

## **Duchovny Files Second Film**

***The man behind Mulder talks about the forthcoming sequel.***

**US, April 16, 2008** - Before 1993, David Duchovny was probably best known as transsexual agent Dennis/Denise Bryson on *Twin Peaks* -- and for many sci-fi and fantasy fans, that would have been more than enough to earn him eternal admiration. But 15 years, 173 episodes and now two movies later, he has become the equivalent of genre-entertainment royalty thanks to *The X-Files*, an iconic science fiction series that is currently being updated on the big screen for a second time.

Along with a small coterie of journalists and reporters from other international and online outlets, IGN was invited to tour the set of the upcoming *X-Files* sequel and interview key members of the cast and crew. In addition to discussing the few secrets he could divulge about the film, Duchovny talked at length about returning to his character, and reflected on the series' considerable legacy.

### **IGN Movies: Does it feel like old times being here?**

**David Duchovny:** Well, that part's over. We've been at it about two and a half months now. So the first couple of weeks felt a little like déjà vu, but now it's just the business of making a movie. Now it's just another movie, in a way.

### **IGN: Could you tell us about certain general themes and...**

**Duchovny:** Um, you know I think the reasoning behind being mum about what's going on in the film, for Chris [Carter] at least, is to give the audience an experience of surprise, which is so hard to do with trailers and obviously you guys have a job to do and it's hard to write anything if we're not saying anything. But having said that, the themes are the same of what the show always was. The themes are about belief and faith and about the relationship between Mulder and Scully and how that's developed over the past four or five years the show's been off the air. As if they've been living, you know, as we've all been living. They've not been stuck in time, I don't know if Chris mentioned that. But you know, they've moved on in some fictional realm just as we all have. And yet their issues remain the same.

### **IGN: When the series started, it sort of captured the zeitgeist of the country in a way that other shows haven't before. How is *The X-Files* different now that the world has completely changed?**

**Duchovny:** You know, people say the world changes all the time, and yet human nature remains the same. You know, good stories are going to be good stories and people are going to see them. I don't think people go to the movies because of what's going on in the world, you know, they go usually to escape what's going on in the world, and that always remains the same. I think what changes is the size of our cell phones.

### **IGN: I asked Frank [Spotnitz] before about why make this movie now, and he responded with a very businesslike answer. Artistically, why now is it the right time for you?**

**Duchovny:** I don't know. I felt always that, at any time it would have been fine. Whenever Chris was ready to come up with a script, whenever his burnout was over. You know, as actors our burnout was probably a little shorter than is. I think he carried a heavier load, producing and writing and directing. I know it took me about a year to feel, you know, whole, after the show was over. So after that point I was ready, and it was always my intention, my desire, that the show would continue on in movie form. It was never my intention when I wanted to leave the television series to sabotage the show in any way. It was, yes, we've done all we can on television, let's take this into movies, like we always said we would.

### **IGN: So you see it as a series of *X-Files* movies maybe?**

**Duchovny:** Yeah, I wouldn't see any reason to do it unless it were. It's a serial show by its nature. It starts as a television show which is a serial. The frame and the characters throw off an infinite number of stories and situations, it's a classic, archetypal relationship, with a believer and a nonbeliever with this kind of unrequited love in the middle of it and it all works. And that can work forever as long as your stories are good.

**IGN: Mulder is not a changed person, six years later, being on the run?**

**Duchovny:** Because you're so eager, you're so interested in the world changing and people changing, in my experience things don't change that much. People are who they are.

**IGN: What has changed then?**

**Duchovny:** You'll have to see. I mean, we are affected by things that happen. Does character change? In my life experience, character doesn't change.

**IGN: How excited were you to get back into the character, to get back in this guy's skin again after all these years?**

**Duchovny:** Well, I was very excited to do it, and then as the date approached nearer I started to wonder if I needed to work more, to kind of get back into that, and um, so there was a certain amount of fear because I had maybe changed. I'm going back on my word. That it would be hard to, well I think what happened is my facility and maybe my range or interests might have changed. I didn't change. And so, so this character might have represented a narrower box than the one I've been working in for the past four or five years since I left. So it was how to bring what I've learned in the last four or five years into this box. And you know what was interesting, last night, we just, they were on the internet and somebody pulled up just one of these homages to the show that has the song, like a romantic song and then all these kisses between Gillian and I, and that was actually really helpful to me, to kind of feel the show again. Because it was kind of this overview, and it was very romantic and it was very sweet, and it was like oh, I could watch that and then that would help me get into work.

