



12TH FLOOR



Does danger lurk just a few floors below?

A JOHN R. KITCH DIGITAL FILMMAKING PRESENTATION STARRING ALICIA N. SMITH ROCKY CHAEL ROZANNE DEVINE
WITH MAUREEN SMITH MARY GAY ROGERS DONALD WHITE PETRA CHAMBERS ALLEN BOB ALLEN AND JOHN R. KITCH
MUSIC SUPERVISOR NICHOLAS YOUNG PRODUCTION SOUND MIXER & BOOM OPERATOR LA'RON COOPER DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ANTHONY LONG
EDITED, WRITTEN & PRODUCED BY JOHN R. KITCH & ALICIA N. SMITH DIRECTED BY JOHN R. KITCH



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NR NOT RATED, PARENTS CAUTIONED
LANGUAGE, THEMATIC MATERIAL, AND SOME VIOLENCE WITH BLOOD

12th Floor directed by John R. Kitch
johnrkitcdigitalfilmmaking@gmail.com
Color 119 min. English USA

Narrative Feature Film: 119 minutes

SYNOPSIS – SHORT (29 words)

When a wheelchair-bound woman moves back in with her disabled mother, she finds that much more goes on in the independent living apartment complex than she could possibly imagine.

SYNOPSIS – FULL (79 words)

A young woman, who goes by the singular-lettered name of “A”, is wheelchair-bound and forced to move back in with her mother, Mo, at an independent living high-rise. As she does battle with her own demons, she begins to spy on other residents of the building, but mischief quickly turns to mayhem when she realizes she may have witnessed something of the macabre. Is it all in her head, or does danger lurk just a few floors below her?

DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

I first met Alicia N. Smith at art school, where I was studying filmmaking and she was studying photography.

I was working in a computer lab during after hours (as I usually did), and she came up to me, introduced herself, and started talking. Never had I ever encountered someone so outgoing, forward, and to-the-point. Alicia struck me as such an energetic soul, so much so that I didn't initially realize there was anything physically different about her. I would later learn

about her disability, something challenging that she conquers daily. From then on, we were friends, and it continues to be an honor to work with her in many aspects of life and art.



Dir. John R. Kitch sets up a shot for *12th Floor*.

Alicia and I developed *12th Floor* as a fictional, drama-infused mirror to our lives, but more importantly as a message to the filmmaking community that disabled actors and artists have a rightful place in a medium that is experiencing an exciting change with diversity. As a character in the film, Alicia experiences real struggles that those with disabilities face (decreased mobility, lack in range of motion, physical and emotional pain, relationship challenges), and then things are taken to another level with the introduction of a dramatic storyline. Now, an audience gets to see how resourceful someone in a wheelchair can be, and learn that no one should be underestimated or ignored simply because they look, move, and live differently.

Alicia and I are proud and excited to present *12th Floor*, a story that we hope will inspire as much as it will entertain.

John R. Kitch
Director

FAQs

Q: How did the making of a film like *12th Floor* come about?

JRK:

To be perfectly honest, the seed of *12th Floor* was planted out of sheer boredom, creative boredom. In late 2015, it had been at least a whole year since I was deeply involved in any kind of film project. I had been through the wringer with a couple of soul-crushing part-time jobs, but I finally settled into a great housekeeping gig helping out my friend, Alicia, and her mom, Maureen.

Alicia and I knew each other previously from art school, so working with her was no problem. Eventually, Alicia also wanted to invest her creative energies in a big project, and finally an idea came to me. I was always told in school “write what you know”, or “film what’s familiar”, and so I asked Alicia and Maureen if they’d be comfortable making a movie about themselves in their own home.

The catch would be that it was not a documentary, nor was it really a mockumentary. They would play themselves in everything but name, and would work around dramatic scenarios that Alicia and I concocted. The *Rear Window* homage and my involvement in the cast (me, the housekeeper, playing the housekeeper), fell into place, and the movie started to evolve on its own.

Q: Would you consider *12th Floor* a traditional movie?

JRK:

The process by which the film was made was not traditional at all. Some of that comes out of the necessity of super low-budget, independent filmmaking, and the rest comes from Alicia and I wanting to do something a little experimental and dangerous.

We wrote and filmed in such a way that we risked not having a coherent structure to follow once we got in the editing room. When I say we “wrote” *12th Floor*; it wasn’t in the traditional screenplay format. It was a roughly ten page scenario highlighting the main parts of the storyline, and in fact, there was really no written dialogue whatsoever. We figured out the words on set in an attempt to create more normal or organic conversations between characters. A lot of unusable takes were just us finding the scenes by what we wanted to say to each other while we were acting. Some may say that’s a waste of time and footage, but I feel that by our eighth or ninth take, we had a realistic sounding conversation going on, and the following setups went faster once we memorized what we had just discovered.

When it came to shots, and setups, and filming, I remember at one point wanting to shoot every single dialogue scene in only one wide shot, with no over-the-shoulders, mediums, or closes to cut to. Although some of those kinds shots still exist in the final cut, I quickly realized in production that every dialogue scene was not going to work that way, for reasons of pacing and drama. I quickly adjusted my philosophy there, and the film was better for it.

If you’re asking if the film is traditional in an outward appearance, I would say it pretty much is. You have a protagonist who comes with her own problems, emotionally and physically, and she is pitted against an antagonist she comes across while she is trying to figure out how to get used to a new environment. This is one of those times where a chaotic process managed to hold itself together with some kind of spine, so a seemingly experimental film turned into something that is recognizable to an everyday audience. All the while, I am happy to say that subtexts and messages that we wanted to include seem to remain intact.

