

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**MASTERS OF THE AIR'S AUSTIN BUTLER AND CALLUM TURNER TALK FRIENDSHIP TAKING FLIGHT IN APRIL 1 ISSUE OF *EMMY* MAGAZINE**

(LOS ANGELES – Mar. 28, 2024) While working on Apple TV+'s *Masters of the Air*, the third World War II-themed limited series from executive producers Steven Spielberg, Tom Hanks and Gary Goetzman, actors Austin Butler and Callum Turner formed a bond that lasted well beyond production. The actors talk to *emmy* about the young fighter pilots they portrayed and the real friendship they formed, in the award-winning official publication of the Television Academy, on sale Apr. 1.

In 2020, fresh off the title role in the big-screen biopic *Elvis*, Butler had dinner with castmate Hanks when the Oscar winner mentioned a World War II project he was working on. Butler — an admirer of Hanks, Spielberg and Goetzman's previous WWII

productions, *Band of Brothers* and *The Pacific* — sent an audition tape. Turner, who was then working on the film *Fantastic Beasts: The Secrets of Dumbledore*, was also eyeing the project and submitted an audition tape of his own. It wasn't until the *emmy* interview for "**In Air Form**" that the young stars learned they had originally been tapped for each other's roles. "I never questioned it," Butler says. "It was just, 'Whatever you guys think,'" adds Turner, "I just wanted to be on the show."

In the nine-part epic limited series that premiered January 26 and has since become Apple TV+'s most-watched series ever, Butler plays reserved straight-shooter Gale "Buck" Cleven, while Turner plays wisecracking New Yorker John "Bucky" Egan. The two lead a team of airmen, as part of the Eighth Air Force's 100th Bombardment Group and demonstrate strength and courage while piloting a B-17 "Flying Fortress" amid rampant enemy fire and later, as prisoners of war in Germany.

"There's always pressure on a job to be good and true, but this role was more of an honor," Turner says. "It's an honor to represent these people and what they did, who they were and what they sacrificed." Butler adds, "These young men fought for our freedom with their blood. There was a feeling of wanting to do them justice, honor them through the process and do it as authentically as possible." Turner continues, "These two were best friends and what they did was extraordinary. When we committed, it was like, 'It's just you and me.' We dove in and didn't look back."

In preparation for their roles, the actors cast as airmen endured a two-week training regimen led by military advisor Captain Dale Dye, learned to maneuver the controls inside a B-17 and took choreography classes for the celebration scenes. But it was a friendly game of baseball in Hyde Park that ultimately allowed Butler and Turner to get to know each other well. Over the 11-month shoot in London, the duo's friendship grew, including squeezing in Sunday-night card games and group dinners with the cast.

Though the cameras stopped rolling in 2022 and both actors became involved in different projects, their bond remains. "It was an amazing thing to bring these men to life, and then I think of our friendship; I really don't want to shake it off, that's for sure," says Butler. Turner adds, "I really miss him. Some days, I was going into work just to make Austin laugh. It gave me such joy."

Additional featured highlights from the new issue include:

- In "**Rebels with a Cause**," the team behind *Genius: MLK/X*, season four of the National Geographic anthology series, discusses turning its focus to the Civil Rights movement. Creators and cast members talk with *emmy* about delving into the similarities and differences between Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King and Malcolm X, titans of the movement. The eight-episode season is available to stream on Disney+ and Hulu.
- Fresh off signing a multiyear exclusive deal with Food Network, Guy Fieri is taking his tenure at the Discovery-owned channel to the 20-year mark. In "**A Guy Walks into a Diner...**," Fieri reflects on his career and culinary adventures, on screen and off — and shares a recipe for pulled-pork sandwiches.
- In "**True to Life**," Amy Schumer talks with *emmy* about the second season of *Life & Beth*. Schumer reflects on her life and career leading up to the Hulu dramedy, in which she serves as executive producer, star, writer and director.

About *emmy*

Emmy, the official publication of the Television Academy, goes behind the scenes of the industry for a unique insider's view. With wide-ranging, inclusive subjects representative of the Television Academy membership and the medium as a whole, *emmy* showcases the scope of television and profiles the people who make it happen, from the stars of top shows and artisans behind the cameras, to programming trends and technological advances. Honored with dozens of awards for editorial excellence, *emmy* is published 13 times per year and is available at TelevisionAcademy.com for single print and digital copies as well as subscriptions.

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