**IGN: When you were doing the show, you became involved in writing scripts and co-writing scripts with Chris. Have you had any input on this script?**

**Duchovny:** No, not in the initial conception or the first writing of it, and hardly at all, because we kind of signed off on the script right as the writers' strike happened, so, you know, we had discussions about particular scenes and things we might try when we get there, but it's a tightly plotted thriller. In essence, if you have a tightly plotted thriller, there's not a lot of rewriting that should be done, hopefully. You know, if it's good, there's not a lot to do, the story drives forward. If you f\*ck around in the scenes, you're not going to drive the story forward. It's not really a form that tolerates improvisation, and it was well enough put together, you know, when it was presented to me and Gillian, I thought there was really nothing to add in that way.

**IGN: That said, rumor has it this goes for a more supernatural feel, back in the horror vein. What kind of relief was that for you to kind of break outside of the mythology--**

**Duchovny:** Well, I liked the mythology stuff. You know, I always liked it actually more when we were doing the show because it usually gave Mulder a kind of emotional stake, [because] he was personally involved in the episode and that was a relief and more fun for me as an actor to kind of approach. You know, during the yearly grind of the show, so it was like oh, I can understand this and I can chew this up a little bit, rather than just being a law and order procedural, did you do it, did you do it, you didn't do it, this is my theory and get out of there. So in a way, I think I had the opposite reaction--oh, I wish, you know, this was more about me. But in effect it's more about the show and it's more about establishing the parameters of the show, for those who don't know it, for those who've forgotten, and even for those who love it, they'll get that part of it as well. So if there is another one, and I hope there is, I think we would get into a story where more of the mythology because I think that's the heart of the show. Ultimately.

**IGN: You've directed a couple of episodes, you directed your own movie, how interested would you be if there was another X-Files movie in taking the helm of that?**

**Duchovny:** Yeah, I'd be interested, but it's not, it's not in my wheelhouse to direct a big action film like this. I would feel out of my element, which is probably a good thing, so, you know, I wouldn't offer it to me. I might try to get it. I don't know - no, I think I'd stay away from this. I might be interested in directing an action film, but I don't think it would be wise for me to direct myself in an action film or to screw around with this actual franchise. I don't feel like I need to, I feel like there are other opportunities for me to direct

and I have other interests. If it was like my only way in to directing, and please, you know, then I might, but I don't think so. I mean, I think it would be fun and great, but I think there are better people for it.

**IGN: A lot of actors who headline hit series worry about being typecast for the rest of their careers. You seem comfortable returning to this iconic role.**

**Duchovny:** Well, you know what's interesting, I get asked questions by you guys. The first question is, haven't people forgotten? And the second question is, well nobody's forgotten, aren't you typecast? So I mean, I don't know. I gave up a while ago worrying about the whole phenomenon of typecasting, once I realized that it happens across the board, it doesn't just happen in terms of television shows, so comedy actors get trapped in there and dramatic actors can't do comedy and all this stuff. People, even movie actors that have had long careers, have two or three roles that they get stopped for, unless you're Brando. There's only a couple that have done so much that it's hard to even yell something stupid at them on the street. So um, I don't. I don't worry about that, and I think what overcomes that is my kind of sense of love for the show and belief in its legitimacy as an interesting movie franchise with a lot to offer, the thriller aspect and the horror aspect, but also an intelligence and like I said, this great frame of a man and a woman, the believer and the nonbeliever, so I think all of those things make it a very kind of fertile area to move on in.

**IGN: Do you feel that way about *Californication*? Does that help you to escape typecasting?**

**Duchovny:** No. like I said, I don't--I was involved in, I was saying yes to doing this movie three years ago basically, I signed up for this film, so--

**IGN: Why do you think people love the characters on this show? Be it fans of the show? Can you speak about your character and why people love him?**

**Duchovny:** That's, that's more for you to figure out. I just think it was a very classic kind of contentious love relationship between Mulder and Scully, and investigative, if that's a word. And uh, I think why I love Mulder is because first and foremost was always the truth of the case, and yet he wasn't, and yet he wasn't so single minded that it was a drag, he was never a drag, which that kind of a character could have been. So I always liked that he was so narrow minded in his pursuit. And I think that's attractive. I think people respect that in somebody, and I think that they also, you know, they yearn for it. They yearn for a quest or a cause. I think he's a guy on a quest, you know, he will always be.

