkey* fighting for ecological justice, riding bicycles around the Bahamas (his real life birthplace!) and vibing hard with a capuchin monkey. He has been a fan of and involved with The 52nd St. Project since 2018 and a fan of Darius since 2025. Proud uncle, brother, son, grandson, godfather, godson and friend/family member. Amor Fatil! Wabi Sabi!



Aishling Pembroke (*Performer, Team Jaelannie*) is so excited to be a part of Dancemaking with this amazing group! Some other shows she has been involved with here at the Project are “*The Argent Life*,” as part of SEEING STARS, Stage Combat 2019; Project Exchange 2019, Win Playmaking; “*2013 Rematch*,” as part of KNUCKLE SANDWICH, Stage Combat 2022; *Happier Than Ever*, by Molly Carden, as part of ARE WE THERE YET, The Location Plays, August 2022; “*Friends Going Through Life*,” with Samaria, as a part of WITH THE FLOW, *Dancemaking 2024*; “*Misery Loves Company*” by Logan, as a part of TELL IT LIKE IT IS, Replay 2025.



Matt Provenza (*Performer, Team Neza!*) is a SAG-AFTRA/AEA actor originally from Detroit, Michigan. After participating as a volunteer in Playmaking this past fall at the Project, he is excited to be taking part in the Stage Combat program!



Jaelannie R. (Project Member) joined the Project in the spring of 2023. Her first play was *ENCOURAGE*; dramaturged by Ana Gonzalez-Soto and directed by Alex O'Daly; starring Jake Pino & Lynne Marie Rosenberg, as part of the production *A WHALE OF A TALE, Plays That Make a Splash*. Jaelannie was a Songmaker in the fall of 2023, collaborating with composer Paige Menneci on the songs “*Hi, I’m Rosie*,” performed by Angel DeSai; “*Is It My Time Yet?*” performed by Ali Ewoldt; and “*Jumping Frogs*,” performed by Mallory Portnoy; all as a part of the *TUNE IN* Songmaking concert. She made her performing debut with *HUMANS ARE TRICKY*, written by, directed by, and co-starring Molly Carden as a part of *LOOK WHO’S TALKING, Plays That Speak to You*. Jaelannie created and performed the piece “*Delilah*,” with the support of Precious Sipin for *SETTING THE TONE*, Character Workshop, 2025. She can also be heard on the *PROJcast* episodes 42 & 47.



Amy Tedeschi (Stage Manager/Board Operator) is thrilled to make her debut at The 52nd Street Project as a stage manager and board op! She came to the Project because of its dedication to empowering young artists to tell their own stories, and is excited to support the kids as they take creative risks, build confidence, and collaborate boldly! She is especially excited to watch them dive into the world of Stage Combat and learn fun and safe ways to express themselves.



Julian “LJ” W. (Project Member) 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 became a Songmaker in 2024 teaming up with composer James Powers on the songs “*Motivation*,” sung by Greg Hildreth; “*True Potential*,” sung by Major Curda; and “*Just Leave Him*,” sung by Kendal Hartse, which was then reprised at our *DRAWING THE LINE* gala, where it was performed by Taylor Trench. Julian made his acting debut in Sam Gravitte’s *ON SNAP!*, which Sam also wrote, directed and co-starred in for *ONE OF A KIND, The Quirky Plays*, the 2025 One-on-Ones. Julian can also be heard on the *PROJcast*, Episode #48 Playmakers of *FOOD FOR THOUGHT*.



Kerry Warren (Lead Instructor) a NYC-based actor, teaching artist, and advocate for teaching artists and arts education as the former Co-Executive Director of the national nonprofit (TAG) the Teaching Artist Guild. She is excited to return to direct stage combat for The 52nd Street Project, where she began as a volunteer in 2016. She has diverse roles, including Smart Partner, Playwright and the *WIN Exchange* teaching artist. kerrywarren.com



Sharmarke Yusuf (*In-class Volunteer, Team Darius*) is an actor, poet, playwright, and filmmaker. He graduated from the Boston Conservatory at Berklee with a BFA in Contemporary Theater. His work seeks to inspire people to find freedom and expand consciousness. Off-Broadway: *The Tragedy of Keyshawn*, *Last Prince of East Flatbush* (The Public Theater, s/r). Regional: *K-I-S-S-I-N-G* (The Huntington, Elliot Norton Award Nomination for Outstanding Leading Performance), *BLKS* (SpeakEasy Stage Company, Elliot Norton Award Winner for Outstanding Performance by an Actor). TV: *Castle Rock* (Netflix/Hulu). Instagram: @sharmarke_y

