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## Doron F. Eghbali Entertainment Law

### [Actor's Film Performance: Pre, Post and Concurrent Issues with Performance](#)

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Actor's film performance starts not from principal photography and does not end with shooting the scenes. Such performance actually starts from actor's reading of the script and deciding to accept the role to control or approval over the script to the actor's make-up and physical appearance in the film. In addition, such actor's performance encompasses the final editing and the way the final product is altered or diminished, thereby altering or diminishing the actor's performance.

#### ISSUES RELATED TO PRE-PERFORMANCE

##### 1. APPROVAL/CONTROL OF SCRIPT BY ACTOR OR LACK THEREOF

Between actor and producer inevitably exists some kind of friction as to the amount of control or approval each one contractually can exert over the project. On the one hand, actor prudently desires to ensure the role accepted is the role actually performed after numerous revisions of the script.

On the other hand, producer desires flexibility to modify or alter the script depending on fluid conditions such as:

1. **Casting Issues:** Reducing the significance of some roles to accommodate others. For instance, the possibility of altering or modifying the script to accommodate a star actor and tailor the dialogue to showcase a particular's star's strengths rather than weaknesses.
2. **Budgetary and Contractual Issues:** It all comes down to money. It is often possible the producer concludes it will be too expensive to shoot in certain locations or it is absolutely necessary to cut the script to comply with censorship or studio guidelines or the film is literally too long.



3. **Balancing Issues:** The reality is there are so many other participants involved in creating a movie and there are not just the actor and producer. In fact, myriad stakeholders ranging from studio, distributor to financiers, director, co-stars and possibly writers desire to exert some kind of control over the film. In such situation, the producer prudently seeks to balance such often divergent interests.

## 2. MAKE-UP AND PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Actors rightly are concerned about any drastic transformations demanded by the role and not disclosed to them in full or in part. Such transmutations might not be befitting the actor's its public persona and whether or not such persona is appropriate for a particular role.

### ISSUES CONCURRENT WITH PERFORMANCE

There are a couple of issues that often arise concurrent with actor's film performance. Such issues relate to the dynamics between the actor and other personnel especially other actors on the set AND rarely the actor's desire to have exclusive control over the performance.

#### 1. Actor's Dynamic with Other Film Personnel

Actor's concern might not include only the actor's relationship with other actors, but also such dynamic with the director and production personnel. In such instances, problems might arise as to the compatibility, stature compared to others and even the quality of their work. For instance, some actors might demand - depending on their level of control laid out in their contract - a particular director, photographer, cinematographer or star-quality supporting cast.

### ISSUES RELATED TO POST-PERFORMANCE

As indicated before, the salient issue connected with an actor's post-performance concerns edition of the movie. In fact, it is well known that in Hollywood "films are made on the cutting-room floor." In such scenario, it is prudent actor demands and receives assurances the end product audiences will see would not be very different from what the actor reasonably came to believe. Undoubtedly, the producer, as always, longs for the most possible flexibility to ensure the ultimate film is not hamstrung by contractual obligations.

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