**IGN: How is your relationship with Gillian on this now?**

**Duchovny:** It's good.

**IGN: Is it very different from what it was during the series?**

**Duchovny:** Yeah, it's probably different that we're both not exhausted all the time. We're kind of excited to come and do what we think is the heart of the movie, we think is the relationship. And, so, you know, we'll do these scenes that are action oriented and have to do with this particular plot, and Billy Connolly, but then we come back to scenes like we're doing today, and we're aware that this is, we feel like this is where the heart is, or the movie is, and that's, and then we have to trust each other to hold each other up in these scenes and to bring back whatever it was that was there.

**IGN: Is there still a sense of discovery and is there still a journey for you guys in productions like this when you're united with Gillian and Chris, or is it just like you guys are back together and everything's really easy?**

**Duchovny:** No, I think there's a real sense in which, you know, we don't just want to kind of cash in on the past, we want to, you know, we all want to do something new. We all want to make it good. We don't want to throw a piece of crap out there and for, to have people go look at it just for nostalgia's sake. So, I worry, and I wonder how did this guy change in the last five years, how can you, there's a certain like, when I started, there was a certain boyishness to the guy, which I don't feel I can play anymore, physically, looks stupid.

**IGN: Just because you're older?**

**Duchovny:** Well, yeah, I just think it's like watching a, it was like Mel Gibson's *Hamlet*. It was like yeah, it was a good performance, but he was like 20 years too old. You know, so it's like that, it's like certain kinds of things energy wise. Not just looks but energy wise. So how does this guy, how has he grow up a little bit, you wonder about that. How do you kind of, you know, remaining the same guy, how do you ease him into a different stage in his life. So that's a creative endeavor. Certainly for Chris, being overwhelmed directing a big movie like this, very different from anything he's done.

**IGN: Has your dialogue changed with Chris in terms of working together?**

**Duchovny:** Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. I mean, I have ways that I like to work and he has ways that he likes to work, and um, they're not always the same. And you know, with respect and privately we deal with it. But that's a matter of getting older too, and being a professional, it happens privately and it's not a big deal, it's just like you know, it's like telling a lover, you know that finger there? That wasn't great. You know, I know a lot of people like it, but me personally? Not me. Just so you know. Someone else might love that. So I know how I like to work now, I know how I like the director's hands on my, so I try to explain.

**IGN: When we were in the office set a little while ago, there were little things we noticed, call outs to certain episodes of the show. Does this film strike a balance between those shout outs to the series, and then making it accessible for people who have never seen *The X-Files*?**

**Duchovny:** Well, I'm not a fan of the shout outs, but they're just little things, they're like "Where's Waldo?" kind of things. I think this movie is actually much more accessible to the non-fan in terms of story, plot, everything else. In terms of maybe this water bottle having the name of one of our producers on it, this movie probably has a ton of those things. But I'm not even paying attention. Sometimes I'll leave the set and I'll go oh look, that's stupid. But there's a lot of that going on and I think it's fun for people, and for most people it's just going to go by the boards, and for the people that are into it, they're going to love that, I guess.

**IGN: We were just noticing the fish tank with the diver in it--**

**Duchovny:** The diver wasn't in there last night. I said to Chris, where's the diver? He said we're getting it. so that's new.

**IGN: No telling what'll be in there today.**

**Duchovny:** So I'm guilty of the shout out thing. I was just saying that's not realistic. If that's the actual fish tank, where's the diver.

**IGN: And there were only goldfish we heard.**

**Duchovny:** That I don't remember.

**IGN: Stunt double fish.**

**Duchovny:** That's the kind of attention to detail that really ruins a film.

**IGN: Was there anything iconic that did make you smile or laugh? The poster, the pencils?**

**Duchovny:** That kind of, sure. Like I said, they're the same people. There's a fine balance to be struck. I go into the theater and somebody says Gilligan's Island, everybody goes ah, yes. You know. So there's kind of an easy way to get a laugh of just saying oh, we shared an experience and we're all going to laugh because we just wanted everyone to know that we shared that experience, and I'm not a fan of that. But I do recognize that it's comforting sometimes and I do recognize that it's smart sometimes, since you're playing off of a certain image of yourself there. The scene we're going to shoot today certainly exists in two worlds, and we're going to be commenting on a previous work while creating something fully new. So sometimes there's that kind of winking. I think if it exists, it exists, that's fine, but I think as an actor, that doesn't exist in life, you know. We don't wink in life that way, you know. Unless you actually say, you know, remember the time when we had the pencils up--you know, we're not doing that. Remember I used to do that? Yeah, that was funny.

