

All copied directly from: <http://www.hbo.com/carnivale/cast/index.shtml>

Ben Hawkins: (played by Nick Stahl)

Ben Hawkins-A trouble young man picked up by the carnival I the Oklahoma Dust Bowl, circa 1934. Abandoned as an infant by his father, Henry "Hack" Scudder, Ben was raised on an isolated farm by his fanatically religious, mentally ill mother, Flora Hawkins. At an early age, he began manifesting supernatural healing powers. Frightened, his mother condemned him as devil-spawn, rejecting him emotionally and physically until her death in 1934 due to complications of dust pneumonia. He was subsequently picked up by Carnivale.

Since joining the odd troupe, Ben has been plagued by disturbing and mysterious dreams. Forces within the carnival-specifically Professor Lodz, a blind mentalist, working under orders of a mysterious overseer known only as "Management"- seem to be manipulating him into using his healing powers, despite their terrible cost. Clues and strange signs seem to indicate that Ben's past-and his future- are inexorably entwined with that of Carnivale.

Brother Justin Crowe: (played by Clancy Brown)

Brother Justin Crowe-A Methodist minister in California's rich Central Valley, Justin and his sister, Iris, were tragically orphaned when their mother, Plemina, died in a train crash. Like Ben Hawkins, Justin also experienced a manifestation of supernatural powers at a young age-specifically the ability to see into others' souls accompanied by the powers of illusion and telekinesis. Horrified, traumatized by their fatal effect, young Justin sublimated these abilities into adulthood.

Raised by his surrogate father, Rev. Norman Balthus, Justin focused his energy into religious studies, eventually taking his vows as a minister. In 1934, devoted not only to his flock, but also to the poor Okies pouring in from the Dust Bowl, Justin began experiencing apocalyptic dreams and visions as, once again, the powers he buried so long ago have begun reasserting themselves. Along with the manipulations of Iris, Justin stands poised on the brink of fame as a radio evangelist.

Iris Crowe: (played by Amy Madigan)

Iris Crowe-Brother Justin's older sister, she cared for him after the death of their mother, Plemina Belyakov, in a train crash in the California Sierras. Though her brother had long since forgotten about his strange powers, she alone kept his secret, fervently praying for the day when Lord would

make His wishes known. With the onset of Justin's visions, she takes action, ruthlessly pursuing what she sees as her brother's divine destiny. Intensely loyal, fiercely protective, she sees her station in life as one of service and devotion to Justin.

Samson: (played by Michael J. Anderson)

Edgar "Samson" Leonhardt-Began his career as a "mighty-mite," dwarf strongman act at Coney Island's Lilliputia in 1904, a miniature village built to resemble 15th-century Nuremberg (also known as "Midget City"). In 1912, Samson began working with traveling shows, including Carnivale, which was then owned by the Hyde & Teller Company.

Quick-witted, a consummate con-man, Samson was soon elevated from his position as a performer to general manager, a position he lost for a brief period after the show was purchased by Management and his responsibilities were passed on to Professor Lodz. In time, however, he regained his job, becoming Management's right hand. Beyond the penny-ante frauds perpetuated by himself and his people, Samson has borne witness to many strange and inexplicable incidents.

For years, Management has been tracking an ex-carnie geek named Henry Scudder. Now, Scudder's son, Ben Hawkins, has joined the troupe, bringing with him terrible-even fatal-luck. Samson's demands for an explanation have gone unanswered and he's found himself forced to help this strange young man, all the while suspecting that they are both pawns in Management's deadly game.

Clayton Jones: (played by Tim DeKay)

Clayton "Jonesy" Jones- Samson's right hand man, head of the rousties, or carnival workers. Strong, tough, but bull-headed, Jonesy was once a star pitcher in the major leagues, whose career was cut short by a crippling injury to his knee when he refused to throw a game for the mob. Broke, he subsequently eked out bare sustenance as a low-level rumrunner, lining on the edge of society gradually climbing further into the bottle until he joined Carnivale. There, Jones, found redemption in the eyes of a little girl named Sofie, a tomboy who wanted to learn how to pitch just like her Major League heroes.

The two became inseparable-the tall, rangy ex-ballplayer and his playful young doppelganger, who seemed to mimic his every expression and gesture. But eventually, the girl blossomed into a woman and the

relationship that was once so effortless and natural has become painfully awkward, fraught with missteps and misconstrued intentions.

