



MAKE BELIEVE

The Battle to Become the
WORLD'S BEST TEEN MAGICIAN

"GEM OF A MOVIE...THUMBS UP!"
-Roger Ebert

**"PERFECTLY PACED...
ALL THE DRAMA OF A HIGH-STAKES SPORTING EVENT."**
-NY Times

"TERRIFICALLY LIKABLE...COMPELLING"
-Wall Street Journal

"A ROUSING, EPIC CROWD PLEASER"
-Moving Pictures Magazine

"GUARANTEED TO HAVE VIEWERS LEVITATING"
-Variety



Contents

The Project, including logline, synopsis, backstory & the companies 2

The Team, including bios 3

Press Sheet, including reviews & article links 4

Credits 6

Selected Character List 7

Photos 8

The Project

Logline

A coming of age journey set in the quirky subculture of magic, **Make Believe** follows six of the world's best young magicians as they pursue the title of Teen World Champion and lead us on their personal journeys of transformation through magic.

Synopsis

Make Believe follows six teens who all share an extraordinary passion: the art of magic. Armed with great skill and a dazzling array of illusions, they embark from around the world to attend the World Magic Seminar in Las Vegas. There, they hope to be crowned Teen World Champion by Master Magician Lance Burton.

Onstage, the film's subject are remarkably assured and dedicated. Offstage, however, these young outsiders confront the diverse obstacles of adolescence, turning **Make Believe** into an inspiring coming of age story. With great humor, honesty, and heart, **Make Believe** reveals an enduring world audiences know little about while exploring a time of life no one ever forgets.

Backstory

Executive produced by Ed Cunningham and Seth Gordon (the duo behind 2007's acclaimed **The King of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters**), **Make Believe** was initially a passion project for its creators, who for four years mulled over the idea of a documentary set in the highly distinctive world of magic. The right story for **Make Believe** finally presented itself when producer Steven Klein (a former teen magician and current member of Los Angeles' famous Magic Castle) eyed three teenage boys in a magic shop who could barely make eye contact with anyone...until a deck of cards transformed them into consummate showmen. Klein returned to pitch Cunningham and Gordon on the idea of teen subjects, and the producing team then handed the wand to Tweel, who brought his own coming-of-age vision to the project.

The Companies



www.fireflyinc.com

The Team

J Clay Tweel (Director) - When the Universal Pictures feature *Cry Wolf*, associate produced and edited by Seth Gordon, was shot in Virginia, Clay was hired in the art department. Having recently earned a History degree from the University of Richmond, Clay had little idea he was about to spend the rest of his days making film. His continued stint in the art department included *The Oh in Ohio* and Seth Gordon's award-winning short *The Problem with Percival*, before working on *The King of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters*. Clay's experience parlayed into numerous credits on the film from associate producer, assistant editor, DVD material editor, all the way to original song composer. Just prior to *Make Believe*, Clay worked on *Four Christmases*, and his projects now in development include two fiction features and another documentary.

Steven Klein (Producer) - Steven was once a teen magician and is now a member of the *The Magic Castle*. An actor and producer, Steven is committed to creating strong stories for the stage and screen. Many of these are developed through Firefly: Theater & Films, the company he founded in 1996. Under his guidance, Firefly's theater productions have won more than 25 awards for shows in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Belfast, Off-West End London, Off-Broadway, and his hometown of Boston. Wanting to make movies with the cross-disciplinary collaboration of theater, Steven and Oscar-winner Bruce Cohen made 35 shorts from 2001 - 2005, and Firefly projects growing from these have screened at dozens of festivals. *Make Believe* is Firefly's first feature. Steven's recent acting work includes Firefly's *Unscreened*, TV's *Burn Notice*, and Jeff Pickett's film, *Nature*.

Ed Cunningham (Executive Producer) - Ed is best known for producing the documentary *New York Doll* with Seth Gordon, which premiered at the 2005 Sundance Film Festival, and for producing 2007's *The King of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters*, with Gordon directing, an internationally released, critically acclaimed documentary with Picturehouse/HBO. Ed is currently executive producing the narrative remake of *The King of Kong* at New Line Cinema, also with Gordon set to direct. Ed also had a five-year NFL playing career, which he followed with announcing college football, first with CBS and now with ESPN/ABC.

Seth Gordon (Executive Producer) - Seth last premiered *Freakonomics*, which he executive produced and directed a section of; he made his narrative directorial film debut with 2008's *Four Christmases*; and he will soon open the summer comedy *Horrible Bosses*, starring Jason Bateman, Jason Sudeikis, and Charlie Day. Gordon previously directed the acclaimed documentary film *The King of Kong: A Fistful of Quarters*, about two men vying for the world record in Donkey Kong. He also directed several shorts that have won awards at festivals including Sundance and Slamdance. He produced and edited the Sundance documentary *New York Doll*, theatrically released in 2005, and was a contributing producer and cinematographer on the Dixie Chicks' 2006 Oscar-nominated documentary *Shut Up And Sing*.

