



A film by David LaChapelle

Rating: PG-13

Run time: 85 mins.

PERFORMERS

Tommy the Clown

Lil Tommy

Larry

Lil C

Dragon

Tight Eyez

Baby Tight Eyez

Ms. Prissy

Swoop

El Nino

Daisy

Big X

La Nina

Quinesha

THE FILMMAKERS

Directed by.....DAVID LACHAPELLE

Produced by.....DAVID LACHAPELLE
.....MARC HAWKER
.....ELLEN JACOBSON-CLARKE

ProducersRICHMOND TALAUEGA
.....TONE TALAUEGA

Executive Producers.....ISHBEL WHITAKER
.....BARRY PEELE
.....ELLEN JACOBSON-CLARKE
.....STARVOS MERJOS
.....REBECCA SKINNER

Line Producers.....COLEEN HAYNES
.....WALID J. MOUANESS
.....DREW CAROLAN
.....SCOTT KAPLAN

Director of Photography.....MORGAN SUSSER

Editor.....FERNANDO VILLENA

Sound Supervisor.....J. PAUL HUNTSMAN

Music Supervisor.....JONATHAN MCHUGH

Original Music by.....RED RONIN PRODUCTIONS

Original Score by.....AMY MARIE BEAUCHAMP
.....JOSE CANCELLA

Production Company.....LIONZ DEN

Production Company.....HSI PRODUCTIONS / DARKFIBRE

SYNOPSIS

"Rize" reveals a groundbreaking dance phenomenon that's exploding on the streets of South Central, Los Angeles. Taking advantage of unprecedented access, this documentary film brings to first light a revolutionary form of artistic expression borne from oppression. The aggressive and visually stunning dance modernizes moves indigenous to African tribal rituals and features mind-blowing, athletic movement sped up to impossible speeds. "Rize" tracks the fascinating evolution of the dance: we meet Tommy Johnson (Tommy the Clown), who first created the style as a response to the 1992 Rodney King riots and named it "Clowning", as well as the kids who developed the movement into what they now call Krumping. The kids use dance as an alternative to gangs and hustling: they form their own troupes and paint their faces like warriors, meeting to outperform rival gangs of dancers or just to hone their skills. For the dancers, Krumping becomes a way of life – and, because it's authentic expression (in complete opposition to the bling-bling hip-hop culture), the dance becomes a vital part of who they are.

Like "Paris is Burning" or "Style Wars" before it, "Rize" illuminates an entire community by focusing on an artform as a movement that the disenfranchised have created. But the true stars of the film are the dancers themselves: surrounded by drug addiction, gang activity, and impoverishment, they have managed to somehow rise above. The film offers an intimate, completely fresh portrayal of kids in South Central as they reveal their spirit and creativity. These kids have created art – and often family – where before there was none.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

The production consisted of a small crew of no more than five people. All film locations were in the Clowners and Krumpers own neighborhoods, schools and homes. This allowed the filmmakers to gain more personal insight and commitment in order to give an authentic voice to these kids and their underground dance movement. It also created unique and meaningful friendships by breaking down stereotypes and cultural differences.

ABOUT THE MUSIC

RED RONIN PRODUCTIONS is the creative collaboration of five; Richmond & Tone Talauega, Anwar “Flii” Burton, Jose Cancela, and Kevin Richardson. Based on a brotherhood, these five took their friendship and joined together to venture into the world of music.

RED RONIN’s creation of the music for “Krumped” involved the producing talents of BLOEZART, rappers FLII STYLZ, DAP DANIELS, and LIL’ C. Joining the team for the feature “Rize” was Atlanta Producer, ID4 WINBZ, WALT LIQUOR BARRELL and TENASHUS. The producers sought to create a vibe of music that was a true artistic reflection of the energy present during these "dance sessions" (or krump sessions) - a mixture of spiritual African dancing; chaotic mosh pit/ underground fight club moves integrated with the syncopated moves done to a HIPHOP back beat.

