

‘Resident Evil: Extinction’ Screams Readiness For Franchise Extinction

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AUSTIN, Texas – “[Resident Evil: Extinction](#) [14],” which opens on Friday and to the dismay of many critics didn’t screen across the U.S., is yet another cineplex excursion that’s beneath contempt.



Milla Jovovich in “Resident Evil: Extinction”.

Photo courtesy of IMDb

Directed by [Russell Mulcahy](#) [15], who is best known for the serviceably charming pulp translation of “[The Shadow](#) [16],” the franchise is injected with a promising Mad Max riff by writer and producer [Paul W.S. Anderson](#) [17] – yet does nothing with it.

At best, I’ve always thought of Anderson (who directed the first film and wrote the second) as a poor man’s [Stephen Sommers](#) [18]. To have the second consecutive sequel where Anderson couldn’t be bothered to direct (only write and produce) really says you’re in for “B”-movie hack hell.

So “Extinction” is another video game-based sequel by test-marketed numbers where everything about it was cooler in the trailer. The Mad Max stuff turns into mostly trucks driving in a desert while an imaginative attack by zombie crows plays like a video game of “The Birds”.



[Ashanti](#) [19] in “Resident Evil: Extinction”.

Photo courtesy of IMDb

At a certain point – maybe somewhere in the first act where there aren’t characters as much as feet-entering, low-angle frames – the desert-scape starts to reveal a 16th-wave Sergio Leone influence (but mostly from testosterone guitars).

The males do their acting with beard stubble while the women grit their teeth to look all hardened. All the while, model and actress [Milla Jovovich](#) [20] is the most confounding presence of all.

I spent most of the film trying to figure out why such a luminous woman has her face so consistently digitally airbrushed. While she may have just liked how writer/director [Kurt Wimmer](#) [21] spruced her up in “[Ultraviolet](#) [22],” almost every close up of her has Photoshop skin tones.



Milla Jovovich in “Resident Evil: Extinction”.

Photo courtesy of IMDb

Outside of her lithe figure, I never even understood why she was repeatedly cast as an action heroine. Perhaps Sony is still paying writer [Luc Besson](#) [23]’s bill of goods. Jovovich really only acts in two modes: frailty and penis envy. In both instances here, she has a gun.

While zombies safely remain the screen villain with the most tender, thinnest and most sliceable flesh this side of Orcs from “Lord of the Rings,” some of the Jovovich’s balletic slicing is the best action in the movie (though a lot of it is frequently ruined with lazy CGI gore).

If you aren’t sufficiently scared, the sound design will dwarf you into submission by going from silent to loud like a Pixies’ slasher score.

“Extinction” is a zombie movie bored with zombies. When one character is bitten in the first 10 minutes and keeps it a secret for the rest of the film, you wish it might’ve become bored with zombie clichés.

This is heroically juxtaposed when another character – who isn’t given solely callow character beats – nobly sacrifices himself in an explosion.



Milla Jovovich in “Resident Evil: Extinction”.

Photo courtesy of IMDb

This third “Resident Evil” is what it is: another soulless studio flick where everyone involved is going through the motions (especially the audience). While it has the beats of a movie, it’s purely product and you can’t even really begrudge it for that.

It’s a movie only ’roided zombie fans, optimistic executives and mothers can love.

Like the other two flicks, “Extinction” does have one nifty scene: the last one, which is a cliffhanger. For maybe a few naïve seconds, you’re enticed for a hypothetical movie that – depending on the box office – might or might not follow.

It’s not until you remember the tedium you’ve just sat through (itself a prolonged drag of the last movie’s cliffhanger) that it may dawn on you that the “Resident Evil” movies only find themselves when selling a completely different movie.

★ [See our 31-image “Resident Evil 5” video game slideshow.](#) [24]

★ [Read our “Resident Evil: Extinction” theatrical review.](#) [25]

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