Make Believe Press Sheet

select press as of June, 2011 with more available upon request

Select Reviews:

"...Gem of a movie...charming...thumbs up!"

-Roger Ebert, *At the Movies*

<http://www.bertpresents.com/movies/make-believe>

"The young people seen here never seem artificial; you feel their passion for doing magic, as well as their nagging loneliness, devoted as they are to practicing card tricks and such for hours on end, while their peers are off doing what most teenagers do...The buildup to the actual competition is perfectly paced...the championship has all the drama of a high-stakes sporting event..."

-Neil Genzlinger, *New York Times*

<http://movies.nytimes.com/2011/05/13/movies/make-believe-documentary-review.html?smid=tw-nytimesmovies&seid=auto>

"Terrifically likable...These talented, dedicated kids aren't making believe about anything—they're making art out of shimmering illusion, intricate manipulation and blithe misdirection...compelling."

-Joe Morgenstern, *Wall Street Journal*

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702304066504576347242496083716.html>

"Guaranteed to have viewers levitating, 'Make Believe' is a charming, affectionate and often elegantly executed study...it's a kind of personal heroism that helmer J. Clay Tweel captures in this Los Angeles Film Festival jury prizewinner...Production values are superb..."

-John Anderson, *Variety*

<http://www.variety.com/review/VE1117943066.html?categoryid=31&cs=1>

"Make Believe is so irresistible because Tweel combines the kids-making-good plot line with the sheer joy of the magic show."

-Leslie Stonebraker, *NY Press*

<http://www.nypress.com/blog-8869-believe-in-lsmake-believers.html>

"Totally awesome from start to finish, J. Clay Tweel's documentary about the path to success for a group of teen magicians from around the world is the stuff dreams are made of...Tweel makes an impressive mark directing a doc that seamlessly puts the viewer into the mindset and personalities of its hard-working subjects. Make Believe is a touching movie about discipline and the power of illusion to elevate the mundane into the sublime. You'll be amazed."

-Cole Smithey

<http://www.colesmithey.com/capsules/2011/05/make-believe.html>

"full of humor, insight, and, most importantly, suspense... 'Make Believe' is a rousing, epic crowd pleaser that will speak to both the child inside who wants to believe in magic and the adult who still wants to believe that if you pursue your dreams, they will come true."

-Bryan Buss, *Moving Pictures Magazine*

<http://www.movingpicturesnetwork.com/11870/make-believe-documentary-2/>

"...The effect is mesmerizing... 'Make Believe' is not a film about magic, but rather an intimate and personal portrait of adolescence, told through magic... It is easy to see why this film was chosen as the Best Documentary in competition at the LA Film Festival."

-Laurie Curtis, *Tonight at the Movies*

Video & Audio:

Lance Burton on *The Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson*

[http://www.cbs.com/late night/late late show/video/?pid=6n6JSrRetEdbgNtqIe8MLkRfuJshOxK7](http://www.cbs.com/late%20night/late%20late%20show/video/?pid=6n6JSrRetEdbgNtqIe8MLkRfuJshOxK7)

Lance Burton & Bill Koch on ABC's *What's the Buzz*

<http://abcnews.go.com/Video/playerIndex?id=13600623>

J. Clay Tweel on *Last Call with Carson Daly*

[http://www.nbc.com/Last Call with Carson Daly/video/make-believe/1331242/](http://www.nbc.com/Last%20Call%20with%20Carson%20Daly/video/make-believe/1331242/)

J. Clay Tweel on KPCC's *Film Week* with Larry Mantle

<http://www.scpr.org/programs/filmweek/2011/05/27/filmweek-for-may-27-2011/>

Lance Burton with Dennis Miller on the *Dennis Miller Show*

http://fetch.noxsolutions.com/dm/mp3/LanceBurton_060211.mp3

LAFF interview with J. Clay Tweel & Steven Klein

http://www.youtube.com/user/filmindependent#p/u/7/z_s4CEaH908

Standing Ovation at Premiere at TIFF

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OeywOrMn3XM>

Podcast with J Clay Tweel & Steven Klein at Virginia Film Festival

<http://www.virginiafilmfestival.org/podcasts/make-believe/>

Articles on the Film:

"Something to 'Believe' In" (*Moving Pictures Network*)

<http://www.movingpicturesnetwork.com/28396/make-believe-lance-burton-interview/>

"Director & Producer Interview" (*Collider*)

<http://collider.com/j-clay-tweel-steven-klein-interview-make-believe/93314/>

"Make Believe Pulls Back Curtain..." (*Wall Street Journal*)

<http://blogs.wsj.com/speakeasy/2011/05/03/make-believe-pulls-back-curtain-on-world-magic-seminar/>

"'Family' & 'Make Believe' Take Top LA Film Festival Accolades" (*IndieWire*)

