

Royal Young Explains Why Fame Isn't Everything In His Memoir 'Fame Shark'



By Marisa Spano

There is something special about Royal Young, and it's not just his name. Perhaps it's his hefty quantity of charisma and understanding of the world around him. The 28-year-old writer was born Hazak Brozgold to a Jewish family on New York's lower east side. He spent much of his young life looking for a spotlight, and now that he's finally got one, he's urging people to understand the downsides of fame.

To the American culture, fame means money, mansions and adoring fans. Most people think of the perks instead of the downfalls. But is fame a good thing? That's the very question that this author and [Interview Magazine](#) writer answers in his recently-released memoir, *Fame Shark*. Young's memoir outlines his past obsession with being famous and uses his history to illustrate to young people why a fixation with celebrity can be damaging. When CupidsPulse.com chatted with Young, he opened up about initial resistance to his memoir, the story behind his name and his new perspective on fame.

At what moment did you realize that you wanted to write a memoir?

When I was 18 years old, I was kind of crazy. I was drinking a lot and chasing all of these different means of getting attention instead of looking for love from my parents and relationships in general. One of the ways I was doing that was modeling. I met some shady people in that industry, but I also got to meet someone amazing at Wilhelmina. I sent him some of my writings and photos of myself. He sat me down and was like, "Dude, I read your writing, and you have a real talent here. You can keep being a crazy downtown New York City kid and messing up your life, or you can write a book. I think you have that in you." That was the first time I had heard that from anyone. I was so excited by it that I actually started a very tiny piece of *Fame Shark* right then and there.

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What was the initial reaction to your book?

Honestly, it was hard. So many people were very skeptical, and I dealt with a lot of rejection and resistance. But for me, being so young is kind of the point of writing the memoir. I think we live in a culture that is very obsessed with celebrities and very obsessed with youth, and I think that can be taken to a dangerous extreme. Writing a book like *Fame*

Shark at a young age is kind of a comment on that culture.

Are you still obsessed with fame? If not, what changed for you?

It has definitely changed. When I started writing the book, I was still under the kind of weird, narcissistic delusion that the book itself would be my final catapult to celebrity. However, writing a book doesn't really work that way because it's such hard work and there's so much rejection. I have worked incredibly hard for seven years as a journalist – that delayed gratification was so helpful to me in terms of these disillusionments. Do I still want to be famous? No. Do I still want to be successful and visible? Do I want my work to get to the largest audience possible? Absolutely.

In your book, you have an infatuation with Winky, a 14-year-old girl you meet on MySpace. She's the one who gave you your name, Royal Young. Tell us about that!

Winky had nicknames for all of her *Gossip Girl*-type, upper Westside friends. She would call us "The Lost Boys." It felt awesome – she was like this weird Wendy figure, and I was like a drunk Peter Pan. It felt great to be a part of that and be saved from my horrible Hebrew name, which always set me apart and made me feel like an outsider. I legally changed my name eight years ago, and it changed who I am. Even my old friends call me Royal now. It's a persona and a personality that I have grown into and that I feel so comfortable with.

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You say that you went to art school to live out your father's dreams of becoming a famous artist. Do you feel like you were living your father's life instead of your own?

I certainly felt that way. I think the peril of trying to fulfill someone else's fantasies is that you really end up resenting them. That's something that my dad and I had to work

through, but what's so cool now is I feel like I am in a position to help him. My dad's images are in the hard copies of the book. So in that sense, I am still connected to my dad's dreams. I still want to help him live them out, but I'm not the one who is doing the living – he is.

What advice do you have for young people looking to be famous?

Don't do it! Get rid of your grand ideas; get paparazzi, flashbulbs, money and all of that out of your mind. Just enjoy your life and work hard at your passion. I think it's so important to stay grounded and really keep those connections to friends and family. Work on those key relationships in your life because that'll help you; pursuing a path of solitary success is very dangerous and scary too. Focus on knowing yourself before you go out into the world.

And finally, what's next for you?

I want to go silver screen. I want *Fame Shark* to have a red carpet premiere. I'm negating everything I just told you! I really do see *Fame Shark* as an evolving brand though. When it started off for me, the definition of fame shark was someone who is so lonely that they mistake success or being a celebrity for love, and now, I feel like that's changing. Now, it's about tenacity; it's about hard work and hustle. So I would love to see where that goes next. I'm also working on a novel.

Fame Shark is available now on Amazon. You can follow the author on Twitter @RoyalYoung

Illusionist David Copperfield Keeps His Relationship Magical By Relaxing in The Bahamas!



By Royal Young

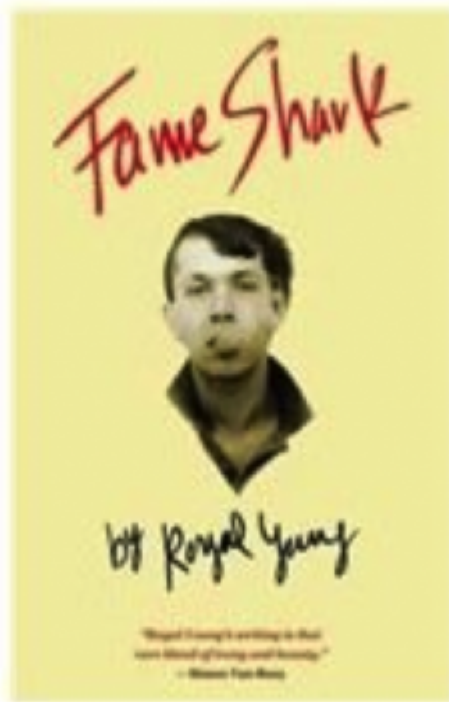
World renowned illusionist, David Copperfield, talks with us about keeping the magic alive, not only when he's performing a show, but in his personal relationship as well. Copperfield, performs over 500 shows a year and has won 21 Emmy Awards. He has accomplished mind-boggling illusions such as walking on

the Great Wall of China and making the Statue of Liberty disappear. His newest passion is focused on educating people about the joy of relaxing in the Bahamas. Copperfield who enjoys The Bahamas with his family owns a chain of eleven islands “Musha Cay and the Islands of Copperfield Bay” which he calls the most “magical vacation destination in the world.”