Most interesting was that the kids creating this dance movement were not trained dancers – the movement was involuntary and came completely natural to them – an extension of who they were and what they were feeling and experiencing in their lives. The TALAUEGA BROS. (also producers of the film) were truly integrated into the shooting and production of the films – their first hand experience of the live and uncut talent and emotions of the performers inspired them artistically and has been directly reflected into the music for the films.

ABOUT THE DANCERS

THOMAS “TOMMY THE CLOWN” JOHNSON, as one who was raised in South Central, Los Angeles, spent his early adulthood finding himself in and out of trouble and on a road to nowhere. Little did he know that a desperate phone call from a friend in 1992 to provide entertainment for her child’s birthday party would lead him on a successful life-changing journey.

Known these days as the “*Father of Krumping*” – a style of dance that is best described as a raw and natural form of self-expressive freestyle dancing – Tommy the Clown has successfully found a way to relate to today’s youth on their level and in their language.

Realizing Tommy had become a positive role model for the kids in South Central, he created the Battle Zone to provide an alternative outlet for the kids in the community to battle it out on the dance floor instead of on the streets. In 2003, Tommy the Clown’s Battle Zone hosted a sold-out performance at the Los Angeles Forum. Tommy continues the battles every third Saturday of every month at Debbie Allen Dance Academy – a non-profit dance studio where kids from the community can learn all forms of dance training.

Tommy the Clown emerged as a community icon and was asked to be a spokesperson for Governor Gray Davis’ Census Campaign which involved outreach to schools, neighborhood questionnaire assistance centers and statewide agencies which succeeded with the highest mail-in response rates in four decades. He formed strategic partnerships with counties and cities, all while delivering smiles and laughter.

Tommy’s movement is the subject of David LaChapelle’s short film, **KRUMPED** and long-form feature film, **RIZE** slated for release in June 2005. Already, Tommy has been sought out for international radio and magazine interviews and live performances.

Truly an entertainer for all ages, Tommy the Clown’s mission is to reach out to communities across the world that are in need of a positive alternative lifestyle.

LIL "C" is 22 years of age, born January 31, 1983 in California. He was reared in a single parent household by his full-time working mother, Mildred Williams, along with his sister Keisha and his two brothers, Robert Davre and Ronaldo. Through great sacrifices by his mother, Lil "C" was schooled solely in both private and religious schools. He graduated from South Bay Lutheran High School in 2001. Although his private schooling provided him with a safe haven, on the other hand, he still had to return home daily to the dangerous crime ridden neighborhood of South Central. He never succumbed to joining street gangs, drugs, or the rampant crime statistics of his

neighborhood. He was taught early to dream, work hard, study, reach and believe in himself.

Lil "C" has always loved music, dancing, speaking and people. At the age of 3, he stood out as both a talented child dancer and speaker. At the age of 8, he won an essay contest sponsored by Magic Johnson and 92.3 FM The Beat (now 100.3 FM The Beat). As a result, he won the opportunity to not only play one-on-one with the basketball superstar, but receive a personally signed jersey from Johnson. He was sought out to be a speaker for Tom Bradley (first black mayor of the Los Angeles) at community forums; he also spoke annually on the NAACP Martin Luther King, Jr. birthday honor celebrations. He was the main speaker for the Los Angeles county supervisor, Yvonne Burke when Denzel Washington was honored for the naming of a pediatric wing at Martin Luther King, Jr. General Hospital. Crowds never fazed him--the larger the crowd, the more enthusiasm he showed. Lil "C" is loved by people of all ages and economic status. He is a rare uncut gem of talent and compassion and a great communicator. He is a talented dancer, and a hungry, hard worker He has appeared in many videos, with such artists like Eve, Gwen Stefani, blink 182, and Young Romeo. He's performed on the Soul Train Awards with Usher, on the Grammy's with Eve and Gwen Stefani, Regis & Kelly, and 106th and Park with Brooke Valentine. He has choreographed for such artists like Christina Milian, Omarion, Brooke Valentine, Nelly, The Game, Ciara, and Missy Elliott. His personal life is riddled with death of personal family members through both disease, violence, and suicide. Lil "C" raps, acts and is an aspiring choreographer, who hopes to further his career as such by spreading the gift of "Krump" (which was created by Lil "C" and Tight Eyez) throughout the world.

