WHERE THE KNOT ENDS
The Teen Ensemble’s Transcontinental Tour


For many years, The 52nd Street Project’s Teen Ensemble has performed full-length Shakespearean plays at the end of its two-year cycle. This year our artistic staff decided that the current Ensemble was up to a different sort of challenge: devising a full-length show all on their own. The result, after months of writing and rehearsing, was called Where the Knot Ends.

The show had its first performances on June 21 and 22 at our own Five Angels Theater. The Ensemble then packed up and flew to California for a performance at Z-Below in San Francisco on June 21, and then a final show in the small and scenic coastal town of Bolinas, CA on July 2nd.

The whole creative journey was exhausting and exhilarating. The teens expressed themselves in their writing and performing to a degree not often seen at the Project. Our audiences saw the concerns of today’s young people described in honest and raw terms. The ACTUAL journey across the country was a wonderfully tiring and terrific experience as well. The teens walked around Haight-Ashbury, Chinatown, and the Mission District, visited the California Academy of Science, saw the Gay Pride Parade, toured the Bay Area by boat, and ate at many fine restaurants, including In-N-Out, the renowned burger chain. As exciting as San Francisco was, the group was impressed by the charming surfing town of Bolinas, where they visited an artistic knot exhibition, bought t-shirts, and looked for shells and stones along the beach.

We couldn’t have done this amazing expedition without our California friends and hosts: Commonweal, Jenepher Stowell, Paull Hejinian, Eric Karpeles & Mike Sell, Valerie Kay, Shauna Marshall & Bob Hirsch, Aenor Sawyer & Melinda Griffith, Wendy vanden Heuvel & Brad Coley, Tracy Wan & Carl Creager, and Zspace.

GRB

A prime spot for the Pride Parade!

“The Stage” in Bolinas, which was actually the home of Aenor Sawyer and Melinda Griffith. Our young actors could see the Pacific Ocean as they rehearsed.

From the New York performances, a scene that was literally about finding “Where The Knot Ends.”

Our old pal, Frances McDormand, came to see WTKE in Bolinas. Fran appeared in Genesis Hires’s Playmaking show in 2012, and they had a nice reunion.
OUT OF THE BLUE:
THE UNPREDICTABLE PLAYS
THE SPRING, 2019 PLAYMAKING SHOWS

As most P.U. readers know, the first step at The 52nd Street Project is Playmaking, in which our newest members, aged 9-11, take a class in playwriting and have their work fully realized on our stage. On this page and the next are some glimpses of the performances March 22-24.

THE DESIGN AND TECH TEAM
Zonia Tsang ........................................... Composer
John Beltre, M.E. Guadalupe Rubi, Crystal Thompson .................. Costume Designers
Greg Macpherson ...................... Lighting Designer
Kaylie Groff ................................... Sound Designer
Margaret Gleberman ..................... Stage Manager

THE BRIDGEHAMPTON HOSTS
Alex Gersten-Vassilaros, Cathy Dantchik, and Leslie Dantchik.

My Friend/Enemy, by Adolfo Sinchi, starred Jose-Maria Aguilá and Ross Cowan as classmates who pray for, and receive, super powers. Austin Regan directed it and staged a three-person melee we will never forget.

Denisse Xolocotzi wrote The Lies, in which a chicken and a kangaroo (Olivia Gilliatt and Arlo Hill) conquered their fears and made a pizza. Leta Renée-Alan directed.

Meredith Garretson and Jennifer Ikeda were a princess and a commoner who found common ground in Ayah Musa’s Acceptation, directed by Alexandra O’Daly.

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Many years ago, before the 52nd Street Project had its own theater, the great Kevin Roach designed a set for us that was extremely portable and could be set up in any theater. It included a projection screen, two doors, and a small “Laugh-In” window (search “Laugh-In Joke Wall” on YouTube for clarification). The Instant Set served us for the last 25 years. Over time, we added a new screen and digital projector. We also covered the shiny flats with velcro-receptive material to accommodate foam-core props. (The original flats, inspired by Colorforms playsets, were designed for vinyl cut-outs. Baffled? See “Colorforms toys” on Google).