[http://www.indiewire.com/article/family make believe take top l.a. film festival accolades](http://www.indiewire.com/article/family%20make%20believe%20take%20top%20l.a.%20film%20festival%20accolades)

"Reel to Tweel: Filmmaker scores at LA Film fete" (*The Hook*)

<http://www.readthehook.com/blog/index.php/2010/06/30/reel-to-tweel-filmmaker-scores-at-la-film-fete/>

"LAFF 2010: 'A Family' and 'Make Believe' take top awards" (*LA Times*)

<http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/movies/2010/06/laff-2010-a-family-and-make-believe-take-top-awards.html>

"Los Angeles Film Festival: What's Up? Docs" (*The Wrap*)

<http://www.thewrap.com/movies/column-post/whats-docs-18788?page=0,1>

"LA Theater Veteran Wins LAFF Documentary Award for 'Make Believe'" (*LA Times*)

<http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/culturemonster/2010/06/black-dahlia-steven-klein-wins-documentary-award-at-la-film-festival.html>

"LA Times Talks to Krystyn Lambert About 'Make Believe'" (*iTricks*)

<http://itricks.com/news/2010/06/la-times-talks-to-krystyn-lambert-about-make-believe/>

Credits

Credit	Name
Directed by	J Clay Tweel
Produced by	Steven Klein
Executive Producers	Ed Cunningham Seth Gordon
Cinematographer	Richard Marcus
Original Music Composed & Conducted by	Lucas Vidal
Editor	J Clay Tweel
Co-Editor & Co-Producer	Luis Lopez
Associate Producer	Mary Rohlich
Additional Music by	Aaron Kaplan Matthew McGaughey
Written by	Cleven S Loham
Additional Cinematography	J Clay Tweel Bradford Whitaker
Shooters	Vaughan Giose Steven Klein Luis Lopez
Assistant Editors	Ari Levin Luca Shapiro
Assistant to Production	Luca Shapiro
Production & Editorial Intern	Bryan Carberry
Japanese Dialogue Editor	Yusaku Mizoguchi
Graphics	Bryan Carberry
Visual Effects	Luis Lopez J Clay Tweel
Music Production	Music & Motion Productions
Executive Music Producer	Steve Dzialowski

Selected Character List

Principal Characters, alphabetical order

Siphiwe Fangase

Hiroki Hara

Bill Koch

Krystyn Lambert

Derek McKee

Nkumbuzo Nkonyana

...and their families, friends, and mentors

Notable Selected Characters, alphabetical order

Ed Alonzo, Magician

Gay Blackstone, Producer, *Masters of Illusion*

Eugene Burger, Magician

Lance Burton, Master Magician

Bob Dorian, Director, Magic Castle Jr. Program

Andrew Goldenhersh, Magician

Neil Patrick Harris, Actor; Board Member, Magic Castle

Jeff McBride, Magician

Justin "Kredible" Willman, Magician

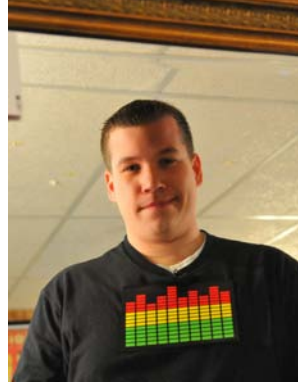
Diana Zimmerman, Magician; Founder, Magic Castle Jr. Program

Photos

Sample photos are below, with these and other high-res images available for download via files.me.com/s.klein/epy786 with password "makebelieve".



Krystyn Lambert
17 years-old
Malibu, CA



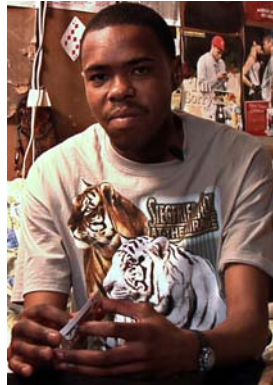
Bill Koch
19 years-old
Chicago, IL



Hiroki Hara
18 years-old
Kitayama, Japan



Derek McKee
14 years-old
Littleton, CO



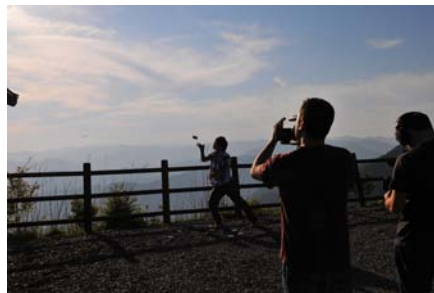
Siphwe Fangase
18 years-old
Capetown, South Africa



& Nkumbuzo Nkonyana
18 years-old



Bill Koch
Steven Klein, Producer
J Clay Tweel, Director



Hiroki Hara
Richard Marcus, Cinematographer
J Clay Tweel, Director



Hiroki Hara
J Clay Tweel, Director
TJ Rohlich, Interpreter
Steven Klein, Producer