

THE WISE KIDS



CONE ARTS PRESENTS A FILM BY STEPHEN CONE MOLLY KUNZ TYLER ROSS ALLISON TOREM "THE WISE KIDS"
MATT DECARO SADIH RIFAI STEPHEN CONE CASTING MATTHEW MILLER MICKIE PASKAL, C.S.A. JENNIFER RUONICKE, C.S.A.
COSTUME DESIGNER ERIN AMELIA WHITE SOUND DESIGNER ADAM GORON ORIGINAL MUSIC MIKHAIL FIKSEL PRODUCTION DESIGNER CAITY BIRMINGHAM
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY STEPHANIE DUFFORD PRODUCED BY SUE REDMAN LAURA KLEIN STEPHEN CONE WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY STEPHEN CONE

THE WISE KIDS

Directed by Stephen Cone

Canon 5D Mark II Digital SLR / HDCAM or Digibeta / 1:85 / Stereo / 95 Minutes

World Premiere Screening / Outfest 2011



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SYNOPSIS

A thoughtful and evocative coming-of-age drama, *THE WISE KIDS* takes place in the transitional space between high school and college, when life seems to be all questions and no answers, and the future is scarily wide open. Set in and around a Charleston, SC Baptist church, weaving through this ensemble piece are three main characters - Brea, an introspective pastor's daughter experiencing debilitating doubt; the hyperactive Laura, Brea's best friend and a devout believer; and Tim, the open-hearted son of a single father, confronting his homosexuality for the first time. Tensions and buried feelings abound, as colleges are chosen and adults behave badly, as Brea, Laura and Tim attempt to hang onto what they have, all the while yearning to break free.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

Born and raised the son of a Southern Baptist minister in South Carolina, 30-year-old Stephen Cone has spent the past seven years in Chicago, IL making one short or feature film per year, while also dabbling as a writer/director in Chicago's rich and internationally respected theatre scene. It was after the completion of his first full-length feature IN MEMORIAM that he first had an idea of two southern teenagers who have grown up in the same Baptist church. Both female, best friends, they find themselves at opposite ends of the belief spectrum. Realizing that the time had come to make his semi-autobiographical "youth group" film, Stephen continued to develop the idea and, just after Thanksgiving 2009, began writing it, with the then-absurd notion of possibly shooting it that summer.

As the script was written, new elements, characters and shadings were added. The leading duo turned into a trio with the addition of Tim, a gay character reconciling his sexuality and his faith, as well as the two supporting roles of Austin and Elizabeth, a thirty-something couple in the church, dealing with their own private pain.

With script feedback positive, a wide open 2010 and an eagerness to keep moving and learning, Stephen, along with producing partners Sue Redman and Laura Klein, as well as Director of Photography Stephanie Dufford, pulled the trigger on a Summer 2010 shoot.

While the decision to shoot in Stephen's hometown of Charleston, SC was a part of the plan from the beginning, there was also the desire to pull from Chicago's dynamic and world-renowned acting scene, as well as Stephen's prior collaborative pool, spread far and wide, from Chicago and Los Angeles to the East Coast. To help with the former, Casting Director Matthew Miller was brought on board, along with Mickie Paskal and Jennifer Rudnicke of the highly reputable Chicago casting agency TP&R Casting (now PR Casting). Auditions were conducted in Charleston, SC and Chicago, IL in order to find the best mix of actors who would contribute to the utmost authenticity and excellence of the final film. The final cast was split, more or less, 50/50 between Midwestern and Southern actors, with the three central characters hailing from the Chicago area. Erica Tobolski, a Theatre and Voice Professor at Stephen's alum, the University of South Carolina, was brought on board as Dialect Coach.

In addition to a Kickstarter fundraising page, the small, less-than-100K budget of THE WISE KIDS came from a large handful of private investors along the East Coast. As the shoot approached, flights were purchased and cast & crew were flying in, the final portions of the budget were raised and shooting began, as scheduled, on July 19th, 2010 in Charleston, SC. Principal Photography wrapped in Charleston on August 14th, 2010, and, after one September day of pick-ups in Chicago, THE WISE KIDS was in the can.