Q: What does *12th Floor* mean to you now, with it being finished?

JRK:

What rose out of just a desire to film something, anything, has turned into something that ends up holding a lot of weight, and I believe that is largely because our leading ladies are disabled. It’s not just a film containing two disabled characters. Alicia and Maureen, as people, are disabled, and live with that, but more importantly they thrive.

Although *12th Floor* is an homage and genre film, I truly think its a prime showcase for two actors who may not land roles in other movies. I’m not saying I agree with that mentality, however. I think in this exciting era of show business where we are becoming more inclusive and diverse, actors, filmmakers, and other artists who are disabled should not miss out. They should not be pushed to the side, and they should not be discouraged. They possess another unique perspective of life we should not overlook.

BIOGRAPHIES



JOHN R. KITCH
DIRECTOR, PRODUCER, WRITER

John R. Kitch is an independent filmmaker whose credits include the feature film *12th Floor*, and the short films *Drive-ins Driven Out?* and *Earth Wept for the Moon*.

In August 2018, Kitch completed post production on *12th Floor*, the first full-length feature film produced by his independent production company. He produced it with filmmaker and actor Alicia N. Smith. *12th Floor* is honored as an official selection of Kansas City FilmFest International 2019.

Kitch was the director for Team What's In The Box? for the 48 Hour Film Challenges in Kansas City and Des Moines. They created the short films *Blood Iron* (Kansas City 2012), *Feelgood* (Des Moines 2013), and *General Justice* (Kansas City 2013). *General Justice* garnered two awards for Best Writing and Best Choreography. The team won four awards for their 2013 National Film Challenge entry, *Good Morning, Justin*, including runner-up for the sponsored Go-Pro Challenge. Kitch also completed assignments with the Media Team for Kansas City FilmFest 2013, creating a series of interviews with guest filmmakers.

Drive-ins Driven Out? went on to play at the Kansas City FilmFest and the Tallgrass Film Festival in 2014. *Sizzled*, another short film written and directed by Kitch, was also an official selection of Kansas City FilmFest 2014 by way of the Kansas City Fringe Fest.

In June 2013, Kitch completed his B.A. in Digital Filmmaking and Video Production. While attending film school, he received a scholarship for outstanding academic achievement. He graduated with high honors.

Kitch is an avid reader and researcher of psychology, myths, and world history/politics. He keeps an eye out for the next story all the while.



ALICIA N. SMITH
PRODUCER, WRITER, LEAD ACTOR

Alicia N. Smith is an artist, filmmaker, and actor from the Kansas City area.

12th Floor is Smith's first feature film. She serves as a producer, writer, and editor, and as the lead actor. Smith's experience includes stills photography, assistant directing, and other cast and crew work. She often works with filmmakers Anthony Long and John R. Kitch.

When not working in film, Smith also draws, paints dolls, practices keyboard, sews, creates jewelry, and attends cosplay conventions, sometimes in costumes of her own design. She is also a reader and researcher of the strange and unusual.



ANTHONY LONG
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Anthony Long attended The Art Institutes International-Kansas City from 2011-2015 to further expand his knowledge in film production. There, he received his Bachelor of Arts in Digital Filmmaking & Video Production.

While living in Kansas City, Long worked as a production intern for CinemaKC; where he assisted in the production of the 5th season of their show. He also worked on several short films, including writing and directing the short film *Effexor* in 2015.

Long also operates as a freelance videographer & editor; with work including promo spots for the Gordman's Unfringed Fashion Show, as well as the Kansas City Comic Con convention. He recently acted as Director of Photography for the independent feature film titled *12th Floor*.

PRODUCTION CREDITS

Directed by
John R. Kitch

Edited, Written, and Produced by
John R. Kitch & Alicia N. Smith

Director of Photography
Anthony Long

Production Sound Mixer and Boom Operator
La'Ron Cooper

Cast
Alicia N. Smith as A
Rocky Chael as Ed
Rozanne Devine as Mildred
Maureen Smith as Mo
Mary Gay Rogers as Plant Lady
Donald White as War Historian
Petra Chambers Allen as Dancing Woman
Bob Allen as Dancing Man
Yang the Cat as Himself
John R. Kitch as Joel

Music Supervisor
Nicholas Young

The producers wish to thank
Linda J. Kemp, Carla Schubert, The Kitch & Russell Families, The Smith Family, Ruby Smith
Dace & Laura Mercer, Elisabeth Dorton, Barry & Stephanie Wilson
Michael Martin & Amanda Smith-Martin, Analisha Martin, Have Guns Will Rent Costumes & Props
888 International Market, The Residents of S.F.T., The City of Overland Park, Kansas
Star Phoenix Films, Cairn Productions

With special acknowledgment & gratitude to
The composers of Artlist
The composers of Free Music Archive
The foley artists of Freesound

Filmed with cameras by
Canon, Sony, GoPro

Edited with software by
Adobe

Filmed on location in various cities of Johnson County, Kansas

OFFICIAL WEBSITES & SOCIAL MEDIA

John R. Kitch Digital Filmmaking – Official Website

<https://jrkdigitalfilmmaking.weebly.com>

John R. Kitch Digital Filmmaking – Official Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/JohnR.KitchDigitalFilmmaking>