

Kurt Russell's Not Happy About the Planned "Escape from New York" Remake

By [Rebecca Murray](#), About.com Guide

Of course during the press rounds for [Grindhouse](#), the Robert Rodriguez/Quentin Tarantino homage to campy B movies from the 60s and 70s, Kurt Russell was hit with a batch of questions about the upcoming remake/sequel/prequel/whatever of *Escape from New York*. Russell ('Stuntman Mike' in Tarantino's *Death Proof* segment of *Grindhouse*) had already expressed his displeasure with the announcement of [Gerard Butler](#) (*300*) in the role of Snake Plissken - a character Russell created - and during the LA media roundtables for *Grindhouse* he reiterated his position on the subject.



Kurt Russell at the Hollywood Premiere of "Grindhouse" presented by The Weinstein Company.

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Asked if he'd spoken with writer/director John Carpenter about the *Escape from New York* remake Russell replied, "No, I haven't talked to John for a long time. We're great friends, but we haven't talked in a while. I haven't talked to him about *Grindhouse*. I just heard about the remake, and you have to understand that some Disney movies that I've done have been done in remakes. *Stargate* was turned into a television show that was very successful and *Backdraft* was turned into two television shows that were on TV and did well, I guess. I don't know. They're going to remake *The Thing*.

They're going to remake *Escape from New York*. I created the character of Snake and so I have a little bit of a different feeling about that, and my feeling about that is, and I've joked about this all day, very simply, 'Wait until Stuntman Mike hears about this. It's really going to set him off.' (Laughing) So, it's 2007. I'm working on *Grindhouse* and am trying to create something that an audience can have fun with today."

And don't even think Russell will make an appearance in the proposed remake. "F**k no," said Russell. "That would be ridiculous. That would be like Sean Connery doing something in Roger Moore's *007*. It would be like, 'What? Please.' No. 'Go off on your own. Good luck.'"

Russell continued, "Here's the thing. I know this, any time that you're going to do something that someone else created, an iconic character that they make figurines of, they have to accept that they're taking that role on. That's a given. I created that. I'll never *not* have created that. That's just the way it is."

Russell's latest film, *Grindhouse*, and the original 1981 *Escape from New York* have a lot in common. In fact it could even be said Rodriguez's gory, over-the-top zombie flick is a love letter to Carpenter. But Russell says there is a big difference between Carpenter's films and the Tarantino/Rodriguez movie. "Well, it's like taking some of John's movies that he did that were in that vein, like *Them* and portions of *Escape from New York*, and then putting them into the grindhouse thing," explained Russell. "But when we did *Escape from New York*, that doesn't qualify really as grindhouse. That was just a quirky, weird movie at the time. But their reverence for John Carpenter, both [Robert] and Quentin's, is enormous. We spent many, many hours talking about different things, movies that John and I had done, all of them."

Russell has fond memories of life on the set with Carpenter. "We'd be getting ready to do a scene and we would talk about what to do and then sometimes we'd say, 'Well, should probably do this.' Then we would look at each other and say, 'Well, let's do what we want to do because it might be 10 or 15 years before anyone can kind of watch it.' But there will be someone out there who says, 'Yeah, there you go. That's the way to do it.' I loved John for always wanting to do that, to do the right thing for a movie that we thought would hold together for 25 years or more."

With all this talk of remakes and returning to older projects, is there even the remotest of possibilities Russell would reunite with Sylvester Stallone for a sequel to *Tango and Cash*? "No, I don't like doing sequels," responded Russell. "I've not done them in my life. I did one. I did *Escape from L.A.* and I did it for a number of reasons. Mainly, I wanted to work for John one more time and I wanted to play Snake again, but I don't do sequels. I haven't done them. I signed up for movies that, if they were going to do more of them, I thought that it was okay. I would've done them and would in the future, but sequels for the most part for me have always been uninteresting and I think that you make a movie as that experience. An audience should feel as if they were having that experience. Now, [Sky High](#) is a kind of fun thing that if they wanted to make more movies about those kids and I have a character in that, I don't have a problem with that. But do I want to do *Big Trouble in Little China IV* or do I want to do *The Thing III*? Listen, I was asked about all of those movies. I had a chance to make a lot of money and I chose to have a different career. I just didn't do that and I'm really glad that I didn't. I think that I would've quit a long time ago. I would've said, 'No.'"

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