



L I G H T

P R E S S P A C K

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OVERVIEW

Genre: Sci-fi / Horror

Running time: 93 mins 45 s

Writer/Director: M. K. Woollard

Producers: David A. Bradley & M. K. Woollard

Starring: Christine Roche & Gia Lily

Original Music by: D. A. Rinaldi

Format / Resolution: 4K 2:1 aspect ratio 4096 X 2048

Sound: 5.1 / Stereo

Language: English

Country of Origin: United Kingdom

SYNOPSIS 1

“After crash-landing in an escape pod on a dark, misty planet, a mother is hunted by a predator which attacks the lights she must use to find her missing son.”

SYNOPSIS 2

After crash-landing in an escape pod on a dark and misty planet, Niu pulls on her emergency spacesuit and sets out searching for other survivors, including her young son.

She quickly discovers that there is life in the fog - and that the lights she must use to find her missing boy draw in an alien predator. In a race against time, Niu must evade the creature and locate her lost boy before their oxygen runs out.

But as Niu starts to encounter other survivors, it becomes clear that they are not here by accident - and that there are worse things than creatures lurking in the dark...

SYNOPSIS 3

A survivor named Niu crashes in an escape capsule on a dark and misty alien planet. Putting on a battered old spacesuit she sets out in search of other survivors, including her young son. Quickly she discovers that the planet harbours bioluminescent lifeforms - including a predator which homes in on her helmet light and almost kills her.

As Niu recovers from the creature's attack, she spots the distant emergency beacon light of a teenager named Tallie. Struggling to get there before the creature, Niu just manages to make radio contact and warn Tallie in time. Tallie however is unable to save another passenger she was in radio contact with, Avel - who was in turn in contact with a young boy. Avel is killed, cutting off Niu's son again.

Niu refuses to waste time finding Tallie, so the two women head off in search of the boy, in contact with one another only by radio. They bond as they try to figure out how their ship crashed whilst trying to avoid the predator, sinkholes and other dangers. As they search, Niu begins to see hints of shadowy figures in the mist who vanish when approached, including finding a dropped chisel. While sheltering from a storm they discover that the 'boulders' providing cover are actually piles of the predator's dung, which also happen to be flecked with pieces of a precious material called perla. Tallie digs into the dung in search of her fortune, eventually finding a huge chunk. As night falls and Niu wants to get moving again, she figures out that by mimicking lightning flashes they can avoid sinkholes while not attracting the predator.

Becoming desperate, Niu uses her scanner to locate another capsule, tossing the scanner and it's light away just before the predator reaches her. She is however devastated to find that her boy is not there. Tallie convinces Niu to use the capsule's powerful radio in the hope of reaching her son. But Niu only succeeds in making contact with a rescue ship - which is still hours away, much to Tallie's consternation.

Getting out of the capsule, Niu discovers a patch of fresh blood and an out-of-place chain of broken lights. Beginning to suspect that she is being watched, Niu runs - but it is Tallie who is attacked by one of the shadowy figures, cutting off her radio. Niu is forced to continue her search alone with a dwindling supply of oxygen. Just as she is running low and is ready to give up hope, Tallie gets back in radio contact claiming to have found Niu's son's capsule. Tallie flashes this capsule's lights quickly to draw Niu to her.

Reaching the capsule, Niu finds that her son is not there, but that Tallie is waiting for her - armed with an electroshock gun. Tallie demands that Niu hand over her remaining oxygen, where it is revealed that Niu is an illegal immigrant attempting to reach Earth, and that Tallie believes the 'rescuers' are deliberately dragging their feet because they don't want to help people like them. Niu figures out that Tallie is not an immigrant like her, but is actually one of the people traffickers - a coyote. A fight ensues, ending with Niu escaping but being hit with an electroshock blast as she vanishes into the mist.

Niu awakes to discover she has been captured by the shadowy figures, who have tied her up in a chain of lights. Niu asks why they're doing this, but receives no answer. She begs to know where her son is and whether they captured him - and one of them nods in the direction her son is. After they leave her to die, Niu manages to cut herself loose using the chisel she found earlier, heading in the direction the figure indicated, where she finally spots the boy being wrapped in a chain of lights. She kills the figure wrapping up the boy and finally comes face to face with her son... only to discover that the boy she has been on the trail of this whole time is not her son. There was a miscommunication earlier with Tallie about the boy's name. Her own son is still missing and is almost certainly dead.