Stephen, uncredited Editor of both this and IN MEMORIAM, spent the next four months editing the film before bringing in sound designer Adam Goron and original music composer Mikhail Fiksel to finish up the process. Color correction and HD Mastering took place at Technicolor Hollywood in April/May 2011 and the film was completed on Friday, May 13th, 2011, less than one year after the start of shooting.

DIRECTOR'S NOTE(S)

Whenever I tackle themes of faith, the work tends to come off as either an indicting love letter or a loving indictment. Which seems about right. My upbringing as the son of a Southern Baptist minister was largely a happy one, but I continue to wrestle with the balancing act that is embracing, loving and respecting my Bible-believing friends - many of whom are as smart and kind and human as anyone I know - and bafflement at the so very many things that are taken and accepted, simply, on faith, sometimes at the cost of others, or of common sense and decency.

Further, I am fascinated by the idea of living in bodies – more specifically, the idea that people of faith are forced to inhabit bodies they live in hope of shedding. What does it mean to be a believer and a human being at the same time? To prioritize the soul while negotiating and navigating the physical self? Does one negate the other? Does it have to?

These are the questions THE WISE KIDS was born out of. They are questions I've been asking for as long as I remember, and to which I see no end to the asking.

-Stephen Cone

Writer/Producer/Director, THE WISE KIDS

CREW

Stephen Cone (Writer/Producer/Director/Austin) moved to Chicago in July of 2004. While dabbling in the Chicago theatre scene, he founded Cone Arts in 2005 to facilitate the making of his own films. Since then, he has written and directed the short films *Church Story*, *Young Wives* (co-production with Collaboraction; screened at 2007 LA Shorts Fest) and *7 Experiments*, as well as his medium-length feature debut *The Christians* (with Split Pillow; screened at Gene Siskel Film Center; Philadelphia Independent Film Festival; NewFilmmakers @ Anthology Film Archives) and his first two full-length features *In Memoriam* (Gene Siskel Film Center, Big Muddy Film Festival, Buffalo/Niagara Film Festival) and *The Wise Kids*.

As a playwright, his work has been seen in Austin and New York, and at Chicago Dramatists, Collaboraction and Bailiwick in Chicago. For the side project theatre company, Stephen has directed his own plays *The Dancer*, *Henry Hettinger* and *Raised*. He has twice been a Bay Area Playwrights Festival finalist and his short play *The November Boy* was a finalist for the Ensemble Studio Theatre Marathon. His short plays *I'll Never Tell You*, *Young Wives* and *We Came Here Because It's Beautiful* have been featured in Collaboraction's Sketchbooks 5, 6, 7 (as well as the forthcoming Sketchbook "greatest hits" revue REVERB) and his one-act *Cut To : A Stream* was commissioned by Collaboraction for The Siddhartha Project. Also for Collaboraction, he directed a workshop production of his own play *Stonehenge*.

Other theatre directing work includes the side project's World Premiere of Philip Dawkins' *Perfect*, the same theatre's acclaimed Chicago premiere of Sarah Kane's *Crave*, as well as readings and productions for Bailiwick and Dog & Pony.

Stephen is currently making his Chicago stage debut in the World Premiere of Philip Dawkins' *The Homosexuals* at About Face Theatre in Chicago.

Sue Redman (Producer) is an actor/producer/writer currently living in Chicago. A graduate of Emerson College's BFA Acting program, as well as the School at Steppenwolf, Sue helped found SiNNERMAN Ensemble, an award-winning theatre company in Chicago. As an actor, Sue has worked on productions all over Chicago with SiNNERMAN Ensemble, The Gift Theatre, The Artistic Home, Collaboraction and Theatre Seven, among others. Most recently, Sue was seen in *Days of Late and Ivanov* with SiNNERMAN. While acting is her truest passion, she's also co-produced a lot of theatre, with a focus on developing new plays-- including multiple shows with SiNNERMAN, and a one-woman show that she wrote and starred in, which toured to the San Francisco Fringe Festival. Sue can be seen in a bunch of commercials, web series and films including Stephen Cone's previous film, *In Memoriam*, and Steven Soderbergh's upcoming film, *Contagion*, opposite Matt Damon and Gwyneth Paltrow.

