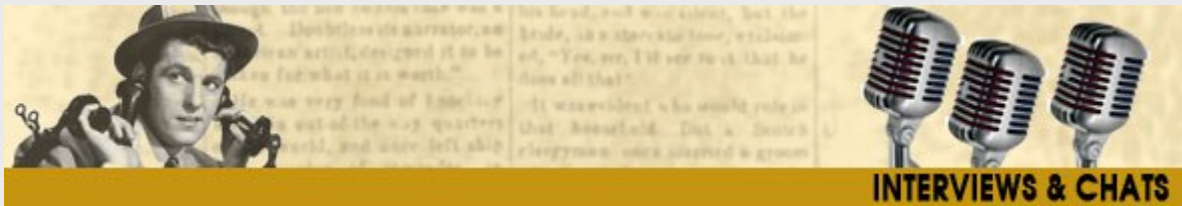


Aaron Stanford and Amanda Schull Talk Season 3 of 12 MONKEYS



Amanda Schull and Aaron Stanford talk about the third season of *12 Monkeys* in broad, non-spoilery terms so as not to ruin anyone's experience of binge-watching the show in one weekend starting May 19th.

I was privileged to be on a conference call with the two stars and other science fiction based websites. For simplicity's sake I concentrate on the answers and merge similar questions at times in this article.

The first question asked was about the tough choices the characters had to face in season three. Aaron said that the characters have had to make choices between the greater good or someone they hold dear. In the beginning, Cole was on a suicide mission and didn't care about surviving but now it's gotten very personal-he could distance himself from that but coming face to face with his son changes his perspective on things.

Amanda said that Aaron could answer all of her questions! She said that Cassie carries the baby and has a stronger bond. Also, in the nature versus nurture debate, Cassie believes in nurture.

Amanda's favorite time period this season was the eighties. She said Aaron had a Marty McFly outfit, Todd looked like Sonny Crockett, and Emily was dressed like Cindy Lauper. She also said in episode 8 they designed a beautiful Victorian dress for her and she got to play the part all episode.



Inspired by Poe's Masque of the Red Death, perhaps? (Photo by: Dusan Martincek/Syfy)

Aaron said that Amanda fits in every time period but this one. No matter what she wears, she looks like she fits. He said she had shoulder pads and mom jeans and looked like Molly Ringwald in the eighties.

Aaron likes the new binge format. He said it's the way he likes to watch. You can string it together and follow what's happening. He thinks this is the future, the way we will be watching things.

Amanda says, "You don't HAVE to binge." You can tivo it, watch some later. (Can't you just see her as someone who saves her chocolates and eats them, one after dinner, for days?) But she also said it's been a very long hiatus and it's great to get it out there.

They were asked how long they had known who the Witness would be. Amanda said it was mid-season 2, and it gave them time to create and pace it out. She said it was a luxury to have a story that was planned out. But now they have a child older than they are. James Callis! Who they agree is perfect to play their kid. Aaron agreed with her about the timing, and said it was a decent amount of time to think about it.

They were asked about how intense and physical season three was. Amanda said that Cassie started out season 3 in a very low place. She would be killed or abandoned once the child was

born. She might never see Cole again. But Amanda as an actor found that challenging and exciting.

Aaron said that it was a rollercoaster. In the beginning Cole is desperate to find Cassie again and is the only person around him that doesn't understand that the game is already lost. When he finds out that the Witness is his son, he has a difficult decision to make.

It was asked, what life lesson would they give their characters? So Amanda starts on Cole! Cole needs to make a plan. But then she talked about how Cassie's mission changes all the time. Sometimes she looks out for herself and her child, sometimes she looks towards the greater good. "I want her to be able to sit and breathe for a minute or two-have a cup of coffee!"

Aaron says that Cole needs to "get down off the cross". He thinks the character needs to give himself a break and quit carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders. Then he replied to Amanda and said her plans lay in ruins, his work out.

Someone asked if they kept up with all the details of the show. Amanda said that she was a meticulous note taker, but it was hard after a long hiatus. The environment helps your sense memory come flooding back.

Aaron answered that there was no choice. You have to understand every piece, where they are at in their own cycle for everything to make sense. When you are in it 14-16 hours a day you get immersed. It's more difficult after a longer hiatus.

Aaron said that their writers were real genre fans, and influenced by sci-fi and ancient mythology. Amanda said they were influenced by Greek mythology and they changed her character's name because of it. In the movie the character was named Kathryn (Madeleine Stowe) and they changed it to Cassandra for *12 Monkeys*, the series. In the Greek myth, Cassandra always knew the future but no one listened to her.

The question was asked about what they thought about the instant reaction from social media. Aaron thought that social media was a minefield of trying to avoid spoilers, of secrecy and intrigue. He compared the response to theater, to getting a laugh when something was funny, or hearing a pin drop because people were holding their breath at the height of drama. He found an emotional reaction to be affirming.

Amanda agreed with Aaron but said you can't change it even if they comment because the work is already finished.



I didn't know there was going to be a test. (Photo by: Ben Mark Holzberg/Syfy)

Someone commented on Cole and Cassie's complicated relationship. Aaron said, "Cassie can't come to terms with how hopelessly in love she is." He said there were more complications in season 3-it unites them then splits them apart. There was silence for a moment. I guess everyone was waiting. Aaron said "End of thought," and they moved on. I bet there were spoilers in that silence.

Amanda said that they had a strange and unusual relationship. There was deep love, but if they stop the end of the world, they will no longer have met.

They were asked if it was a relief to know that everything is released at once. Aaron said "Yes, it will be a relief." He feels that this is the superior way to do it-not bottling spoilers up for months.

Amanda said she had been chastised by people in other countries for spoilers a few days after episodes had aired. She intended to still be very vague because they put so much effort into the show and wanted people to enjoy it and she didn't want to ruin it for anyone.

A big thanks to Amanda Schull and Aaron Stanford for talking to us, and to Samantha Agnoff for moderating. I can't tell you how much I am looking forward to watching season 3. You can tell from what they are saying that it's going to be great.

12 Monkeys starts on Friday, May 19th, at 8pm/7c on Syfy and will finish on Sunday, May 21st.

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