

KNIGHTS OF THE ZODIAC

PRODUCTION INFORMATION

Based on the international anime sensation, *Knights of the Zodiac* brings the Saint Seiya saga to the big screen in live action for the first time. Seiya (Mackenyu), a headstrong street teen, spends his time fighting for cash while he searches for his abducted sister. When one of his fights unwittingly taps into mystical powers he never knew he had, Seiya finds himself thrust into a world of warring saints, ancient magical training and a reincarnated goddess who needs his protection. If he's to survive, he will need to embrace his destiny and sacrifice everything to take his rightful place among the Knights of the Zodiac.

Stage 6 Films presents, a Toei Animation Production, *Knights of the Zodiac*. Directed by Tomek Bagiński and written by Josh Campbell & Matt Stuecken and Kiel Murray, the film is based on original stories and characters from the manga "Saint Seiya" by Masami Kurumada. The film stars Mackenyu, Famke Janssen, Madison Iseman, Diego Tinoco, Mark Dacascos, Nick Stahl, and Sean Bean. Produced by Yoshi Ikezawa, Joseph Chou, and Tim Kwok. The executive producers are Kozo Morishita, Katsuhiko Takagi, Jeffrey Chan, and Rick Nathanson. Director of Photography is Tomasz Naumiuk and the film's Production Designer is Csaba Lódi. Edited By Peter Pav and Kenny G. Krauss, the film's Costume Designers are András Dániel Tóth and Attila Godena-Juhász. The Visual Effects Supervisor is Ron Simonson and the film's composer is Yoshihiro Ike.

Knights of the Zodiac is rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association for action/violence.

ABOUT THE FILM

The idea of a live-action Saint Seiya film has been a dream for Toei Animation since the 1990s, when Masami Kurumada was still composing his famous manga. Now, in 2023, that dream is a reality. The winding road of development took over ten years, dozens of scripts, and a heavy dose of filmmaking ingenuity.

With the rising popularity superhero films, the time was right to bring Seiya to the silver screen. But breaking into the world of Hollywood production studios was no easy feat. The producers met with several creators and considered a variety of approaches that were ultimately not right for the project. In the end, the only way to ensure that *Knights of the Zodiac* would become the great movie everyone believed it could be was to develop it as an in-house production.

Although *Knights of the Zodiac* is the first live-action entry in the Saint Seiya canon, it stands on the shoulders of decades of beloved manga and anime. The filmmakers had a responsibility to make this film something to be proud of, a responsibility they took very seriously. From the first meeting with Tomek Bagiński, the producers knew his commitment to the source material, his experiences as an Oscar-nominated filmmaker and TV producer, and his cutting edge VFX work with Platige Image made him the perfect person to bring this story to life.

The next hurdle was casting. A worldwide search was conducted for actors with the talent, range, gravitas to embody the mythical yet grounded characters that the fans know and love. The resulting cast was diverse and international, including genre legends like Sean Bean, Famke Janssen, Mark Dacascos, and Nick Stahl and rising stars like Madison Iseman and Diego Tinoco. For this global movie based on Japanese source material, the producers felt it was important for a Japanese actor to play the titular character. Mackenyu emerged as the perfect choice to play Seiya, as an award-winning actor who is also a native English speaker and proficient martial artist in the mold of his father, the late, great action star, Sonny Chiba.

Budapest was chosen for its gorgeous locations and booming film industry and *Knights of the Zodiac* began production in July of 2021.

ABOUT THE CAST

MACKENYU (Seiya)

Mackenyu, a Japanese American actor born November 16, 1996, is the son of actor, producer, director, and martial artist Sonny Chiba. Growing up he appeared in a few films and TV shows while he was in school and had many interests that included learning to ride horseback, Kyokushin Karate, gymnastics, water polo, and wrestling as well as interest in music that led him to learn piano at age ten and later learning to play saxophone and flute.

Mackenyu rose to fame as an actor after landing the role of Wataya Arata in the “Chihayafuru” trilogy (2016) that earned him the 40th Annual Japan Academy Newcomer of the Year Award in 2017. His fame grew dramatically after his supporting role as Cadet Ryoichi in the feature “Pacific Rim: Uprising” (2018) and his lead role in the racing action movie “Over Drive” (2018). Mackenyu was cast as the villain, Enishi Yukishiro, in the blockbuster “Rurouni Kenshin: Final Chapter” (2021) and then as Scar in “Fullmetal Alchemist: The Revenge Of Scar” and “Fullmetal Alchemist: Final Transmutation” (2022).