DRAGON was born Jason Green in Frankfurt on November 2, 1981. A military baby, he spent his initial years living throughout Germany, his very first in a hospital, the result of being born prematurely. His family eventually moved to California and settled in Compton. Dragon first crossed paths with Tommy the Clown while dancing for Platinum Clowns, a rival clown group, in competition. Dancing since the age of 19, Dragon has appeared in such music videos as Blink 182's "I'm Feelin' It," and in various awards shows including the Choreographer Awards and the 2005 NAACP Awards. Outside of the Clowning world, Dragon is also an accomplished artist whose experience spans across fashion design, the graphic arts, multi-media, airbrushing, and comic book art. Now residing in Carson, CA, Dragon is currently studying to be a minister. He rediscovered the church after years of distancing himself from it, only to realize how truly unhappy he was with his life. Dragon now believes that the principles our nation was established upon – religion, principle, respect – have been compromised by our drive for material things which have no true value. Through the church, he hopes to someday help others find their own spiritual foundation for a happy life.

MS. PRISSY, born Marquisa Gardner, is a native of South Central Los Angeles, the daughter of Belizean parents. Ms. Prissy first started dancing at the age of four, when her father had given her dancing lessons for her birthday. Her first professional dance gig was in a television commercial for the ATT Go Phone. A spot in a Sprite Remix

commercial soon followed. Among her music video credits are Ludacris' "Stand Up" and lead dancer in Formula One's "Gotta Roll," produced by gospel legend Mario Winans. She is currently on tour with The Game, a protégé of rap legend Dr. Dre. Ms. Prissy first met Tommy the Clown at age 19. She taught ballet and modern dance, before being recruited by Tommy, and moving over to the Cartoons, where together they pioneered the "krump" dance style. The First Lady of Krumping, Ms. Prissy considers herself a Renaissance Woman who also sings R&B / Pop, plays piano and raps. She hopes to continue to work professionally in the entertainment world, in which she uses the stage name Phoenix, and looks to Oscar winner Angela Bassett for inspiration. Ms. Prissy resides in South Central Los Angeles, where she lives with her mother.

TIGHT EYEZ, real name Ceasare Willis, is one of the founders of Krumping. He created the Krump movement in 2000 with his brothers and Lil C and Mijo. While living in New York, Tight Eyez dreamed of launching a dance that would get everyone "hyped up." He soon moved to Los Angeles and founded Clown dancing, which thereafter evolved into Krumping. He went on to perform with many clown groups before finally meeting and joining creative forces with Tommy the Clown. Tight Eyez has turned his life over to God and changed his life through Jesus. He uses the Krump movement to help young people in faith to change their lives. His goal is to establish his own Krump Organization, of which he would be the CEO, and hopes to open schools for youth to dance, exercise their talent and utilize their inner gifts. *Hopefully, by the age of 23...*

Christian Jones, a/k/a **BABY TIGHT EYEZ**, was born and raised in the Church. His grandfather was the founder of the Christian Tabernacle of Love, Faith and Deliverance, and his Aunt is now Pastor of Christian Tabernacle Ministries. After his grandfather passed on in 1998, he took up the organ, which he plays at services. Baby Tight Eyez learned how to Krump dance at the heels of Tight Eyez, Lil C, Mijo, and Dragon, and considers them among his closest friends in the Krump movement. When he is not dancing, he loves to hang with his homies. His goal is to launch a big dance studio where everyone could Krump for free. He would also like to buy his pastors a new church. He hopes to give back to those who do not have, to give back to his neighborhood, to give those who are as he once was.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

David LaChapelle (Director/Producer) was born in Connecticut in 1969. He trained in the fine arts department at The North Carolina School of the Arts before moving to New York. Upon his arrival, LaChapelle enrolled in both the Arts Student League and the School of Visual Arts. Andy Warhol offered him his first professional job shooting for Interview magazine. Recently ranked among the top ten Most Important People in Photography in the world by American Photo, he has continued to reap numerous awards.

