**Fame**

**By Christopher Gore**

Auditions

In New York City, a group of young, vibrant teenagers audition to study at the High School of Performing Arts. In the drama department, Montgomery MacNeil forgets his lines while auditioning, and Doris Finsecker is unable to control her nerves, due to the presence of her mother, who insists that she should sing during her audition. In the music department, Bruno Martelli is an aspiring keyboardist, whose electronic equipment horrifies Mr. Shorofsky, a conservative music teacher. In the dance department, Lisa Monroe is an aspiring dancer, and Coco Hernandez is confident that she will be accepted in all three departments because of her all-around talent. After attempting to audition for both the music and dance departments, Ralph Garci succeeds with his audition for the drama department. Leroy Johnson goes to the school, performing as part of a dance routine for an auditioning friend, but the dance teachers are more impressed by his talents than hers.

Freshman year

The students learn on the first day of classes that academics are weighed equally with performance. Doris, overwhelmed by the energy and spontaneity in the lunchroom, flees and meets Montgomery. As the year progresses, Coco tries to convince Bruno to book performing gigs with her. Doris and Montgomery become friends, and Doris worries that she is too ordinary against the colorful personalities of the other students. Leroy and his English teacher, Mrs. Sherwood, clash over his refusal to do homework; it is later revealed that Leroy is illiterate and ashamed to admit it. Bruno and his father argue over Bruno's reluctance to play his electronic music publicly. Miss Berg, the school's dance teacher, warns Lisa that she is not working hard enough. Graduating senior Michael wins a prestigious scholarship and tells Doris that the William Morris Agency wants to send him out for auditions for television pilots.

Sophomore year

A new student, Hilary van Doren, joins the school's Dance department and seduces Leroy. Bruno and Mr. Shorofsky debate the merits of traditional orchestras versus synthesized instruments. Bruno's father plays his music (the title song) outside the school, inspiring the student body to dance in the streets. As an acting exercise, the students are asked to divulge a painful memory. Montgomery discusses discovering his homosexuality, in the process coming out to the school; Doris relates her humiliation at being forced by her stage mother to sing at a child's birthday party; and Ralph tells of learning about the death of Freddie Prinze. Miss Berg drops Lisa from the dance program, and Lisa, after seemingly considering suicide in a New York City Subway station, drops her dance clothes on the subway tracks and decides to join the Drama department.

Junior year

Ralph and Doris discover their mutual attraction, but their growing intimacy leaves Montgomery feeling excluded. Hilary brings Leroy home, much to the shock of her father and stepmother. Ralph's young sister is attacked by a junkie and Ralph lashes out at his mother's attempts to comfort the child by taking her to the local Catholic church, instead of to a doctor. Doris begins to question her Jewish upbringing, changing her name to "Dominique DuPont" and straining the relationship with her mother. At a screening of The Rocky Horror Picture Show at the 8th Street Playhouse, Ralph encourages Doris to smoke marijuana. Intoxicated, Doris takes part in the stage show during the "Time Warp" sequence. The next day, she realizes that as an actress she can put on any personality she wants, but is sobered upon running into Michael, who is struggling as an actor and waiting tables.

Senior year

Ralph follows in the footsteps of his idol Freddie Prinze and performs stand-up comedy at Catch a Rising Star, where he garners some initial success. He falls into a hard-party lifestyle, which upsets Doris. Given a prime spot at a comedy club, he bombs after clashing with both Doris and Montgomery over his new lifestyle. Disgusted with himself, he believes his career is over, but Montgomery comforts him by telling him that failure is a part of the entertainment business. Hilary is now pregnant with Leroy's child, but secretly decides to get an abortion, drop out of school and move to San Francisco, California, where she has been offered a place with the city's ballet company. Coco is approached in a diner by a man claiming to be a director; she naïvely goes to his apartment for a "screen test", but discovers that he is really an amateur pornographic film director. He manipulates her into taking her shirt off, as he films her sobbing. Leroy is offered a spot in Alvin Ailey's dance company, but to be accepted he must graduate. He finds Mrs. Sherwood outside her husband's hospital room and lashes out at her for giving him a failing grade. As the two argue, he realizes that Mrs. Sherwood has problems of her own; chagrined, he comforts her. At graduation, the student body performs the finale, "I Sing the Body Electric". The opening lines are sung by Lisa, Coco, and Montgomery; intercut with the performance are scenes of Leroy dancing and Bruno playing with a rock band, finally sharing his music with others.