**IGN: On the set your living space was very neat to have guests over but your office was such a mess.**

**Duchovny:** [The] bedroom? We haven't shot in there yet, so I think that will change.

**IGN: It will get messy?**

**Duchovny:** But I think the joke was, I know on the set, during the show, my apartment went like this: I had the fish tank there and the kitchen over here, but there was actually no bedroom on the set until the seventh year, when somebody else switched bodies with me and had sex. So I can't really comment on how I kept my bedroom, because I never saw it.

**IGN: Does Mulder still sleep on the couch?**

**Duchovny:** Well yeah, I guess he does. I haven't slept at all in this movie.

**IGN: There was some exhaustion at the end of the series with the fans. Do you think the movie will bring those fans back?**

**Duchovny:** I don't know. I don't know. Um, you know, there were nine years of one hour [episodes]. I can't think of another show that did that with the same cast, even though I wasn't in most of the ninth year. You look at, you know, any drama, any long running drama, and they don't run that long normally. *Law and Order*, it's like Menudo, you know. And *ER*'s the same.

**IGN: They change casts.**

**Duchovny:** Yeah, so the exhaustion is mutual. Um, but I would think that you know, in the good will of trying to tell new stories, you ultimately reach farther and farther in all directions and probably by the seventh, eighth, and ninth years, the writers were forced to reach. And I think there are people, fans, journalists out there who kind of sit on that moment and wait for, you know, that sign of exhaustion or that sign of creative bankruptcy, which, you know, has to come, you know, naturally. I can't imagine anybody that can do it for much more than eight or nine years, a show like this, that's idea driven. It's not like oh, we've got good jokes you'll watch. It's not like a sitcom that can run for 12, 13, years. Um, so you know, if they were exhausted, I would think if they fell in love with the show for the premise and for the characters and for the execution and the writing, well, that's what we're back to. You know, this is actually more of a story that we would have told in season three or four.

**IGN: How scary does this movie get?**

**Duchovny:** I think very.

**IGN: When it gets good it gets scary, it's thrilling.**

**Duchovny:** Right. I think it's scary. It's, there's, it's pretty dark. I mean, there's some nasty stuff going on.

**IGN: Is it going to be PG-13?**

**Duchovny:** Yeah. That's the funny thing. What was the first movie, PG-13?

**IGN: Yeah., but there were episodes that bordered on near R some times.**

**Duchovny:** Yeah, you would think. In a way, you could do more on TV, you could almost do R stuff--like some of those TV shows probably would have been getting close to an R. Um, but I know the mission is to make a PG-13 film here, so I assume we will. But it's more the ideas behind it. What is *Saw*? *Saw*'s R? Yeah. it should be X.

**IGN: Would you say this is *Saw*? Is it *Saw*-like?**

**Duchovny:** It has some of uh, there's some danger in there. There's some twisted, weird--I said danger. No, there's no torture because there's always--to me *Saw* doesn't have a point, it's like a guy like teaching somebody a lesson, right? Torturing them.

**IGN: That's entertaining.**

**Duchovny:** Well, obviously for a lot of people it is. Uh, and uh, I think *The X-Files* was never just about the nasty stuff. Hopefully there was a story behind it and somebody--you know, we'll always torture for a reason, we're like the American government. We want something when we're torturing, we're not just doing it.

**IGN: I just didn't know if it was a "Home" territory or something different.**

**Duchovny:** Yeah, I think there's some of that, you know, and I don't know how much of it you'll see, but it's in the story. You'll come away with a oh, so that was what they were doing? Uh. And "Home" is probably the most controversial show we ever made, I think it was pulled out of rotation and yet it's one of maybe four or five shows that, if someone wants to bring up a show with me, they'll bring that show up. So obviously they enjoy, people have enjoyed that part of the show also.