In shock, a devastated Niu turns the boy's lights off just before the predator attacks - but an oxygen alarm goes off at the wrong moment, drawing it back. As Niu and the boy prepare to be eaten, Tallie reappears, blasting the predator with her electroshock gun, scaring it away. Tallie and Niu face one another, with Tallie perhaps still thinking of stealing Niu and the boy's oxygen, when the creature returns enraged, zeroing in on the fidgeting boy. Realising the boy is about to be killed, Niu sacrifices herself by turning on her helmet light, trusting that Tallie will try to save the boy. The predator eats Niu and Tallie escapes with the boy.

Tallie is now alone with the boy, her own oxygen almost gone. The boy's penultimate oxygen canister runs out and Tallie takes out his last full canister, wondering what to do... She finally decides to help him, connecting up his canister before the two of them set off for the rescue lander. As they reach the lander, with Tallie out of oxygen and gasping for air, two shadowy figures block their path. Tallie again decides to help the boy, telling him to run as she throws herself at the figures, swinging her bag with giant perla chunk like a mace. She manages to knock down one figure before being dropped by an electroshock blast from the other, causing her to drop the bag. She looks around and is dismayed to see that the boy has also been blasted and captured.

At that moment a rescuer emerges from the lander, armed with a huge laser rifle. For a moment Tallie thinks they are saved. But the rescuer is only there for Tallie, a genuine citizen. Choking for air and screaming in desperation, Tallie is dragged onto the lander as the figure wraps the boy in a chain of lights. A distraught Tallie is rescued as the immigrant boy is left to die. The final shot shows the chunk of perla spilled from Tallie's dropped bag, revealing the reason for everything: Perla forms around the bones of people consumed by the predator. The shadowy figures are shooting down ships containing illegal immigrants and are feeding the survivors to the predators so that they can harvest the perla from their bones. The authorities are aware, but instead of stopping it they are turning a blind eye.

CAST



**Christine
Roche**
"Niu"

Appearing in film and commercials for around 20 years, Christine has recently featured alongside Steve Guttenberg in *Heckle* (2020), with past credits in *Kill Your Lover* (2016) and *Karen Carpenter: Goodbye to Love* (2016)



**Gia
Lily**
"Tallie"

Singer-songwriter, TikTok star and actress, Gia is a woman on a mission. *Light* (2023) is her first feature film co-lead role. Gia has previously appeared in *Casualty* (2017) and featured alongside Andrew Elias in the award-winning short, *Cognition* (2020). 2023 has seen the release of her debut EP *If You Think These Are About You, They Probably Are*.



**Tedroy
Newell**
"Avel"

With his unique, authoritative voice, Tedroy has been a successful voiceover artist for a number of years. He has recently ventured into acting, appearing in the hit TV show *Bridgerton* (2020-). *Light* (2023) is his first feature film.



**James
Woollard**
"Boy"

Light is James's first foray into acting. He now has all his front teeth.



**Anna
Swan**
"Officer"

Anna has appeared in a number of notable productions over the past few years, featuring alongside the likes of Emily Watson and Mark Gatiss. Credits include *Doctors* (2020-22), *Dracula* (2020), *A Royal Night Out* (2015) and *Victoria* (2016-2017).



M. K. Woollard Writer/Director

Matt has worked in the film industry for several years, primarily in awards campaigning, working as a consultant with companies including STUDIOCANAL, NETFLIX and SHUDDER.

He co-founded OUTATIME FILMS in order to venture into film production.

LIGHT is his first feature film.



David A. Bradley Producer

Co-founder of OUTATIME FILMS, David has written multiple screenplays and has worked on several feature-length movies and short films in front and behind the camera.

