

## Interview, Audio: Trey Edward Shults Directs 'It Comes at Night'

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on June 7, 2017 - 12:44pm

- [A24](#) [2]
- [Apocalypse](#) [3]
- [Carmen Ejogo](#) [4]
- [Christopher Abbott](#) [5]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [6]
- [Horror](#) [7]
- [Interview](#) [8]
- [It Comes at Night](#) [9]
- [Joel Edgerton](#) [10]
- [Kelvin Harrison Jr.](#) [11]
- [Krisha](#) [12]
- [Krisha Fairchild](#) [13]
- [Patrick McDonald](#) [14]
- [Riley Keough](#) [15]
- [Thriller](#) [16]
- [Trey Edward Shults](#) [17]

CHICAGO – In 2016, a new filmmaker voice made its way into the scene, and it was significant. Trey Edward Shults released his debut film “Krisha,” a shattering story of addiction and its effect on family. The film got him a deal with the distributor/producer A24, and his sophomore effort – the horror/thriller “It Comes at Night” – will be released on June 9th, 2017.

“It Comes at Night” deals with a supposed post-apocalyptic world, where a disease is killing off the world’s population. Trust is a difficult issue in such an atmosphere, and when Paul (Joel Edgerton) discovers Will (Christopher Abbott) trying to break into his fortified cabin in the woods, he immediately reminds the intruder that he has no problem killing him. But the situation modifies, and Paul ends up inviting Will’s family to stay with his family. But because the trust issues still exist, the paranoia after sunset increases with each dark night.



'It Comes By Night,' Written and Directed by Trey Edward Shults

*Photo credit: A24*

Trey Edward Shults is a self made director. He began with a short film called “Mother and Son” in 2010, which featured his aunt Krisha Fairchild. He followed that up with the short film version of “Krisha,” again featuring Fairchild. After raising money for the feature film version, he created “Krisha” in his mother and father’s home, and most of his cast were family members... including Shults himself in a key role. The film won a Grand Jury Award at the 2015 South X Southwest festival, and was released a year later to rave reviews. HollywoodChicago.com talked to Shults in anticipation of the release of “It Comes at Night,” and the interview is split into transcription and an audio portion.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** You are fascinated with the effect that outside forces have on the human psyche in this film. Which current outside

force do you see as the biggest threat to the mental balance we try to maintain in life?

**Trey Edward Shults:** So much of what is pulling us apart today, and has continued throughout our very existence, is fear at a primal level. I think there is so much fear in the world right now, and it's messing a lot of us up. That goes into things like the recent election and world events, and fear keeps messing with us.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** When you were casting this film, were you intent on making Paul's family mixed race, or did it just happen that Kelvin Harrison was best for the role of Travis, and you cast backwards from there?

**Shults:** It wasn't my original intent for the family to be mixed race. It's not a film about race, but in making a film today I still have keep stuff like that in mind. I didn't really think about it until after the fact, but now that we're sitting here, there is a mixed race factor in the film. But it's a 'post-race' commentary, even though as human beings that fear can still divide us. It's still there, certainly.



Director Trey Edward Shults in Chicago

Photo credit: Patrick McDonald for HollywoodChicago.com

**HollywoodChicago.com:** One of the more interesting scenes was when the two adult males exchange what they did for a living, one vague and one specific. What do you think this tells us about the two men in that scene?

**Shults:** I like having those little details and insights. It tells us a lot about each character and how they approach the world. They do come from different places, and it speaks to a range of characteristics. Paul is a more meticulous kind of guy than Will, but less intuitive.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** When you created the story, did you think about what former occupations you were going to make these guys?

**Shults:** Actually no, because the first draft came out very quickly from me, and I wrote the story from the character's point of view. I intuitively knew who they were and what I expected from them, and as it evolved I just filled in the details in subsequent drafts.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** The emerging sexuality of Travis is a specific theme, especially in his isolation. What do you think is the most difficult thing about the transition from boy to man, that men generally don't talk about?

**Shults:** In that sense of boy-to-man, one thing that I think about is responsibility, in so many different facets. When I thought about all the men characters, I thought about where that responsibility existed. That was the most interesting element of that nature.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** What is the connection, or how do you think specifically, the characters in 'It Comes at Night' and 'Krisha' are related?

**Shults:** Well, the final shooting draft of 'Krisha' and the first draft of 'It Comes by Night' were written around the same time. They are very intermeshed, even as they are similar and different. It's all about the personal side of where the stories come from me – it's about the real people in my life that 'Krisha' represents, and how much I see of myself in the character of Travis in 'It Comes at Night,' and what I see in my Dad and Step Dad in Paul. It's about the different sides of me going into different characters.

**In the audio portion of the interview, Trey Edward Shults talks about his early memories of his Aunt Krisha, directing his family on that film, and what reaction he anticipates for "It Comes at Night."**

Kelvin Harrison Jr. Written and directed by Trey Edward Shults. Rated “R”



[18]

By [PATRICK McDONALD](#) [19]  
Writer, Editorial Coordinator  
HollywoodChicago.com  
[pat@hollywoodchicago.com](mailto:pat@hollywoodchicago.com) [18]

© 2017 Patrick McDonald, HollywoodChicago.com

Source URL (retrieved on *Mar 28 2024 - 2:25am*):  
<http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/27602/interview-audio-trey-edward-shults-directs-it-comes-at-night>

Links:

- [1] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/users/hankq>
- [2] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/a24>
- [3] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/apocalypse>
- [4] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/carmen-ejogo>
- [5] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/christopher-abbott>
- [6] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/hollywoodchicagodotcom-content>
- [7] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/horror>
- [8] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/labels/interview.html>
- [9] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/it-comes-at-night>
- [10] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/joel-edgerton>
- [11] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/kelvin-harrison-jr>
- [12] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/krisha>
- [13] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/krisha-fairchild>
- [14] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/patrick-mcdonald>
- [15] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/riley-keough>
- [16] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/thriller>
- [17] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/news/trey-edward-shults>
- [18] <mailto:pat@hollywoodchicago.com>
- [19] <http://www.hollywoodchicago.com/about#PAT>