In 2021, Mackenyu was cast as Roronoa Zoro in the Netflix live action series adaptation of “One Piece” (2023), and as the lead, Seiya, in the feature “Knights of the Zodiac” (2023). Mackenyu also stars in two Disney+ projects in 2023, the original live action/ anime mixed feature, “Dragons of Wonderhatch” and the drama series, “House Of The Owl.”

SEAN BEAN (Alman Kido)

Award-winning actor Sean Bean has enjoyed a 38-year career that spans across theatre, radio, television, and film. Having graduated from the Royal Academy of Dramatic Arts (RADA) in 1983, Sean began his career on stage appearing in productions such as the RSC's "Fair Maid of the West" (1985) and "Killing the Cat" (1990).

After becoming a household name due to his portrayal of Richard Sharpe in the "Sharpe" series, an array of major international film roles followed including his portrayal of super-villain Alec Trevelyan in "GoldenEye" (1995) and as Boromir in "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring" (2001), a role for which he received the Awards Circuit Community Award for Best Acting Ensemble, an Empire Award nomination for Best Performance by an Actor and a Screen Actors Guild Award for Outstanding Performance by a Cast in a Motion Picture. Subsequent notable roles include "Troy" (2004) and "National Treasure" (2004).

Sean received critical acclaim for his role in the award-winning series "Game of Thrones" (2011), starring as protagonist Eddard 'Ned' Stark. In 2013, Sean was awarded his first International Emmy Award for his portrayal of a transgender teacher accused of murder in BBC crime drama "Accused." He again returned to primetime TV as Father Michael Kerrigan in the BBC's drama series "Broken" (2017), a role for which he won the BAFTA for Leading Actor.

That same year he also starred as John Marlott in "The Frankenstein Chronicles" (2017). Sean returned to our screens in February 2019, starring in Sky's original series "Curfew," where he played the lead character "The General." In September 2019, the first series of the critically acclaimed BBC war drama "World on Fire" aired, which saw Sean star as Douglas Bennett. Following this, Sean starred in the second and third series of "Snowpiercer," a television-adaptation of the wildly popular Bong Joon-ho film.

In 2021, Sean reunited with Emmy-winning writer Jimmy McGovern for the eagerly anticipated BBC Drama “Time” where he portrayed the role of Mark Cobden for which he won the BAFTA for Leading Actor. In 2022, Sean starred in Stefan Golaszewski’s BBC Drama “Marriage” opposite Nicola Walker.

FAMKE JANNSEN (Guraad)

Famke has recently filmed the out-and-out lead in “Locked In” for Netflix Film, directed by Nour Wazzi (Anna Friel, Rose Williams and Finn Cole). Prior to this she wrapped Sovereign’s “The Experiment”, directed by Chee Keong Cheunc, and filmed a lead on feature “Boy Kills World” (Bill Skarsgard), directed by Moritz Mohr.

Famke will soon be seen in “Then You Run” (Derek Ritchie and Ben Chanan, the team behind “The Capture”) from Kudos for Sky.

Last year, Famke starred in DJ Caruso’s “Redeeming Love”, as well as “Dangerous” (Scott Eastwood and Mel Gibson) and independent films “The Postcard Killings” (Jeffrey Dean Morgan and Cush Jumbo) and “The Vault” (Freddie Highmore and Sam Riley). Further recent projects include “Primal” (Nicolas Cage), “The Poison Rose” (Morgan Freeman and John Travolta) and “Bayou Caviar” (Richard Dreyfuss and Cuba Gooding Jr).

Famke is best known for her leading roles in Bond Film: “Goldeneye,” “X-Men” as Jean Grey/Phoenix, and the “Taken” trilogy opposites Liam Neeson. Her television credits include Ryan Murphy’s “Nip/Tuck” and “How To Get Away With Murder” starring Viola Davis, Ava Duvernay's “When They See Us” on Netflix and the BBC/PEACOCK series, “The Capture.”

She has worked with notable directors such as Woody Allen, Robert Altman and James Mangold. Her co-stars include among many others; Robert DeNiro, Matt Damon, Hugh

Jackman, Edward Norton, Ian McKellen, Patrick Stewart, Bruce Willis, James Gandolfini, Michael Douglas, Pierce Brosnan, and Jeremy Renner.