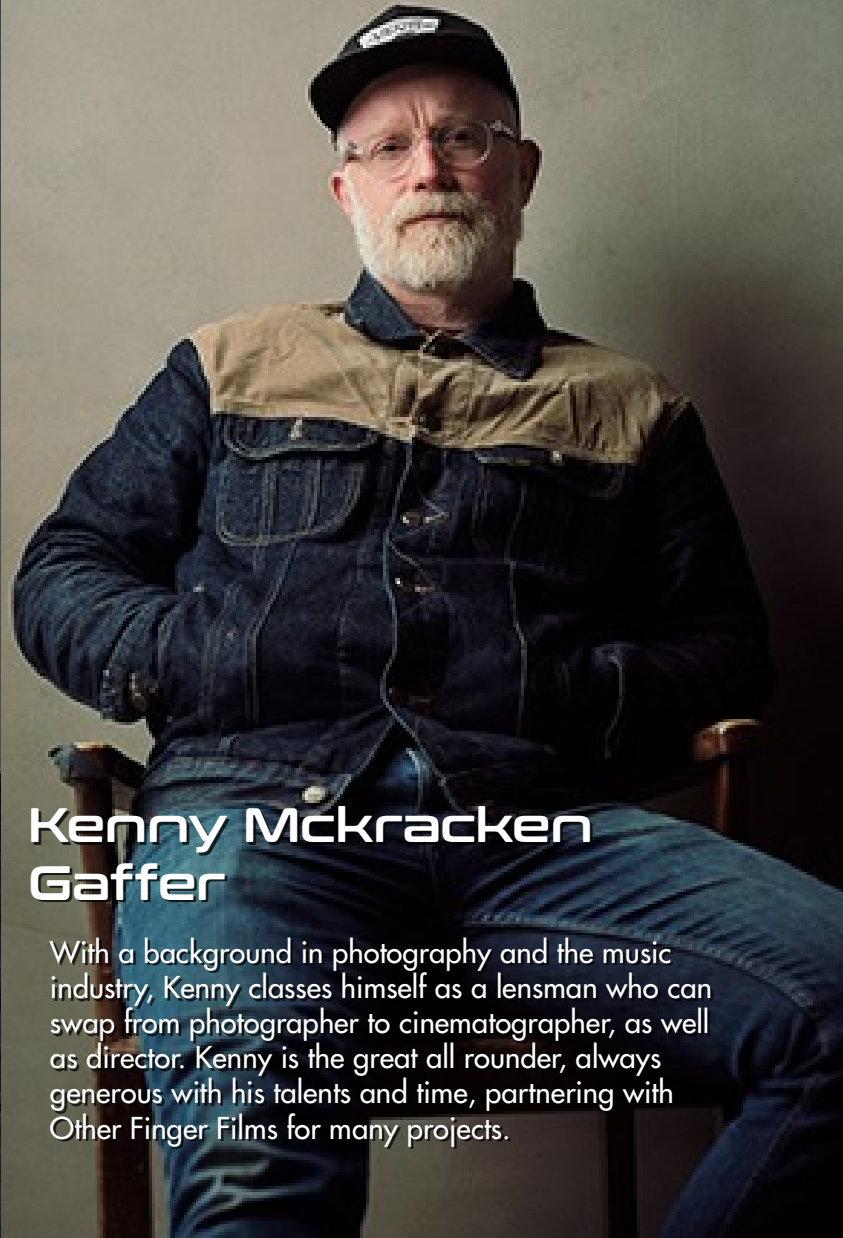
LIGHT is his first project as a producer to reach production.

