

Latest TV News



Cary Joji Fukunaga on the World He Left Out of 'Maniac' and Potential of a Second Season



Wayne Maunders, Star of the 1960s Western 'Lancer,' Dies at 80



Why Hugh Grant Is Done With Leading-Man Roles



Arielle Kebbel Doesn't Want to 'Glamorize Guns' on 'Midnight, Texas'



Awards Season: Peak TV and the Blurred Lines Between Drama and Comedy



Trump Hints He Might Go to Next Year's White House Correspondents' Dinner



European Television Pioneer Anke Schaeferkordt Resigns from RTL Group



Will Fox Business Network Take Action After Lou Dobbs Tells Judge to 'Go to Hell'?



Critics' Notebook: 'Documenting Hate: New American Nazis' Presents a Chilling Picture



Greg Berlanti and Sophie Turner Laing Honored at International Emmys



Toms Donates \$5M to Organizations Working to End Gun Violence



'Sex and the City' Cast Talk Fighting Sexism Then, How the Show Would (or Wouldn't) Work Now



Red Arrow Inks Development Deal With 'The Gordin Cell' Producers



Kelly Clarkson to Perform at the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade



'Sex and the City' Cast, Crew Open Up About Clashes With Kim Cattrall Over Third Movie



'The Neighborhood' Stars Beth Behrs, Max Greenfield Are Thankful for Live Audience: "Keeps You On Your Toes"



White House Restores Jim Acosta's Press Pass



Meredith Ahr Upped to Top Reality Post at NBC Entertainment



Randy Tieman, Veteran Canadian Sportscaster, Dies at 64

TV

Two Casting Directors Plead No Contest in Pay-to-Play Audition Scandal

10:33 AM PDT 10/5/2017 by Gary Baum



Damon Casarez

Scott David

In the fallout from the pay-to-play scandal, Scott David and Ricki Maslar receive probation and agree to community service to avoid charges of violations against a California labor law.

Two casting directors pled no contest on Oct. 3 to misdemeanor violations of the Krekorian Talent Scam Prevention Act as the Los Angeles City Attorney's Office continues broad prosecution efforts in a pay-to-play audition scandal that has rocked the local acting community.

Scott David publicly parted ways with CBS' *Criminal Minds* and the workshop company he co-owned, The Actor's Link (since rebranded ACE Studios) in April 2016, shortly after *The Hollywood Reporter* had published an investigation into the then-pervasive practice. Facing multiple counts, he agreed in his plea to terms that included a 36-month probation and 125 hours of community service.

Ricki Maslar, who specializes in low-budget films (2013's *Hansel & Gretel Get Baked*, 2015's *Secrets of a Psychopath*), was a steady teacher at one of the most high-profile "casting workshop" companies in the city, The Actor's Key. Faced with one count, she agreed to 60 hours of community service as well as volunteering to instruct at 10 free casting seminars, potentially at the SAG-AFTRA Foundation. (If Maslar completes all of this by next August, she may move to withdraw her plea.)



READ MORE

New Hollywood Economy: Pay-for-Play Auditions for Actors Gain Dominance

"I am pleased we've been able to achieve just results in these cases," said L.A. City Attorney Mike Feuer. "Most important, we're working to protect aspiring actors from being scammed in the first place so their dreams don't become nightmares."

Both agreed not to "annoy, harass, threaten or molest anyone involved in this case," although only David's terms explicitly specified he "stay away and have no contact with actor James Runcorn and Stephen Salamunovich," the former a previously speculated confidential informant in the cases and the latter a fellow casting director who has been outspoken in his criticism about pay-to-play auditions.

"Going to trial is stressful; it's time-consuming, it's risky," said David's attorney, Mark Werksman. "When all you have to do is some community service — which Scott does anyway — and you can put it behind you, it seemed to make sense." Separately, he contended that "the 'stayaway' order is common and routine and does not have anything to do with Scott posing a danger to either of the named witnesses. He has had no contact with either of them and wouldn't."

Neither Runcorn nor Salamunovich would comment on the matter.

Alan Eisner, Maslar's lawyer, noted in a lengthy statement that while Maslar "appreciates this opportunity to keep her record clean and move on with her life," she would have been exonerated if she'd continued her court fight and only declined to do so for lack of resources and energy. He added, "While this law may have the desired intent of protecting certain aspiring actors from predatory practices of the management sector of the entertainment community, it is being applied arbitrary in this case, to prosecute persons and agencies that host productive, lawful, educational workshops that benefit many."

Feuer filed charges against five prominent casting firms and 25 individuals on Feb. 9. That day, the general counsel for SAG-AFTRA, Duncan Crabtree-Ireland, said, "We're extraordinarily pleased with the action that was taken to handle this problem. These workshops prey on the hopes and dreams of people that want to work in this industry." He added, "These people's dreams were taken advantage of. These are not people of means. These are people barely getting by. So just to be considered for a job, it's a real abuse."

The first plea deal was announced this past June, when Bradley Sachs, owner of Actors Alley, pled no contest to one of the three misdemeanor counts with which he had been charged.

Cases against the remaining defendants are ongoing in downtown L.A. A trial against the former owners of The Actor's Key, along with other casting directors who taught there, is set for Oct. 23.

A statistical comparison by *THR* found a 46 percent year-over-year decrease in the number of casting workshops offered during the same monthlong period between the beginning of 2016 (prior to *THR*'s initial report) and 2017, just before Feuer announced the indictments.



GARY BAUM

✉ THRnews@thr.com
🐦 [garymbaum](https://twitter.com/garymbaum)