Laura Klein (Producer/UPM/First AD) Born in Cape Town, South Africa, Laura immigrated to the United States in 1987. While a frequent collaborator of Stephen Cone's, she has also produced and directed numerous short films, including *Sandhill Boys* written by Ashley Christopher Leach, *Reggie III* also by Leach, *The Falling of the Bright* and *Hidden Hearts*, written and directed by Caity Birmingham. She received her MFA in Film & Video from Columbia College Chicago and BA in Theatre & English from the College of William & Mary. Screenings of her films include Slamdance, Cucalorus, Miami Gay & Lesbian, Chicago International and Rhode Island International.

Stephanie Dufford (Director of Photography) graduated from Columbia College Chicago in 2007 with a Bachelor's degree in cinematography. Prior, she studied drawing and painting at Rhode Island School of Design for two years and ultimately decided she wanted a creative career working with people and happened upon film. The summer after transferring to Chicago, she

worked as a camera intern on the feature *Stranger than Fiction*, which lead her to join the union as a camera assistant a couple of years later. Her focus and true aspiration is to shoot films and she continues to seek out projects that compel and challenge her. She has shot countless short films and recently completed her third feature film. Over the past two years, she has continued her learning by mentoring with cinematographer Seamus McGarvey, BSC, ASC. Her undergraduate thesis project, *The Fantastic Magnifico*, (a World War I short film with stop motion aerial sequences), earned her an Honorable Mention for the 2007 ASC Laszlo Kovacs Heritage Award for Outstanding Cinematography. It was during production of *The Wise Kids* that she learned she was a 2010 recipient of the ICG Emerging Cinematographers Award.
www.stephaniedufford.net

CAST

Molly Kunz (Brea) has been acting most of her life. Some highlights include *The Secret Garden* with University of Wisconsin-Opera/UW-Theatre, *Annie* with Stagestruck Productions, *Carousel* with Madison Repertory Theatre, *The Sound of Music* with Music Theatre of Madison and *The Nerd* with MTC. She has been featured in commercials for Cricket Wireless, Marshfield Clinic, Great Wolf Lodge and Wisconsin Tourism and has appeared in the feature films *Something Better Somewhere Else*, *The Penny* (Best Feature Film at SAICFF and 5 Doves from The Dove Foundation) and *The Wise Kids*. She will soon be seen in the Philadelphia-shot feature film *Benny the Bum*, currently in pre-production. When she is not filming, she is a student at University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Tyler Ross (Tim) moved to Chicago to pursue acting professionally in late 2009 from Jacksonville, FL, where he was born and raised. Since arriving in Chicago he has been seen on stage in Jeff Recommended productions of *McMeekin Finds Out* (Route 66 / Victory Gardens) and *Hickorydickory* (Chicago Dramatists). He also recently led an incredible cast in Chicago Children's Theatre's critically acclaimed production of *Jackie and Me*. He can next be seen in Redtwist Theatre's *That Face*, starting in July. In film and television, Ross has appeared in the feature films *Little Men* (2005), ABC Family's *Searching For David's Heart* (2004), and Stephen Cone's *The Wise Kids*. Ross has appeared in national commercials for Snickers Ice Cream, Cricket Wireless, and Steak 'n Shake. Ross is currently in Chicago shooting the feature film *Nate & Margaret*, starring opposite Natalie West of TV's *Roseanne*.

Allison Torem (Laura) was most recently seen as The Girl in *The Hot L Baltimore* at Steppenwolf Theatre, as Roann in *The Boys Room* at Victory Gardens Theatre, and as Annie in David Schwimmer's *Trust* at Lookingglass Theatre (Jeff Award Nomination), under the direction of Mr. Schwimmer. Allison was part of the Second City Youth Ensemble for two years. *The Wise Kids* is her first independent film.

Sadieh Rifai (Elizabeth) is very thankful to be a part of *The Wise Kids*. She has been an ensemble member at American Theater Company since 2008 and has appeared at ATC in *Welcome to Arroyo's*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*, *Distracted* and *Speech and Debate* for which she won an After Dark Award for outstanding performance. Sadieh was most recently seen in *The Piano Teacher* at Next theatre. Other Chicago credits include understudying the role of Johnna Monevata in *August: Osage County* (Steppenwolf Theatre), *Ski Dubai* (Steppenwolf Theatre First Look) and *The Merchant of Venice* (Silk Road Theatre). Sadieh is a graduate of The School at Steppenwolf. She is also in the new mockumentary comedy series *Bad Sides*. In Fall 2011, she will be seen in *The Amish Project*, a one woman show at ATC, in which she'll play 15 characters.