OTHER FINGER FILMS



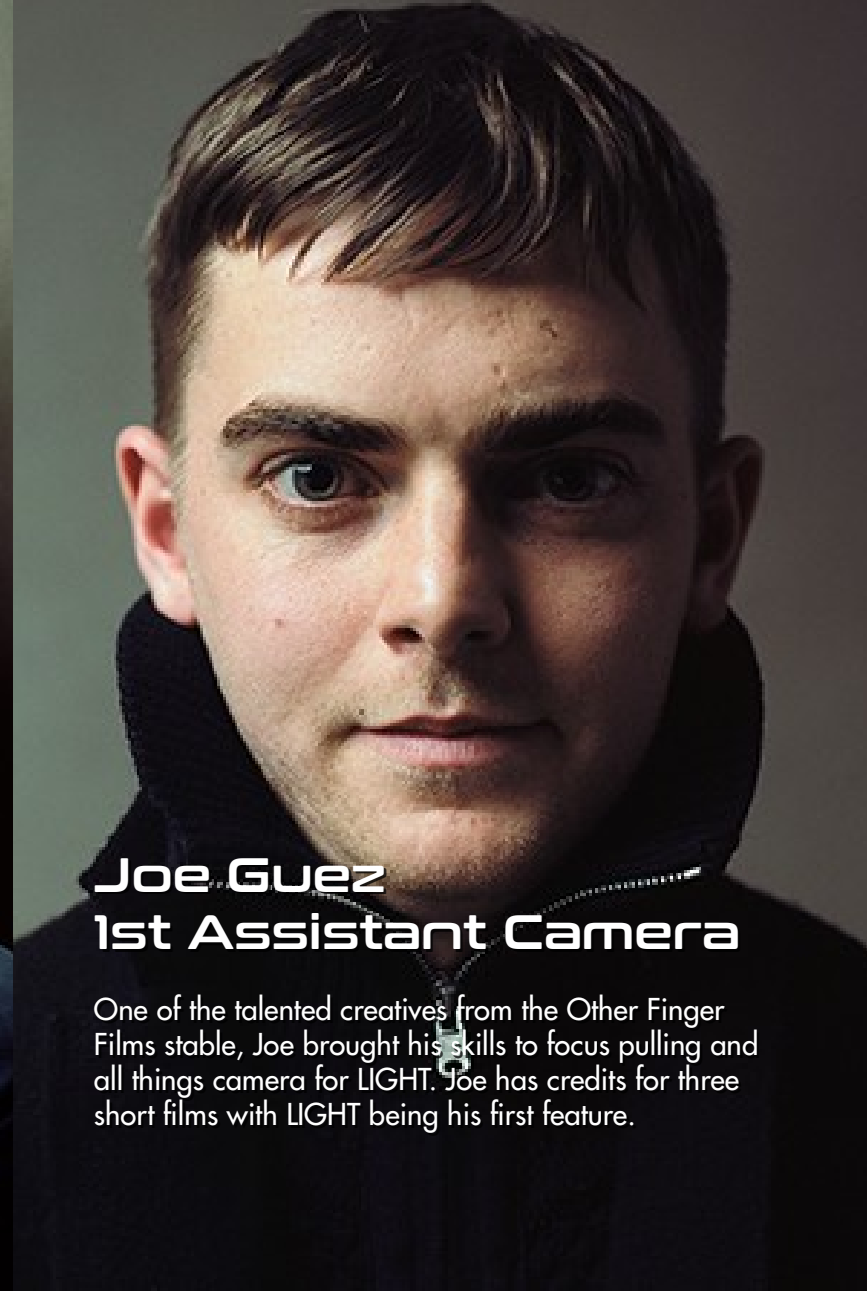
Jonathan Nicol
Cinematographer

Jonathan founded Other Finger Films in 2009 & has worked on a huge variety of projects as director & cinematographer, from music videos to lifestyle films, documentary work & eventually commercials, where he has shot for major brands including Maserati and Ogilvy. After years building his business & skills, Jonathan recently branched out into narrative fiction, shooting several feature films & more than 20 shorts.



Kenny Mckracken
Gaffer

With a background in photography and the music industry, Kenny classes himself as a lensman who can swap from photographer to cinematographer, as well as director. Kenny is the great all rounder, always generous with his talents and time, partnering with Other Finger Films for many projects.



Joe Guez
1st Assistant Camera

One of the talented creatives from the Other Finger Films stable, Joe brought his skills to focus pulling and all things camera for LIGHT. Joe has credits for three short films with LIGHT being his first feature.

CREW

Writer / Director
Jonathan Nicol
Kenny McCracken
Joe Guez
Javier Carles Madurga
David Bradley
Ian Thomas
Matt de Ath
Robert Clark
Amelia Jean
Olivia Pitcher
Alanna Thomas
Andre Farquharson

M. K. Woollard
Stephen J. Bell
Michael Fischer
D. A. Rinaldi

Miles Anthony
Mitch Rumin

M. K. Woollard
Cinematographer
Gaffer
Assistant Camera Person
Sound Recordist
First Assistant Director
Line Producer
Second Assistant Director
Production Assistant
Production Assistant
Production Assistant
Production Assistant

Editing / VFX
Consulting Editor
Assistant Editor
Composer

Casting Director
Casting Director

Director Qs

1) What was the origin of LIGHT?