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Grand Opening: New Rooftop Garden at ‘Sleep No More,’ Gallow Green





By Royal Young

Mystery, voyeurism and delicious macabre make up Gallow Green. The restaurant sprawls over a roof on 27th street and almost the Hudson, near the McKittrick Hotel. [Lori Bizzoco](#), founder of CupidsPulse.com, and I stumble into Gallow Green's grand opening after having wandered through the haunting mazes of Sleep No More, wearing white masks and witnessing ghostly dances through blue lit woods, listening to old music cranked from a far away gramophone as silent actors slowly danced.

We're high from the show and booze, consumed in the smoky lounge of the McKittrick where a busty woman with a red rose in her dark hair sang jazz. The restaurant feels like it is from a different, more elegant time, the 1920's or '30s. Yet we are surrounded by glittering modern Manhattan. The Empire State Building shines over our shoulders as we're guided to a wood table under beams hung with tattered, thick white lace.

Our server looks like a beautiful nurse at an insane asylum.

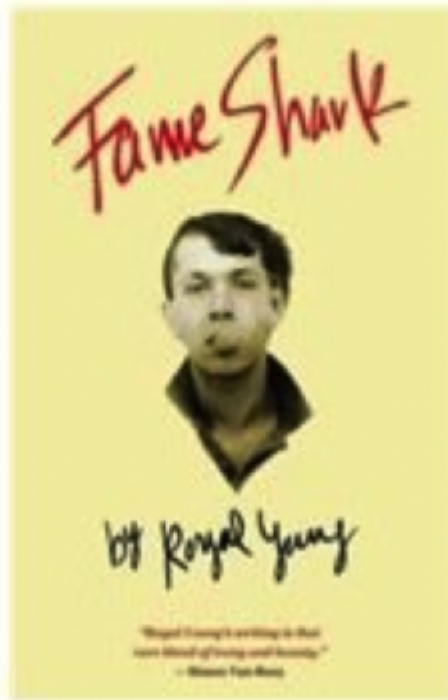
“Try everything!” She urges us.

We settle for a tall beer list along with pulled brisket toast with tomato jam, horseradish and aioli, smoked pork meatballs, potted peekytoe crab a deeply buttery spread with toast tips, sliced summer tomatoes, avocado and brisket jerky. Everything is delicious. Small golden lights, and green plants decorate Gallow Green, rusting railway tracks and loose stones lay in the middle of the restaurant. With a live swing band playing, it does feel like we are on a beautifully decrepit old train, munching decadent morsels in the dining car.

I hate sweet things, so for dessert we decide to go with the Gallow Green Punch. Our nurse brings over a massive gold bowl and fills it with Absinthe. She heroically lights matches in the wind, until one catches and the liquor is in flames. It burns out blue into the night. She adds Delord Blanche White Armagnac, Lemon Shrub, Apollinaris Water and ice cubes the size of fists. We drink until it's done. The night is all about escape.

My Love Relationship with Celebrities and Fame





By Royal Young of

Interview Magazine

Charlie Sheen's recent escort escapades are good for a raunchy laugh, but they are part of a trend in bad celebrity behavior that has poisoned my own ideas about passion. I have always chased fame – which never seemed to match up with love – despite the fact that my devoted parents have been together for almost 30 years. While I'm sure there are plenty of Hollywood homebodies with happy marriages, we are constantly bombarded with the burning Bentley car wreck of celebrity relationships.

Growing up as a reserved Jewish boy already predisposed to solitude who would only come alive when performing, I decided I would never need to use my heart. Spotlights were flirtatious, and applause was better than the attention I couldn't get from pretty girls my own age. I turned into a hungry ghost, too self-obsessed to want anything but vague, vacuous fame – at any cost.

I was raised on the Lower East Side in the '90s (before its multi-million dollar reincarnation) and went to LaGuardia "Fame" High School. I chased gaudy glamour after graduation and skipped college for empty extra roles in music videos, sleazy modeling gigs, sex exchanged for money and promises of lines in movies that were never made – all which led to failed, fledgling relationships. I wore outlandish, revealing outfits for attention, and was thrilled when shutterbugs snapped my portrait for a street style section picked up by Gawker, where, to my glee, I received so much hate mail. Yet without any long-term girlfriend – since I pushed away every person who tried to get close to me – I felt empty.

At 24, I realized I hadn't been in a normal relationship for ten years. Sure, I've hooked up with models and had two seconds of screen time in some indie movies, Boy George once winked at me and I've partied with Yoko Ono, but I suddenly craved the comfort of a real lover. For the first time in my life, I wanted the stability and support my parents seemed to have, working through their issues as a loving team. But I had no idea where to start. I no longer wanted to be a fame shark, get featured on Perez Hilton, or go dancing with the stars. I knew none of that would make me feel like I had a home or a heart, or allow me to be satisfied with who I was: a shy loner who longed to fit in with a loud, lascivious crowd. When it came to love, I realized there were no rules except for letting go; I just wish there were some tabloids that could teach me how.

Royal Young just completed his debut memoir *Fame Shark*. He works with *Interview Magazine* (www.interviewmagazine.com) and you can follow him at [Twitter.com/RoyalYoung](https://twitter.com/RoyalYoung).