**IGN: You're also known for doing some straight up comedy episodes.**

**Duchovny:** Yeah. Not the time or the place.

**IGN: What people like about Mulder is his dry sense of humor. Is that continuing in this or is there no place for that?**

**Duchovny:** Yeah, there's a place for it, you know, like there was, always looking for a place for that in the TV show and I think it's an essential part of the character. I certainly always look for those moments. We've done them--whether or not they stay in the film, whether or not--you know, it's always a matter of juggling the tone. The same with the television show - is Mulder being funny going to deflate the danger in the scene? It was my opinion that it never did, but certainly Chris and other producers and other directors have different ideas. I don't know. I always liked to have some funny stuff in there.

**IGN: So much of the show was based on conspiracy theories. How about you personally? Is the truth out there? Are there conspiracies that we as the general public are not being kept up to speed on? Is there stuff out there the government is covering up in real life time, not X-Files time?**

**Duchovny:** Um. Yeah, I think that's pretty obvious, isn't it? I mean, there's nothing we don't know. It's obvious there's a lot of covering up going on, but I think it gets aired out pretty quickly. I don't think there's an alien conspiracy being covered up, but--

**IGN: When the episodes of the old show come on, do you watch them or do you flee like hell?**

**Duchovny:** I don't flee. You know, I don't seek them out. I'm not an appointment television watcher. I guess I'm a child of the 70s television watcher which is I sit down in front of it and if something happens to be on I watch it. therefore I leave myself open to sometimes watching an *X-Files* because I'll be flipping around and I don't TiVo or anything--I'm really silly that way. So if something comes on, I won't watch it alone, but if I'm in bed with Tea [Leoni] and we're just going to sleep, you know, maybe watching ten minutes of TV before we go to sleep and it comes on, she'll say oh, I've never seen that one, and I'll say yes you have, because I think she's seen them all. She says no, no, I've never seen this one, and I'll say you just forgot. And she'll say oh yeah, I've seen this one, and then we'll turn it off.

**IGN: Are you planning for potential DVD extras then?**

**Duchovny:** Yes, a lot. Because I think there's a lot of extra gore and stuff. Because we're not just shooting a PG version.

**IGN: What are your favorite episodes?**

**Duchovny:** I have a few. I probably have my top ten. Um, you know, I think uh, some of Chris's are really terrific, like the black and white episode, and the one with Lily Tomlin. And the one on the boat. Um, Darren Morgan's episodes were always great. Jose Chung and like two or three others. Then some of Glen Morgan and Tim Long's stuff were really scary, they like had the best scary. Vince Gilligan kind of straddled scary and funny better than anybody. Like "Bad Blood" was a great one, with Luke Wilson in it. That's a lot, I guess, a lot.

**IGN: What do you like best about Mulder, doing it, and what's your most challenging thing?**

**Duchovny:** Well, I think it is that kind of single minded, not taking no for an answer, just never giving up, just being a quest hero. It's not something we get to do in life. And it sometimes makes, it feels larger than life to go into the scene. And then the challenge always is to bring in the humanity, inside that. You know, the one quest is to bring in the humor or to bring in side interests, to make the guy three dimensional.

**IGN: How does it feel to be back in Vancouver?**

**Duchovny:** I've been back in Vancouver a few times since, working, so that kind of took away the reunion feel to it. I love Vancouver, so it's always good to come up here, I have a lot of friends up here. We worked up in Whistler for three weeks, and I'd never really been up there and that was just an amazing environment to work in. So aside from you know, not being with my kids and my wife, I love being here.

**IGN: There's so much secrecy surrounding this film. Is it because the fans are out there clamoring for every bit of information?**

**Duchovny:** Or it's the nature of the X-Files? I think it's a little bit of both, but I think it's what I said first, which is, Chris doesn't want, you know, he wants it to be a surprise. I think that, well I know that the story, you know, it being a thriller, if you go in knowing what the story is it's kind of not as interesting. So, he's kind of hoping to keep that a secret as long as possible.

**IGN: Is it fun dropping Billy Connolly into the movie?**

**Duchovny:** He's fantastic. He's a terrific guy and he's a terrific actor - just a great person to be around and always and interesting and funny off set and great in the character that he's playing. I can't understand a word he's saying, but he seems to be like a nice guy.

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