Soon after moving into the Five Angels theater, we realized that it was time to replace our bedraggled old set. After much mulling, musing, and spitballing, we realized that the old set worked pretty well and that our new one was not going to be radically different. So, our friend Burke Brown drew up a new design that would take the old set a few small steps into the future. Thanks to The Jean and Louis Dreyfus Foundation and Neil Mazzella and his company Hudson Scenic Studios, we didn’t have to pay a cent! (Hudson Scenic actually built the original set a quarter-century ago). We finally used Fivesy’s House, as Burke calls it, for the first time on the Block Island One-on-Ones.

What’s different? The changes are subtle to the casual theater-goer but sweeping for those of us that put together our shows. Most obviously, there are more small doors that can be used for scenic changes, prop deployment, or even character entrances (it is now possible for actors to climb in and out of the larger windows). The new flats stand in a flatter profile, allowing for better sightlines, and they are now 9 feet tall, matching the height of our screen. The flats can also be repositioned and even flipped vertically, making it possible to place doors and windows in a wide range of configurations. Best of all, Fivesy’s House is shiny and new.

So, come and see our new set in action! And thank you, Kevin, The Dreyfus Foundation, Burke, Neil, Glenn, Carrie, Helen, and everyone at Hudson Scenic! GRB
Over nine weeks of classes led by Elli Stovall Brown (who was assisted by Garrett David Kim), 9 young members learned how to create and choreograph dance pieces. On June 7, the kids showed their stuff at the Five Angels with their adult partners in a program called *Step On It*. These photos offer but a glimpse of the dynamism on display that night.

1. Alex Torres and Mitchell Winter in *Worship*.
2. The entire company in *Friendzy*.
3. Cassidy Wingate and Rosneyri Rosario in *La Vie - Life*.
4. Daniel Henk and Ashley Marie-Ortiz in *One Longing Moment*.
5. Love Jones and Maryn Pearl Shaw in *Best Friends*.
8. Xavier Espinal and Gardiner Comfort in *Space Adventure Odyssey*.
10. Quilvis Medina and Carrigan O’Brian in *Cleaning It Out*.
Each year, in the first week of May, The 52nd Street Project holds its annual benefit gala. An integral part of our fundraising operation, the gala brings in a big chunk of our annual budget. This year’s event, featuring songs written by young Project members and entitled Power In Numbers, raised over $400,000. We are super-grateful to all those who made it possible, including our guests of honor, “power couple” Eliza Baldi and David Costabile, the guest composers and artists Lilli Cooper, Brian d’Arcy James, Kim Jinhyoung, Jarrett Murray, Sean P. Pallatoni, Ronald Peet, Sharone Sayegh, David Andrés Trujillo-Tapias, Natalie Walker, and Richard C. Walter, our musicians, Doug Derryberry, Chris Schultz, Sam Weber, our hosts John Ellison Conlee and Joel de la Fuente, and our awesome music director Avi A. Amon. Last and definitely not least, we aim our highest praise at our youthful lyricists, Nyla Blake-Soden, Amari Dubose, Kiara Figueroa, Christian Santoni, and Jayleen Velez. There were too many great moments for one small sidebar, but we thought we’d show you some of the highlights.

1. The honorees, Eliza Baldi and David Costabile, at the podium.
2. Christian Santoni and Brian d’Arcy James take a bow.
3. Kiara Figueroa watches Sharone Sayegh do her song City Life.
4. Amari DuBose introduces his song.
5. Ronald Peet singing Amari’s Freedom.
6. Jayleen Velez introduces Broadway star Lilli Cooper (once a Project kid herself!)
7. Doris Alcantara, a Project college graduate, brings the house down as she expresses her experience with her deafness.

Hi, P.U. Readers! 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 year-round.

$50,000 ............................................the Pinkerton Foundation
$50,000 ..................................seller-Lehrer Family Foundation
$25,000 ......................................Cantor Fitzgerald Relief Fund
$25,000 ..............................................the Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, General Operating Support
$25,000 ...........................................the Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, for the Fund for Future Campaign support over 3 years
$25,000 ........... The Harold & Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust
$20,000 ..............................................The Shubert Foundation
$10,000 ..............................................the Educational Foundation of America
$10,000 ..............................................Lilah Hilliard Fisher Foundation
$10,000 ...........................................the Morris and Alma Schapiro Fund
$8,000 .................................................The Lotos Foundation
$7,500 ..................................................Showtime Networks
$7,000 ..................................................Heisman Trophy Trust
$5,000 ..................the Harold & Mimi Steinberg Charitable Trust
$5,000 ..................................................Tiger Baron Foundation
$2,500 ..................................................Goldman Sachs
$2,500 ..................................................Signature Bank
$2,400 .............................................Carnegie Corporation of New York
$2,000 ..................the Rona & Randolph M. Nelson Foundation
$1,000 .................................................the Dubin Family Foundation
Detectives Anne Troup and Jai-Lizz Rodríguez took on three separate unsolved cases in one work day in Anne's play Quitting Time.