Famke wrote and directed the independent feature film, "Bringing Up Bobby" that starred Bill Pullman and Milla Jovovich, in 2011.

MADISON ISEMAN (Sienna)

Madison Iseman is a multi-talented, dedicated actress, who continues to portray an array of complex characters across all creative mediums.

Next up for Madison is the female lead in the new Sony Franchise film, "Knights of the Zodiac," based on the wildly popular 1980's Japanese anime and later animated series, "Saint Seiya" by Masami Kurumada. Madison plays "Sienna" an average high school girl who one day discovers that she's "Athena the Goddess of War," who's parent's, played by Famke Jansen and Sean Bean go to war over. Madison Iseman was last seen on the small screen as the female lead in a stand-alone episode of the new anthology spinoff, "American Horror Stories" for Ryan Murphy & FX. Before that she starred as the series lead and co-lead (she played twins) in Amazon Prime's TV remake of, "I Know What You Did Last Summer." In 2020 she starred in Amazon Studios and Blumhouse TV's supernatural thriller "Nocturne" directed by Zu Quirke. Iseman starred opposite Sydney Sweeney, playing her fraternal twin. The same year she was also seen in the Disney+ teen drama "Clouds." Directed by Justin Baldoni ("Five Feet Apart"). Iseman stars as the female lead and love interest opposite Fin Argus. The film follows the true story of Zach Sobiech (Argus), a teenager who is diagnosed with a rare bone cancer and turns to music writing the song "Clouds," which went viral on YouTube video and reached No. 1 on iTunes prior to his death at 18 in 2013. The film was released in October 2020.

In February 2021, Lionsgate released "Fear of Rain," starring Madison as a girl with schizophrenia and begins to suspect her neighbor has kidnapped a child. The only

person who believes her is 'Caleb' - a boy she isn't sure even exists. Katherine Heigl & Harry Connick Jr. play her parents. Iseman has worked with almost every major studio and streamer recently including Netflix in, "The F\$#1 It List." The "Ferris Bueller-esque teen comedy starred Iseman as the female lead and love interest to 'Brett Blackmore' (Eli Brown), an exemplary high school senior whose world gets turned upside down when a senior prank goes horribly.

Perhaps Madison is best known for her role in the billion-dollar grossing Sony Pictures' "Jumanji" franchise (last 2 films) opposite Dwayne Johnson, Karen Gillan, Kevin Hart and Jack Black. She originally appeared in "Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle" as 'Bethany,' one of the four teenagers that discover an old video game console and are literally drawn into the game's jungle setting. As they become the adult avatars they choose, 'Bethany' becomes Jack Black, her choice as avatar. Iseman returned in "Jumanji: The Next Level," which brings back the team of friends to Jumanji to rescue one of their own but discover nothing is as they expect.

In the summer 2019, Iseman appeared in theaters around the world in New Line Cinema's horror film "Annabelle Comes Home", the third installment in the Annabelle franchise. Iseman plays babysitter 'Mary Ellen' to 'Judy' (McKenna Grace) and both find themselves with the demonic doll Annabelle when she comes out to play, unleashing a funhouse of horrors on the young girls. The film opened #2 at the domestic box office and found incredible success globally with a \$200m total box office.

In fall 2018, Iseman was seen starring as the female lead in Sony's Goosebumps sequel "Slappy Halloween," which was set in the small town of Wardencllyffe on Halloween night. It follows Sonny (Jeremy Ray Taylor) and Sam (Caleel Harris) as they find a manuscript in an abandoned house that once owned by R.L. Stine. When the boys open the manuscript, they release Slappy, who has plans to cause a Halloween Apocalypse. Sonny, Sam, and Sonny's sister Sarah (Iseman) team up with Jack Black's R.L. Stine.

