

# Catch a couple of rising stars from Queens

Borough teenage girls are working their way to the Broadway stage and Hollywood studio



Ronald B. Hellman

■  
*The Play's The Thing*

Let's hear it for the youth of America, 'cause today I got a couple of 16-year-olds to tell you about.

Talented, hardworking and ambitious, **Francesca Iannacone** and **Isabel Robin** are the real deal. And they're both kids from Queens — Francesca (call her Franny) grew up in Middle Village and now lives in Little Neck. Isabel is a life-long resident of Bayside.

At Fiorello H. LaGuardia High School, located near Lincoln Center, specializing in the visual and performing arts, Isabel is an honor drama student in her sophomore year.

Her real love is musical theater, inspired by seeing a production of "Oklahoma!" when she was only 4.

In just a few years, Isabel

has compiled an impressive resumé, mainly through her association with Theatre by the Bay at the Bay Terrace Garden Jewish Center. She has played lead roles in "Mame" (Young Patrick), "Oliver!" (Oliver) — yes, they're both boys — "Annie" (Annie), and Dorothy in "The Wizard of Oz," her favorite so far.

A star of today she admires is **Laura Osnes**, a Tony Award nominee for "Bonnie and Clyde" and "Cinderella."

Wanting to share her love of music, Isabel recently formed a community service group called Joy Through Music. Broadway show tunes and other standards will be performed around town for those who may not be able to get to see shows on their own.

The kick-off event is coming up Sunday, June 14, at 11 a.m., in Bay Terrace (718-428-6363), featuring "music, bagels and talented teens." You may even get to see Isabel's younger sister Tess perform.

Franny is a sophomore at



ISABEL ROBIN

Talent Unlimited High School, located in the Julia Richman Educational Complex on Manhattan's Upper East Side. A drama major in the Honors Repertory program, she recently appeared in a production of **A.R. Gurney's** "The Dining Room" at the school. Of the several roles she's had



FRANCESCA IANNAZONE

in the last couple of years, her favorite and most challenging was the title character in the ancient Greek drama "Antigone" by **Sophocles**. Talk about heavy lifting!

Leaning toward ballet in her early years, Franny saw the movie "Twelve Angry Men" and decided that acting

was the way to go.

"I'm constantly changing," she said, but right now she prefers film to stage. She's a fan of director **Quentin Tarantino** and the actress **Jennifer Lawrence**. Looking ahead to life after high school, she'd like to attend the University of Southern California — it's got a good drama program and the weather is warm.

Franny is also into visual arts. She has an internship at the Folk Art Museum training to be a docent, and looks forward to visiting the new Whitney down by the High Line. Her only regret is that she won't be old enough in 2016 to vote for **Hillary Clinton** for president.

Lesson to parents by our story today: expose your children to the arts and culture at an early age — you're in the right city for it — and all of us will benefit when they get older.

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