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Lights, Camera, Scalpel: Aesthetic Treatments are Up Amidst SAG and Writer's Strike

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The glitz and glamour of Hollywood are usually associated with red carpets, dazzling lights, and larger-than-life performances. However, as the industry grapples with the SAG-AFTRA and WGA strikes, a curious phenomenon has emerged within the less spotlighted corridors of Tinseltown—the plastic surgery and aesthetic industry is experiencing an unexpected boom.

While actors and writers take to the streets to protest, others in the industry are seizing opportunity to undergo cosmetic treatments.

Considering Financial Futures

Newport Beach, CA plastic surgeon Sanjay Grover, MD explains, “The SAG and screenwriter’s strike is unfortunate and affecting many people. However, it is giving time for some in the industry to get a little nip or tuck. Not only have we noticed more surgical bookings, we have definitely seen an increase in nonsurgical treatments being requested.”

The hiatus from production schedules has, in some instances, freed up time for some to pursue cosmetic procedures. Pasadena, CA plastic surgeon Lily Lee, MD notes the generational divide among her clientele, saying, “I have heard both sides of the coin. Some clients are definitely

taking advantage of the time to have cosmetic work done, while others are buckling down and saving their money in case the strike goes on for a long time.”

Dr. Lee says when she thinks about who falls into which category, younger and newer members of the industry are more apt to have work done. “It is a little surprising, but the more mature folk who have been in the business for longer worry that the strike could go on for a long time as they have seen it happen previously,” she explains.

Getting the Timing Right

For the denizens of the Hollywood scene, appearances are of paramount importance. Beverly Hills, CA facial plastic surgeon **Kimberly J. Lee, MD** sheds light on the urgency driving this surge in demand: “With entertainment industry patients, timing is everything. We usually need to navigate around filming schedules; but with the recent strike, everyone has been trying to get in to do procedures so they can be healed before the strike ends.” The demand is high for procedures like facelifts and blepharoplasty, she says, both requiring a few weeks for recovery.

However, not everyone within the industry is jumping on the aesthetic bandwagon during this hiatus. Encino, CA plastic surgeon George Sanders, MD provides a nuanced perspective: “The top-tier actors don’t seem to see this as an opportunity for surgery since they will take time off for surgery whenever they choose, strike or no strike. The rank-and-file actor would theoretically see this as an opportunity because of time availability but does not seem to schedule surgery because of financial uncertainty.”

The aesthetic industry’s response to the strike underscores the intricacies of Hollywood’s diverse ecosystem. While some professionals are seizing the moment, others are opting for financial prudence amid the uncertainty. As the protests carry on, the flourishing of aesthetics ultimately speaks to an unwavering pursuit of perfection—even when cameras aren’t rolling.

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