Matt DeCaro (Jerry) was seen most recently as Duke Frederick in Chicago Shakespeare Theatre's *As You Like It*, as well as the Jury Foreman in *Twelve Angry Men* at the Maltz Jupiter Theater in Florida. Chicago credits include: *The Lieutenant of Inishmore*, *Dinah Was*, *Talley's Folly* (Northlight Theatre); *Perfect Mendecity*, *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Men of Tortuga*, *Slaughterhouse V* (Steppenwolf Theatre); *Romance*, *Heartbreak House* and *The Play About the Baby* (Goodman Theatre); *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Mystery Cycle*, *The House of Blue Leaves* (Court Theatre); *Driving Miss Daisy*, *Laughter on the 23rd Floor* (Briar Street Theatre); and the world premieres of *Spinning into Butter* and *Boy Gets Girl* (Goodman Theatre, Lincoln Center Theater and Manhattan Theater Club). Regional credits include: *American Buffalo*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Machinal* (American Conservatory Theater); and productions at Alliance Theatre and Santa Fe Stages. Film and television credits include: *Prison Break*, *Mr. 3000*, *Eagle Eye*, *U.S. Marshall*, *Curb Your Enthusiasm*, *House*, and *The Office* among others. This past season he was seen on *Detroit 187* and *Chicago Code*.

cone arts presents

a film by stephen cone

molly kunz

tyler ross

allison torem

THE WISE KIDS

matt decaro

sadie rifai
stephen cone

cliff chamberlain
sadie rogers
ann whitney

rodney lee rogers
jacob leinbach
lee armstrong

casting

matthew miller
mickie paskal, c.s.a.
jennifer rudnicke, c.s.a.

costume designer

erin amelia white

sound designer

adam goron

original music

mikhail fiksel

associate producers

jonathan green
charles patrick
celeste patrick

production designer

caity birmingham

director of photography

stephanie dufford

co-producers

monte redman
carolyn redman

co-producers

tim whitfield
mitchell crosby

produced by

sue redman
laura klein
stephen cone

written and directed by

stephen cone

Unit Production Manager Laura Klein

First Assistant Director Laura Klein

Second Assistant Director Seth Farley

Associate Producers Sarah Horton
Tom O'Connor
Matt Pugliese
David Peckman

Associate Producers Brian Kavanaugh
Gina LoPiccolo

CAST

(in order of appearance)

Brea	Molly Kunz
Ryan	Eric Hulsebos
Tim	Tyler Ross
Frank	Frank Stennett
Austin	Stephen Cone
Harry	Lee Armstrong
Elizabeth	Sadieh Rifai
Laura	Allison Torem
Cynthia	Cynthia Pulsifer
Braxton	Braxton Williams
Dylan	Cliff Chamberlain
Erin	Laurel Schroeder
Pastor Jim	Rodney Lee Rogers
Haley	Sullivan Hamilton
Josh	Jonathan Jones
Kathy	Sharon Graci
Jerry	Matt Decaro
Brad	Jacob Leinbach
Cheryl	Sadie Rogers
Ms. Powell	Ann Whitney
Keri	Kendall Hinson
Savannah	Tessa Nicole
Matthew	Porter Spicer
Paige	Danielle Howle
Adam	Will Kinnear
Man at Party	Joe Debney
Jogger	Luca Del Puppo
Club Woman	Sue Redman
Club Boy	Bryan Bosque
April	Alyssa Puckett
Patrick	Justin Johnson

Youth Group

Addison Quilla Dent	Khaleil Burden
Haley Sirisky	Hannah Reynolds

Church Ensemble

Debbie Kunz	West McMehan
Justin Baker	Shane Simmons
Dan Boland	Tamara Saunders

Script Supervisor Kristin Owings

First Assistant Camera	Filipp Penson
Second Assistant Camera	Will Culick
Gaffer	Luca Del Puppo
Best Boy	Ryan Ferguson