That sounds strangely metaphysical... LIGHT was born out of necessity. We spent 18 months trying to get a different film - with a larger budget - up and running, only to have the funding fall through last minute. We therefore decided to make a movie we could fund ourselves. That meant a minimal budget, only a couple of main actors, a single location, few props and basically no sets. I hit on the idea of a planet with a dense, misty atmosphere, which would be naturally claustrophobic, with the added bonus that we could film it in one small space without it *feeling* like it was filmed in one small space.

2) Which films provided inspiration?

It has to be ALIEN – the granddaddy of all sci-fi horror movies. We even went for a retro Production Design to fit with the ALIEN vibe. When in doubt, we looked back at ALIEN (or ALIENS), just like everyone else does! A QUIET PLACE was an inspiration too - the idea of doing for light what they did for sound – i.e. put our characters into a dark environment with a creature that attacks light sources. And then find reasons for the characters to have to use their lights...

If that sounds like the story was created inorganically, that isn't quite true. Once I had the basic set-up of a lone person crashing in an escape pod on an alien planet, trying to figure out what happened, where she is, and trying to avoid creature attacks while desperately searching for her son, the story actually flowed quite smoothly. The premise came from necessity, but the story itself was organic.

3) What was the casting process like?

Through working in film awards campaigning we were extremely fortunate to know Miles Anthony who runs a talent agency, MAA Associates. He brought on his partner Mitch, just as they serendipitously happened to be branching out into casting. They recruited for our two leads and two supporting actors, sifting through a staggering 4,000 applications before whittling the entries down to about 40 audition tapes. From these we met about 25 actors – via Zoom due to lockdown restrictions. We were actually blown away, not only by the level of response, but by the quality of the actors. It was genuinely tough to make a final decision. The only easy choice was casting the boy, as I have a son who wanted to do it and be paid in PS4 games and sweets. (He also got points.)

4) How was it working with TikTok & future music star Gia Lily?

When we cast Gia, David and I barely knew what TikTok was. (We definitely knew by the end of production, since Gia forced us to dance for one of her posts!) We hired strictly on talent – and we were rewarded on set. Not only is Gia really positive and fun, she is also a top professional. Watching the rushes it struck me how Gia absolutely nailed every single take every single time. In short, Gia needs to be in more films!

Director Qs

5) How rigorously did you stick to the script while shooting?

Pretty rigorously. We had to shoot extremely quickly – about ten script pages per day, with multiple set-ups – so there was little time for improvisation. We didn't even have time to shoot coverage. A lot of scenes had to be shot as 'oners' and that was it. Some scenes we could only shoot one or two takes. We had to get very creative in the edit to make it work!

6) What was your approach to directing?

To get out of the way! There wasn't much time for anything else, even if I'd wanted to. As well as directing and producing, I was also on props, costumes, general problem solving, a thousand other things. We were very lucky to have found actors who turned up on time, knew their lines, knew the tone, and nailed their takes. So my approach was to trust the actors and only nudge them very occasionally when something wasn't quite right... At least that's how I think it went – you'd have to check with them to see how they felt about me! But yes, my approach to directing was to cast well and then let the actors do their thing.

7) Was it a difficult shoot?

Yes. Very. Honestly it was the most exhausting thing I've ever done. At the end of every filming day I was a complete wreck!

We planned as well as we could, but there are things you just can't prepare for. Props that suddenly stop working; space helmets that aren't as robust as you might think a space helmet would be; fire alarms that get set off by smoke machines (twice) which don't stop for several hours leading to the neighbours getting justifiably irate; dust that gets into the equipment and breaks it; neighbours suddenly starting up heavy machinery which ruins the sound; inadequate air conditioning which has to be turned off between takes meaning that the room gets so hot that the camera records >50 degrees C and stops working properly...

However, we had the best atmosphere on-set and everyone was absolutely dedicated to getting the job done. With such a professional, invested group it made what could have been a very trying shoot one of the best filming experiences we could have hoped for.

8) How was post-production?

