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News Briefs

Considering a Career in the Arts?

A new look at realities and possibilities.

Renowned New York Talent Scout Peter Sklar knows a thing or two about helping aspiring child stars achieve success. His list of protégés includes Sarah Jessica Parker, Reese Witherspoon, and Mischa Barton, to name a few, along with current and former cast members of Broadway's Billy Elliott, Hairspray, Legally Blonde, Grease, South Pacific, Bonnie & Clyde, and many others.

Reality shows like American Idol and So You Think You Can Dance have springboarded some of the most talented kids in the nation into super stardom. But with so much available talent, what really sets one kid apart from another?

According to Sklar, an arts career is about two things: self-image and health. He argues that these qualities outweigh looks, training, connections, and even talent.

In "Considering a Career in the Arts?" a free lecture for aspiring teen dancers, singers and actors, and their parents on Saturday, May 26th 4:00PM at Seiskaya Ballet

Academy in St. James, New York, Sklar will explain why his views are in synch with the needs of top New York and Hollywood agents and casting directors.

"The people who sit behind the table are trying to decide two things: do they like you, and do they believe you," Sklar tells young audiences. "If you don't feel good about yourself, both mentally and physically, you

won't open up and show us who you really are. When that happens- no matter how skilled you are, how pretty, or who you know- we've already lost interest."

Alluding to a dramatic rise in self-destructive behavior, such as smoking, drinking, drugs, and eating disorders among so-called "happy" teens, Sklar marvels at how often these activities secretly co-exist with good grades, good behavior, and virtually every other outward sign of stability.

"The kids I interview are the smartest and most talented- the highest achievers in the nation," proclaims Sklar. "And they're often the most unhappy, unhealthy, and least employable."



Sklar boasts an Ivy League pedigree, (Masters Degree in Education from Harvard University), and four decades of experience. He's been the subject of multiple feature-length articles in the New York Times, was interviewed on E! True Hollywood Story, appeared as a guest expert on Donahue, and has had his work

presented on the Bravo Channel, Good Morning America, and dozens of other media outlets.

He's currently developing an original musical based on his experiences entitled "The Kid Who Played the Palace", to be directed by William Martin, (Broadway's "The Lieutenant", recipient of five Tony Award nominations).