Sofie: (played by Clea Duvall)

Sofie Agnesh Bojakshiya-The Gypsy daughter of Apollonia Bojakshiya, a once renowned tarot card reader, now catatonic due to complications during Sofie's birth. Sofie shares a telepathic link with her mother, which allows her to lend voice to Apollonia's predictions. Though this symbiotic relationship allows the two to make a living, it also gives Apollonia access to every thought and feeling Sofie may have. Furthermore, Sofie has never developed a true "inner voice," that role having long been usurped by her mother.

But as Sofie matures, the cloying control her mother holds over her combined with the physical demands of nursing an invalid have become intolerable. Sofie longs to break free of her mother's influence. Apollonia, however, will do anything, including tearing through the veil that separates the living from the dead, to maintain her control over Sofie.

Lodz: (played by Patrick Bauchau)

Professor Ernst Lodz-While searching for his dancing bear, Bruno, Lodz discovered an American expatriate, Henry Scudder, wandering in a Lemberg battlefield. Tragically, the bear was shot by a Russian officer. However, saving Scudder turned out to be fortuitous for Lodz when he became aware of the American's uncanny powers. Besides incipient psychokinesis, Scudder could read minds, divine the past and future from touching objects. The two traveled together, performing for the wealthy in European salons from Belgrade to Paris.

Aware that the Russian was still pursuing him, Scudder decided to leave the act. Lodz tried to stop him, coveting a fraction of his partner's power. Scudder fulfilled Lodz's wish, gifting him with psychic power while exacting a terrible price: Lodz's sight. Bitter, Lodz has pursued Scudder ever since-at first alone, then in league with Management, a pursuit he will continue even beyond death itself.

Lila: (played by Debra Christofferson)

Lila Villanueva - The so called "Bearded Lady of Brussels" was born in Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana, to a circus family in 1890. Given their genetic predisposition, the hirsute family performed under the stage name "Villalobos" (literally, "House of Wolves"). Lila, her two brothers, Oscar and Raoul, and her parents traveled throughout the Southeast, spurning the

freak-show tents for the high-wire. The "Flying Villalobos" were soon signed with the Ringling Brothers Circus, traveling the international circuit for five years before Oscar fell to his death in Copenhagen in 1905, a tragedy from which the family never recovered. Her father, shattered by the loss of his eldest son, committed suicide three years later.

At sixteen, already graced with a thick, silky beard, Lila married for the first time to a ventriloquist, Paco Soza. In her own words, "Paco was beautiful, but that fucking dummy, Gordito, drove me nuts." After less than six weeks, the marriage was annulled. Over the next fifty years, Lila was married over nineteen times, "twenty if you count Gordito." But the one, true love of her life was Professor Lodz. By all accounts, she never emotionally recovered from his disappearance in late 1934.

Apollonia: (played by Diane Salinger)

Apollonia Bojakshiya - A once renowned seer who read cards for the rich and famous on the eastern seaboard. The only psychic Houdini was unable to debunk (when a reporter later opined that perhaps Madame Apollonia was "the real McCoy," Houdini reputedly snapped, "Just because she fooled me doesn't mean she's not a fake.")

In 1913, during childbirth or soon thereafter (reports vary), Apollonia suffered a series of devastating seizures that left her paralyzed and catatonic. She was subsequently cared for by her sister, Anash, and later by her daughter, Sofie the Younger. The two eventually began working the travelling circuits as a mother-daughter act.

Ruthie: (played by Adrienne Barbeau)

Ruthie - A retired snake charmer, Ruthie is the "talker" (what rubes might call a "barker") for her son, Gabriel, who performs a strong man act. Anyone who can wrestle Gabriel to the ground wins five dollars-a prize Ruthie has never had to shell out. She became Henry Scudder's lover during his brief tenure with the Hyde & Teller Company.

Now, with the arrival of Scudder's son, Ben Hawkins, Ruthie once again finds herself drawn in emotionally. Ever pragmatic, no matter how much she tries to extricate herself from her relationship with the charismatic young Ben, the further entangled she becomes.

Stumpy Dreifuss: (played by Toby Huss)

Felix (Stumpy) Dreifuss - Began his career as a talker for the famed fat-lady

twins, Gillian and Shannon Bartholomew in 1910. He then joined the infamous Red Rutherford Traveling Crazy Horse Revue, where he met his future wife and business partner, Rita Sue Menninger.