Following work on select short and indie films, Iseman booked her first television role on the hit ABC series “Modern Family” as ‘Sam,’ the love interest for Rico Rodriguez’s character ‘Manny.’ Iseman continued acting in the independent film “Wild for the Night” with Bianco Santos and James Maslow, Nickelodeon’s “Henry Danger” and Awesomeness TV’s “Mahomie Madness” with Teala Dunn. Other projects for Iseman include the Halloween-themed films “Ghost Squad” and “Tales of Halloween” as well as TruTV’s “Those Who Can’t” and the independent film “Laid in America,” alongside YouTube stars Caspar Lee and KSI and Hollywood stars Bobby Lee and Angela Kinsey, merging the worlds of digital and feature films together. Most recently, Iseman was seen in the films “Feast of the Seven Fishes,” “Riot Girls,” “Beauty Mark,” “Liza, Liza Skies Are Grey” and in the TV movie “The Rachels.” Madison’s first big breakthrough was as ‘Charlotte’ in the CMT series, “Still the King” as Billy Ray Cyrus’s daughter. The show lasted two seasons.

The South Carolina native discovered her interest in the arts in middle school when she became involved in videography and photography, creating her own short films. There were limited theatrical opportunities in her hometown, so Iseman found her own outlets, participating in church choir and learning to play the violin and ukulele. She moved to Los Angeles when she was 16 years old to pursue her craft full time.

Iseman currently resides in Los Angeles with her longtime boyfriend, musician and actor Spencer Sutherland.

NICK STAHL (Cassios)

Nick Stahl can currently be seen as a lead role in the Showtime series “Let The Right One In” opposite Demien Bachir and Grace Gummer. He can next be seen in the Hulu series “Tiny Beautiful Things” opposite Kathryn Hahn set for an April 2023 premiere. He has recently appeared as a lead role in the IFC independent film “Hunter Hunter” opposite Devon Sawa as well as six episodes of the AMC hit series “Fear the Walking Dead”

Last year Stahl appeared as the lead role in the feature film “What Josiah Saw” opposite Robert Patrick and Kelli Garner for Shudder.

Notable credits include Robert Rodriguez's “Sin City,” the franchise hit “Terminator 3,” Todd Field's “In The Bedroom,” and the lead of the HBO series “Carnivale.” Nick Stahl has also appeared in Richard Loncraine's “My One and Only” opposite Renee Zellweger and Kevin Bacon and in the feature film “Quid Pro Quo” alongside Vera Farmiga and starred in the Sundance feature film “Sleepwalking” alongside Charlize Theron, Woody Harrelson, and Dennis Hopper.

DIEGO TINOCO (Nero)

Born and raised in Southern California, Diego Tinoco is a first-generation American. Bullied as a child for his skin condition, Diego found his escape at the local skatepark where he began making skateboarding videos with his friend and discovered his passion for acting.

Diego booked his first role on the MTV breakout hit “Teen Wolf” and immediately moved to Los Angeles to pursue acting full-time. Seven months later, he landed his first lead role on the Netflix series “On My Block.” Diego was awarded the "Horizon Award" for Outstanding Newcomer by The National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts in Washington, DC for his depiction of “Cesar”. He was also nominated for an Imagen Award for "Best Actor - Television" and a Teen Choice Award for "Choice TV Actor." “On My Block” became Netflix's #1 most-binged series of 2018 and ran for four successful seasons, inspiring the spin-off series, “Freeridge.”

Diego went on to star in the iconic role of "Tybalt" in the 2021 Sundance and SXSW competition title R#J, a modern and diverse retelling of Romeo and Juliet, directed by Carey Williams (“Emergency”) and produced by Timur Bekmambetov (“Unfriended” and “Searching”). Diego recently wrapped the upcoming indie crime thriller “Bad Hombres”

opposite Thomas Jane, Luke Hemsworth, and Tyrese Gibson. He also set to star opposite Aaron Eckhart in the thriller MUZZLE. Both projects are currently in post-production.

Diego is fluent in Spanish and English and currently resides in Los Angeles. He is repped by Paradigm, Impact Artists Group, and Jackoway Austen.

MARK DACASCOS (Mylock)

Mark Dacascos is an actor, director, martial artist, voice over artist and television personality. Whether seen on the big screen or small, playing the good guy or the bad, Mark has been making audiences stand up and take notice for many years.

Dacascos has appeared in over 40 feature films including the haunting French film and box office success, "Brotherhood of the Wolf," nemesis to Jett Li in "Cradle to the Grave," and cult classic action film, "Drive." He has also reprised the iconic role of Wo Fat in the hit CBS series "Hawaii 5-0," Mr. Giyera on the hit television show "Agents of S.H.I.E.L.D.," as well as the star of the series "The Crow." Mark has appeared in numerous television shows such as "Chicago P.D.," "Lucifer," and the hugely popular Hallmark franchise, "The Perfect Bride" and it's follow up "The Perfect Bride: Wedding Bells."