How Odd, by John Sheehy, featured John as Rick, an ancient seer, and Frankie Suero Loyola as Dr. Howard Odd, a washed-up surgeon in search of new identity.

Molly Carden’s The Cartoonist and the Zoo-Creep’s Daughter featured Laila Suero Loyola as a young animator and Molly as the daughter of a mental patient.

Kaytie Gil and Paton Ashbrook traveled through time and space and sang about it, gobbled pancakes and sang about that, and then competed in the Art Olympics. It all happened in Alicia Moeller’s Rita and Starbot.

Angelica Toledo and Denisse Xolocotzi are seen here in the cliffhanger sequence of Sammy the Sumatran Tiger, by Caylyn Wan-Creager. Angelica kept hunting Denisse until she saw the error of her ways.
Aaron Ordinola and Michael Propster came to vicious camouflaged blows in Forest Brawl.

Lydian Blossom and Melanie Correa were *Friends* in the play of that name, and then they were not!

In Seeing Stars, the Stage Combat Performance, presented on March 29, a rowdy group of Project members and their scrappy adult partners showed what they had learned of the art of safe, choreographed fake-fighting. Kerry Warren taught them how to create stories of high-stakes conflicts through punches, kicks, slaps, and more! Each play was centered around a staged fight that the partners created together.

- Lydian Blossom and Melanie Correa were *Friends* in the play of that name, and then they were not!
- Aaron Ordinola and Michael Propster came to vicious camouflaged blows in *Forest Brawl*.
- *The Argent Life* featured Kylee Chester and Aishling Pembroke as a superhero secret agent and a supervillain secret agent, both with serious axes to grind.

- The aptly named *The Trouble* starred Yousef Altareb and Marco Formosa in a nasty contretemps.
- The even more aptly named *The Fight* pitted Walter Olivares against Grant Harrison, and yes, they had a fight. Luckily, they made up after the show and are now Smart Partners again.

- Darby O’Donnell and Sarah Quigley slapped each other silly in *The “Cafe.”*
- The audience got to see Kassandra Sinchi do some pretty impressive hair-pulling in *The Final Battle*, which featured Rachel Skalka as the victim of the lock-yanking.

- Even Harvard students lose their cool and start swinging, as we saw in *Crybaby*. Molly Carden was the Australian student who was the recipient of Amirah Hancock’s blows.
- *Al’s Canned Soup* was a knock-down, drag-out fight about soup. As you can see here, Nikolai Alvarez knocked Mat Hostetler down and then literally dragged him out.
GIMME FIVEY!

Hey, Projectiles! The 21st annual issue of Fivey, The 52nd Street Project’s magazine, is here! Most of it was created by Smart Partner pairs like the ones at left. You could come and see a show and pick up a free hard copy, but why wait? Download the full-color web edition at our website: www.52project.org. Do it as soon as you finish this newsletter!

HELP THE PROJECT BY PLAYING GOLF?

You sure can! And you can do it at a very nice course, indeed: the Quaker Ridge Golf Club in Scarsdale has been a world-class links for over a century. The event is on Wednesday, September 25, 2019 and we’ve got a few more foursomes to fill. Lunch and drinks are included! All you have to do is contact Kali Crandall at crandall@52project.org

THE 52ND STREET PROJECT’S ANNUAL CHARITY GOLF OUTING

SPONSORED BY
Evercore
Flexis Capital
Susquehanna International Group
Zubatkin Owner Representation

HONORARY CHAIRS
Louis P. Friedman, Bob Goldberg,
Mark Whatley & Jason Zubatkin

EVENT CHAIRS
Cathy Dantchik & Carolyn DeSena
Christopher Randolph married Audrey Matson in Wareham, Mass., an old Project destination. Nice to see good times still happening on that beach!