Long! Much longer than expected. But this is the way on zero-budget productions. We had people lined up to work on various aspects of post-production, but without much of a budget they had to fit it in with their busy schedules. As time passed, I found myself starting tasks, just to get the ball rolling... and ended up doing the editing, VFX, sound design, sound mixing, colour correcting, you name it!

9) What was the budget?

All in, around £20,000, which is almost nothing for any film, let alone a sci-fi film with this many VFX where people actually got paid – which was very important to us. We paid everyone we didn't know up front, so the actors, the runners, etc, were all paid. Only friends and family got roped in for love and points. We had a very, very limited budget of the little money we could scrape together ourselves, so the fact we got the film done within budget is a huge achievement in itself.

10) How different is the film from your original vision?

That's actually a hard question to answer now. I've been working so long on the movie that I can't really remember what my original vision was!

I'd say it's probably fairly close though. We shot the script pretty much exactly. There were limitations on set – shots we'd planned that there just wasn't time for; a scene we had to cut entirely – but even those were baked in from the start. Knowing how tight the schedule was, Jonathan (the cinematographer) and I made sure we got the essentials done before starting on the 'extra' stuff. And we never got to the 'extra' stuff. In some cases we barely got the essentials done!

The location itself was a limit too. Our filming space was maybe 4 X 5 metres. Move out of that area and the camera would start to pick up the black curtains hung over the walls, the light stands, etc – which frequently happened. We lost a lot of sections of shots through seeing visible background elements which couldn't easily be cropped or VFX'd out. It wasn't easy to film all of the walking / running scenes in particular, of which there are many...

When it came to the edit, we didn't therefore have a tonne of choices, which was both a blessing and a curse – less footage to have to go through, but few options when there was an issue! I therefore had to have decent idea of the edit before we started shooting, so in that sense the final movie is close to how I saw it. More money and more time would've been better – but then again, if we'd had more time and more money we'd have shot something even more ambitious! The whole point of LIGHT was to push as far as we could with very limited resources. In that way at least I think we succeeded.

POSTER



OUTATIME FILMS

Director's Statement

Sci-Fi is almost always about our world as it is now, and LIGHT is no different. I didn't set out to make a movie with a particular message, but every movie needs to be *about* something and my worldview just seemed to creep in. As the writing progressed, it became clear that this was a refugee story.

I couldn't help but be influenced by current events. At the time of writing, that terrible image of the drowned boy on the beach was fresh in the memory. At the time of the film's release the UK has put an end to all legal routes for refugees into the UK and is fighting in the courts to send everyone who does make it here to another country, in contravention of international law, our moral duty and basic human empathy.

I've generally found that you can't change people's minds through arguing. (Though, by god, I've tried!) People have to change their own minds. They can't be cajoled out of their mindsets, but maybe they can be guided, nudged, influenced... And perhaps that's where movies can come in. Even very small movies.

LIGHT is a Sci-Fi horror creature feature. But there's a deeper meaning. It hopefully doesn't beat you around the head with it, but there's a message lurking in the mist with the monster. The hope is that someone who holds certain views might put on LIGHT to watch a monster movie, empathise with the characters and everything they go through... and then discover that those characters are refugees. And maybe just for a moment that will give them pause...

On a practical level, LIGHT was a labour of love. We undertook everything ourselves from concept to screenplay to designing and making the props and costumes all the way through to the final edit and sound mix. It's a project that has occupied my every available moment for more than three years. At times it hasn't been easy, for me or my family.

My hope is that all that work has produced something worthwhile – a movie of which we can all be proud. From the very start my thinking was that making the thing *was* the thing. Having people watch LIGHT, or even selling it, would be a bonus – but just *getting it made* was the goal. Now that's been achieved, my hopes have changed slightly. I now want everyone who devoted time and energy to making LIGHT to benefit in some way, whether that's through points via selling the film, by recognition of some kind, or – the ideal – through this somehow opening doors to future projects.

We've started to build our filmmaking community. LIGHT is the first movie made by OUTATIME FILMS, but it definitely will not be the last. This is what we want to do in life, and we're finding ways to do it.

PRODUCTION STILLS



OUTATIME FILMS

BEHIND THE SCENES