Mark's turn as The Chairman on the Food Network's hit show, "Iron Chef America" launched him into pop icon status with over 200 episodes and counting on the Food Network. He also took his turn on the dance floor transforming his martial arts moves into dancing magic on ABC's hit show, "Dancing with the Stars." Many millions have also enjoyed watching Mark in the hugely popular and uber successful web series "Mortal Kombat Legacy" and the international web series "The Way." Of course, Mark's most memorable recent performance was as lethal assassin "Zero" in "John Wick: Chapter 3 Parabellum" opposite Keanu Reeves, Halle Berry, Asia Kate Dillon, and Laurence Fishburne.

Mark also stars in “Jade”, a film by renowned Stunt coordinator turned director James Bamford, opposite up and coming actress Shaina West and Mickey Rourke.

Most recently on the big screen Mark was seen in “Blade of the Ronin 47” opposite Anna Akana for Universal pictures and “Run & Gun” opposite Richard Kind and Angela Sarafryn for Paramount Pictures.

The darkly exotic, multi-lingual, multi-skilled Dacascos is a mix of Japanese, Filipino, Spanish, Irish, and Chinese heritages. He was born in Hawaii and attended school in Germany. He is married and the proud father of 3 children.

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

TOMEK BAGIŃSKI (Director)

Tomek Bagiński is a celebrated European writer/director and his work has been nominated for Emmys, Visual Effects Society awards and Oscars. He is also a two-time BAFTA winner for his short films. Recently he exec-produced Netflix’s “The Witcher” and “Into the Night” series and is working on future development of the “Witcher” Universe. He is also working on development of several feature film projects, one of them being recently completed “Knights of the Zodiac” for Toei Animation and Sony, a live-action feature based on the popular Japanese anime. He is co-owner of Platige, the biggest eastern-European VFX company.

JOSH CAMPBELL & MATT STUECKEN (Writers)

Josh Campbell and Matt Stuecken are a writing team living in Los Angeles. Their first collaboration resulted in the preemptive purchase of their original spec screenplay, THE CELLAR, by Bad Robot Productions and Paramount Pictures. The movie was released

under the new title: 10 CLOVERFIELD LANE. The film received positive reviews (90% on Rotten Tomatoes) and made over \$110 million at the worldwide box office.

Their film HORIZON LINE, a thriller starring Allison Williams, was released in 2020 by STX Entertainment. KNIGHTS OF THE ZODIAC is the third major movie written by the duo. Next up for Campbell & Stuecken is a remake of the classic Hong Kong film THE KILLER, which will be directed by John Woo and goes into production in May of 2023, starring Omar Sy and Nathalie Emmanuel.

Josh and Matt have scripted feature films for Universal Pictures, Amblin Partners, Spyglass Media, and Lionsgate. They have written television pilots for NBC, Red Arrow Entertainment and AMC; and they've developed series with Amblin, UCP, Sony Television and Wattpad/Webtoons.

YOSHI IKEZAWA (Producer)

Yoshi's tenure at Toei Animation as Head of International Co-Production and lead producer has been for over 20 years. In the past several years, he has produced such international projects as Microsoft's "Halo" and "Harlock: Space Pirate," which had its world premiere at the Venice International Film Festival. Besides having several projects in development with Hollywood studios like Sony Pictures. He is currently in production on several feature projects as well as series including Season 3 for Toei Animation's "SAINT SEIYA: Knights of the Zodiac" the anime series with Crunchyroll distributing globally except Japan and China.

TIM KWOK (Producer)

Tim began his film career working in development at Robert Redford's South Fork Pictures in the mid-90s and then progress to work with Warner Bros Studios on the international distribution department. In the late 90s he joined Fox Studios based New Regency Productions and worked as Director of Distribution/ Finance on studio films

such as “LA Confidential,” “Fight Club”, “Entrapment”, “Mr. & Mrs. Smith” and many others. In early 2000s, Tim produced “The Medallion” starring Jackie Chan and Claire Forlani for Sony Screen Gems and over the 2 decades has also produced over 12 feature films with various studios such as Sony and Lionsgate and one television series for Nickelodeon Network.