David LaChapelle's unfettered images, both bizarre and gorgeous, have appeared on and in between the covers of Italian Vogue, Vanity Fair, Rolling Stone, i-D, Vibe, Interview, The Face, GQ, etc.. He is currently under contract with Vanity Fair.

Worlds collide in David LaChapelle's Hotel LaChapelle (Callaway, 1999), a fresh collection of unforgettable color images. LaChapelle continues to create photographs that confront our visual tastes and re-imagine our contemporary landscape. Hotel LaChapelle follows the photographer's best-selling debut book, LaChapelle Land (Callaway, 1996), in assembling an explosive mix of celebrities and models including Leonardo DiCaprio, Uma Thurman, Cameron Diaz, Ewan McGregor, Madonna, Daniel Day Lewis, Andre 3000, Mark Wahlberg, Drew Barrymore, and Elton John in an extravagant boxed volume.

In addition to his still photography, LaChapelle has directed music videos for select artists including Jennifer Lopez, Christina Aguilera, Britney Spears, Avril Lavigne, No Doubt, Whitney Houston, Moby, Macy Gray, Blink 182, Elton John and Gwen Stefani.

LaChapelle has also recently completed commercial campaigns for Nokia, XM Satellite Radio, and "Desperate Housewives." He directed a Public Service Announcement campaign for "Declare Yourself", encouraging people to vote, which was spearheaded by Norman Lear.

LaChapelle directed and designed Elton John's "The Red Piano" show at Caesar's Palace Coliseum in Las Vegas to critical acclaim.

In the medium of film, David LaChapelle completed a short documentary of the same subject matter, "Krumped," which garnered several awards in 2004.

Ellen Jacobson-Clarke (Executive Producer/Producer), a native of New York City, has worked in film production since 1985. In the course of her career, she has acted as producer for commercials and music videos. Among her projects, Ellen was Associate Producer on "The Hunger," a program for Showtime that was executive produced by Tony Scott. While heading up Ridley Scott's music video arm of production company RSA/USA, Ellen executive produced many award winning videos. She is currently Executive Producer with HSI Productions, representing prestigious directors including David LaChapelle.

Marc Hawker (Producer) is an award winning Director, Creative Director and Producer. Originally graduating as an architect, Marc was awarded The Royal Institute Of Architects Silver Medal and went on to teach experimental aesthetics as Guest Professor at The Southern California Institute of Architects, Glasgow School of Art, The Architectural Association and Tulane University, New Orleans.

His performance installations were commissioned by The National review Of Live Art, The Tramway, The Demarco Gallery of European Art, Gallerie Diana Marquart, and The

Arches in the UK. And his work has been published in Impossible Worlds, LAX, The Body Book, World Architecture and Blueprint among others. As a Creative Director Marc developed a number of projects with the ad agency Bartle Bogle and Hegarty and co-Wrote, Produced and Creative Directed Levi's seminal and critically acclaimed film Ash: Love and Destruction broadcast on Channel 4.

His directing debut was Zombietown, Just Another Rock and Roll War Story, commissioned by Channel 4 was finalist at the New York Film Festival. The film profiled the pirate radio station in Serbia during the Yugoslav Civil War where he was a guest presenter. Time Out called it a "Multi media Epic Street Poem". His short films include Danske Piegä Visa Alt and Watch The K Foundation Burn a Million Quid.

Along with Ishbel Whitaker, Marc is in production on Executing God set in the near future with designs by the award winning experimental architect Zaha Hadid.

Rich Talauega (Producer) and **Tone Talauega** (Producer) - The talents of Richmond and Tone Talauega extend far beyond the conventional use of the word choreography. Musicians, producers, performers – quite simply, they are a strong force in the pop culture of today. As multi-faceted artists, they are able to achieve something truly special in their choreography work that continues to make these two highly sought after, and high on the list to create work for the top names in the industry.