Upon Rutherford's death, the young couple began traveling with various carnival companies as The Gay Paree Show, eventually joined by their two daughters, Libby and Dora Mae. For a number of years, the Dreifuss Family prospered, but their fortunes steadily declined in the 1930s as troubled times spawned a slew of competing "cootch family" acts, including the Beauvilles, the Vance Family and the notorious Franklin Girls.

Rita Sue Dreifuss: (played by Cynthia Ettinger)

Rita Sue (Menninger) Dreifuss - was born in Kansas City, MI, in 1895. Her father, Thomas, a prosperous merchant, and mother, Emma, doted on their only child, educating her at the finest Eastern boarding schools. Thomas's premature death in 1903, however, had a catastrophic effect on the family's financial fortunes, forcing Emma to seek employment as a domestic worker.

Rita Sue left home in 1908, gravitating to vaudeville and, eventually, the Red Rutherford Traveling Crazy Horse Revue, traveling the eastern seaboard and sharing the stage with strip-show luminaries such as Bonnie Fellows and Katie McCook, and meeting her future husband, Felix (Stumpy) Dreifuss. When they were married in Atlantic City in 1914, Rita Sue was already seven months pregnant with their first child, Libby. Her birth was soon followed by that of their second daughter, Dora Mae, in 1916.

Libby Dreifuss: (played by Carla Gallo)

Libby Dreifuss was born in 1914, the eldest child of Felix (Stumpy) and Rita Sue Dreifuss. She joined the Gay Paree Show as a performer in 1928. The Cootch Show is, in fact, the girlie show, nudity required.

Gabriel: (played by Brian Turk)

Gabriel - The Carnivale strong man. Anyone who can wrestle Gabriel to the ground wins five dollars - a prize Ruthie has almost never had to shell out. Gabriel is huge and powerful and has the I.Q. of a six-year-old.

Reverend Norman Balthus: (played by Ralph Waite)

Reverend Norman Balthus is Justin Crowe's mentor and former guardian. Ran an orphanage in Stockton, taking Justin and Iris in as children. Norman and his wife, Rose (d. 1927) were surrogate parents to the two children. Highly respected within the California Methodist Church, Balthus has helped Justin throughout his career, paving the way for his young, gifted protege, lending moral and financial support.

Varolyn Stroud: (played by John Carroll Lynch)

Varlyn "Bird Dog" Stroud - Committed his first murder at the age of 9, when he deliberately upset a Ferris-wheel car, his younger sister, Clara, falling to her death. Three years later, he killed his grandfather in a "hunting" accident. Since then, he has been a suspect in over a dozen contract-killings for the Milwaukee mob. His specialty is tracking down witnesses under protection by law enforcement. Though never convicted of homicide, Stroud had spent most of his life in prison on a variety of charges.

Tommy Dolan: (played by Robert Knepper)

Thomas Dolan - Pioneered the "roving reporter" concept in broadcast journalism on KZAK Radio, Los Angeles in 1932. His "On the Road" series was a ratings success, spawning a number of copy-cat programs nationwide. Dolan left his post at KZAK to produce Brother Justin Crowe's highly successful radio ministry, "Brother Justin's Church of the Air" in 1934.

Henry Scudder: (played by John Savage)

Henry "Hack" Scudder - Born in 1889 in Ingram, Texas, the only son of Hilton Scudder, a notorious Grand Dragon in the Texas Knights of the Ku Klux Klan, and Emma Krohn Scudder. Accounts vary, but it has been alleged that, the night of Henry's birth, his mother went mad and murdered her husband and several of her own children by a previous marriage.

Early in childhood, the boy's powers began to manifest themselves. Besides incipient psychokinesis, Scudder could read minds and divine the past and future from touching objects.

Scudder joined the 1st Canadian Depot Battalion in 1914, stationed in Lemberg as an observer with the Austro-Hungarian army. An assassination attempt by a Russian officer, Lucius Belyakov, was thwarted by a runaway circus-bear, Bruno, whose master, Professor Ernst Lodz, soon became aware of the American's uncanny powers. The two traveled together for several months, performing for (and fleeing) the wealthy in European

salons from Belgrade to Paris.

Aware that Belyakov was still pursuing him, Scudder fled to the United States in 1915. There he met Flora Hawkins, who became his common-law wife. The two had a son, Ben Hawkins. Once again sensing the Russian in pursuit, Scudder left his wife and infant son, taking a job as "The Gentleman Geek" with the Hyde & Teller Company until it was purchased by Belyakov.

By now a heavy drinker, Scudder wandered the Southwest as an itinerant laborer--including a stint at the ill-fated Babylon Mine--before vanishing in 1922.