Grip Grace Preller Chambers
Grip RJ Lawrence
Grip and Electric Intern Alan Sides

Set Decorator Elsie Eubanks
Prop Master Monica D'Onofrio
Construction Brian Hardison
Art Production Assistant Imee Cuison
Art Production Assistant Jessica Holley

Costume Assistant Alex Kosbab
Costume Assistant Jenny Dennis

Make-Up Designer Christien Marie
Tanesha Dupree
Hair Designer

Sound Mixer Jesse McAlpin
Boom Operator Stephen Lynch

Dialect Coach Erica Tobolski

Catering and Craft Frank Cone
Judy Cone

Production Stills / EPK Marty Schousboe
Production Stills / EPK Shane Simmons

Key Production Assistants Justin Baker
Lauren Ford

Production Assistants Dowell Gandy
Brad Rowe

Chicago Unit

Props / Set Decorator Kolleen McNalis
Costume Assistant Emily Wengert

On-Set Make-Up Ashley Vest

Sound Mixer Larry Kapson
Boom Operator Scott Kaser

Production Assistant Emmett Adler
Brian Harris
Andrea Pabon

Color by TECHNICOLOR
HD Colorist Steven Borden

MUSIC

“Could Be Here”

Written by Dannielle Howle
Performed by Danielle Howle and the Tantrums
Courtesy of Danielle Howle
©1998 DMFHMUSIC BMI

“Someone Not You”

written and performed by
Shaun Hettinger
courtesy of Shaun Hettinger

“Kommst ou nun, Jesu from Six Schubler Chorales”

Written by Johann Sebastian Bach
Performed by David Redd
courtesy of Wicks Organ Company/Pro
Organa/Suzie Redd
©1992 Wicks Organ Company

“How Deep the Father’s Love for Us”

written by Stuart Townend
performed by Sarah Sadler
courtesy of Sparrow Records
© Sparrow Records

“How to Live”

written by Kyle E. Peters, Will Roberts, Brian
Healey and Neil Lucas
performed by The Pass
courtesy of sonaBLAST! Records, LLC
©2011 nuluBlast songs (SESAC)

“Crosswalk Stereo”

written by Kyle E. Peters, Will Roberts, Brian
Healey and Neil Lucas
performed by The Pass
courtesy of sonaBLAST! Records, LLC
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“The Audition”

written and performed by
Mikhail Fiksel and Seeking Wonderland
courtesy of Mikhail Fiksel

“Kalidiscop”

written by Jeff Wild
performed by The Squares
courtesy of The Squares

“”Electric Shock” (dj white russian Remix)”

written by Mikhail Fiksel and Seth Bockley
featuring Kasey Foster

“Colors”

written by Kyle E. Peters, Will Roberts, Brian
Healey and Neil Lucas
performed by The Pass
courtesy of sonaBLAST! Records
©2010 nuluBlast songs (SESAC)

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”
Traditional
arrangement by Leigh Nash, Matt Slocum and
Steve Hindalong
performed by Sixpence None the Richer
courtesy of Nettwerk Productions
©2008 Flying Frog Music (ASCAP) admin. by
Simpleville Music, Inc. / Nettwerk Arias (SESAC)
/ Ariose Music and Bipolar Bear Music (ASCAP)

“Hodie Christus natus est”
written by Jan Pieterszoon Sweelinck
performed by The Lakeside Singers
courtesy of Robert Bowker

“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming”
Traditional
arrangement by Hugo Distler
performed by The Lakeside Singers
courtesy of Robert Bowker
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“Adagio – Allegro – Adagio” from
Concerto Grosso Opus 6 No. 8
written by Arcangelo Corelli
by special arrangement with Naxos Rights
International
© 1995 Naxos Rights International

“”Mission” Demo”
written and performed by
Christina Cone
courtesy of Christina Cone

Original Score Written, Arranged and Performed by Mikhail Fiksel

Production Insurance Provided by Johnsonese Brokerage LLC

SHOT ON LOCATION IN CHARLESTON, SC AND CHICAGO, IL

This film is dedicated to the former members of the Unity Baptist Church Youth Group
Florence, SC
1992-1998

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