As teenagers, the brothers were discovered by Michael Jackson's choreographer while free-styling at a club in Oakland. Within a year, the guys were on their way to becoming legendary dancers and choreographers having toured with both Diana Ross and Michael Jackson within months of moving to Los Angeles.

The Talauega's dedication, unique style and creative abilities have transformed artists such as Monica, Usher and the Backstreet Boys. Their highly visible projects include work for Coca-Cola, Pepsi, Gap, Mitsubishi as well as the well-received dance feature "Save The Last Dance". The list of artists seeking their collaboration includes Christina Aguilera, Lil Kim, Missy Elliott, The Black-Eyed Peas, Blink 182, Avril Lavigne and Dirty Vegas, just to name a few.

Most recently, Madonna asked the pair to choreograph several numbers for her world tour, Evolution, which included bringing their talent to the opening number – a redesign of the classic, "Vogue" as well as "Holiday", "Music" and "Nobody Knows Me". Most recently their work can be seen in the new J-Lo video "Get Right"; Eve and Gwen Stefani's hot new video "Rich Girl."

2005 kicks off with the choreography for J-Lo's performance at the NRJ concert in Cannes, France and the 2005 Grammy Awards as well as the artistic direction of the Backstreet Boys upcoming world tour. They are continuing their work as music producers for "Rize" and are actively writing new music for numerous artists & projects

as well as venturing into the writing and development of a new feature film based on their dynamic true life experiences growing up in Richmond, California.

Ishbel Whitaker (Executive Producer) graduated in Fine Art and went on to work in theatre, joining the ensemble company of the maverick experimental Polish director, Zophia Kalinska who was the protégé of Tadeusz Kantor and Grotowski. Ishbel worked with her for a period of 10 years, touring Europe extensively. She has also created her own critically acclaimed live art being commissioned by London's ICA and The National review of live Art. She also co-owns Dark Fibre with Marc Hawker.

Walid Mouaness (Line Producer) Born and raised in Liberia, West Africa. He went on to acquire an undergraduate degree in communications and theatre in Beirut, shortly after the Lebanese war ended. Being in Lebanon led to numerous collaborative and award winning media projects with the United Nations to create civic awareness in a country that had been devastated by years of turmoil.

By the summer of 1997, Walid Mouaness arrived in the United States to pursue an MFA degree in Film (Writing, Directing and Producing). Upon completion of his MFA, Mouaness moved to Los Angeles where he worked in various capacities on independent films until he completed his first indie feature ("Kitchen Privileges" a/k/a "Housebound") as co-producer and editor. "Kitchen Privileges" premiered at South by South West in March of 2000. It was picked up for distribution by Overseas Film Group.

Mouaness has since continued to produce high profile commercials and music videos with the likes of Damien Rice, Avril Lavigne, Seal, J-Lo and New Found Glory to name a few. "All Down Hill From Here" was nominated for Best Breakthrough Video of the year at the 2004 Video Music Awards.

Walid's rise in the industry led him to an ongoing collaboration with veteran music video and commercial director Meiert Avis, and more recently with David LaChapelle on music videos for Elton John.

Morgan Susser (Director of Photography) - Transitioning from the world of commercials and music videos to feature films, cinematographer Morgan Susser teamed up with director David LaChapelle to capture a new style in documentary filmmaking with "Rize."

Best known for his organic ability to capture unique moments in real environments, Susser collaborated closely with LaChapelle on "Rize," which then led to their further collaborations on Elton John's Concert 2004-2006.

Morgan was thrilled to work with LaChapelle on this feature film that, he believes, became more of a dynamic and powerful documentary experience than originally imagined.

“We became a part of so much love and passion that these kids’ have for their lives and art that, through the process of making this documentary film,” said Morgan, “we grew into one big family. It’s was an experience that I’ll treasure forever.”

Fernando Villena (Editor) began his editing career in New York City working on documentaries. Since moving to Los Angeles, Fernando has expanded his work to include commercials and music videos. Educated as a painter, it was only natural that Fernando found editing as another form of visual expression. His visual sense coupled with his love for music and culture has lead him to such substantial and socially significant projects such as “Rize”.