Remember this guy? It's Willie Reale, the founder of The 52nd Street Project. He and Jené LeBlanc tied the knot in a very quiet ceremony on June the 4th. We think they make a nice couple!

Former Project kid Azalea Rosario is now Azalea Rosario-Jackson. This happened when she married her beau, Jon Jackson, in the first weekend in August.

Project Volunteer actor Joél Pérez and Adrian Ferbeyre got married (in some pretty snappy suits, we must say) on April 14th at the Housing Works Bookstore on Crosby St. It was a very joyful event, by all accounts.

Long-time Proj actor, director, writer, and host Christopher Randolph married Audrey Matson in Wareham, Mass., an old Project destination. Nice to see good times still happening on that beach!

MEGABITS

Ben Barenholtz
October 5, 1935 – June 27, 2019

The Project mourns the death of long time board member Ben Barenholtz. Ben was born in Poland, escaped the Nazis as a child and made his way to America. Perhaps the hardships that he endured as a child were the source of the soft spot in his heart for the kids of the 52nd Street Project. It was Ben who arranged that we meet the Muddyman family and he accompanied us on two teen trips to the Chateau De Berne in the south of France. He had at least as much fun as the kids. Ben’s last project was to direct (at the age of 82) an indie film called Alina, a feature length movie that he shot in 15 days with the energy of a twenty-five year old. Ben was thoughtful, suave, handsome and the coolest cucumber in town.

WR
Flyer Bar Profile

Wendy vanden Heuvel

What she does for us - Wendy has been a volunteer actor and director since 1993 and a member of our board of directors since 1997. She has also been a host for the last two Teen Ensemble trips (2017 and 2019) to San Francisco and Bolinas, California.

Occupation - Actress/Teacher/Producer

Why she does what she does - “It's fun and a great way to be with humans.”

Hobbies - “Creating artist retreats and possibilities, Meditating, Karaoke, Salsa Dancing, Long walks.”

Last book read - "White Fragility" by Robin DiAngelo.

Most recent accomplishment - "Being asked to do a Flyer Bar profile! It’s an honor!"

Best Project Memory - "From The Baby" by Judith Agosto, age 8 (in 1993) - The lines after the doctor in the hospital interrupted his patient:

Patient: You stopped my words!

Doctor: Sorry. Yes.

Patient: No sorry. Just don’t."

Credo - “Find a place and put down roots” - Pete Seeger / What's left if you take everything away from an artist? Restlessness.”

Advice to kids - "Listen to your heART.”

Place of birth - "California.”

Habitat - "The Earth.”

Favorite thing about the Project - “Community.”

On Flyer Bars - "How do they fit that much gooey caramel in a chocolate bar?!?!"

As legend has it, when founder Willie Reale (see p. 9) did his very first show with the children at the Police Athletic League back in the early ‘80’s, one little girl approached him after the last performance and said “When’s the next one?” It was a question that eventually led to the formation of our organization. That little girl was Deneka Peniston.

Deneka is now a terrific photographer, specializing in portraits and events. If you look through this newsletter, you will see some of her work in the Dancemaking article and in the Benefit sidebar (pgs. 4 and 5). We’re thrilled to have her hanging around again, and if you’re in need of a skilled shutterbug, check out her impressive portfolio at www.penistonphotography.com.

In February, Garrett David Kim ran another installment of his excellent Radionmaking class for young people at the Project. You can hear the results for yourself as they are gradually released on the PROJcast.

Go to the podcast section of the iTunes Store and search for “The 52nd Street Project” or even just “PROJcast.”

When you see the bold, orange Shel Silverstein/Iris Brown logo above, hit “SUBSCRIBE” and start enjoying stories, plays, interviews and more on a monthly basis. See you on the Net, Yvette!
We recently decided to go out on a limb and assign a theme and a title to every one of our productions in the year to come! The following is a list of the shows and events that the public is welcome to attend. Post it on your fridge, but be sure to consult our website (www.52project.org) closer to the dates below to get more details and make reservations.

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<td>HEARD IT THROUGH THE GRAPESVINE: The Surprising Plays The Annual Playback Show</td>
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<td>TAKE IT FROM THE TOP! The Songmaking Concert</td>
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<td>November 22-24, 2019</td>
<td>UPSIDE-DOWN: The Topsy-Turvy Plays The Fall Playmaking Show</td>
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