

## Interview: Nick Frost Kicks Up His Salsa Heels in 'Cuban Fury'

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on April 11, 2014 - 8:41pm

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CHICAGO – Nick Frost has played character and comic roles as the affable sidekick, especially in the famed “Cornetto Trilogy” – “Shaun of the Dead,” “Hot Fuzz” and “The World’s End” – alongside Simon Pegg and director Edgar Wright. Frost is a leading man now, strutting his stuff on the salsa dance floor in “Cuban Fury.”

This high concept film has Bruce (Nick Frost) revisiting his childhood roots as a championship salsa dancer, after as an adult engineer he falls for his sales manager Julia (Rashida Jones). Turns out Jones is also into salsa, and Bruce believes that taking up the dance again is the best way to woo her. The film co-stars Chris O’Dowd as the rival suitor for Julia and Ian McShane as Bruce’s old salsa coach.



Nick Frost Puts on His Dancing Shoes in 'Cuban Fury'

Photo credit: *Entertainment One*

Nick Frost was in Chicago to talk about “Cuban Fury,” and other topics of note, including last year’s final film in the Cornetto Trilogy, “The World’s End.”

**HollywoodChicago.com:** First, how did this idea come about? Were you salsa dancing beforehand or did you let the idea inform your indulgence into it?

**Nick Frost:** No, I wasn’t into salsa at all. I would actually say that in the past I actively disliked it as a dance, because I didn’t know about it. I used to work in a Mexican restaurant, and the head office would send salsa music to play there, and I didn’t like it then. For one thing, the music is from Cuba, not Mexico. [laughs] So the idea was that this was the thing to do, not only to get over my fear of dancing, but also my fear of salsa.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** So how was your experience in learning the moves? Did you feel once the film was complete that you had done yourself proud?

**Frost:** Absolutely, yeah. I couldn't have done it any better, I think. When I began learning, it was seven hours a day, every day, for seven months. And that was before we started shooting the film.

All those people in the last dance contest are London Latino salsa scene, those 400 people are it. The responses they were giving and the reactions were all real, because none of them had seen me do the choreography. We shot all the dances live, and put in bits and pieces as pick up shots over seven days to do the finale.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** You must have been pretty satisfied to pick up a new skill.

**Frost:** It never got to that point, the process of training was a f\*\*king nightmare. I never had a moment to think, 'brilliant, I got that.' Because the moment I did something, I had to do more. It never got to a finishing point.

Standing next to me on day one was Richard Marcel, an amazing choreography and salsa dancer. And on my other side was Ana Montero, one of the best salsa dancers in the world, from Madrid. I had my hands about my sides and clomped around like a big lump. I could see they were exchanging looks that essentially said, we're f\*\*ked! [laughs] There will be an extras documentary on the DVD which shows the training process, from day one to seven months later. The differences were amazing.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** I'm thinking 'Dancing with the Stars' next.

**Frost:** They can't afford me.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** [Laughs] This is in the British movie tradition of a working class schlub becoming light on their feet – 'Billy Elliott' and 'The Full Monty' come to mind. Where do you think 'Cuban Fury' fits in with that genre?



Nick Frost in Chicago, April 1, 2014

Photo credit: Patrick McDonald for HollywoodChicago.com

**Frost:** I'd like to think it's up there with them, as far as the feeling. 'Cuban Fury' is unashamedly a happy film, it's about a man who finds himself again. I'd like to do for salsa what 'Rocky' did for boxing, I want people to come out dancing. There are not many films that can affect people like that, and it's enough for me.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** There is a shift in the film during a dance-off between you and Chris O'Dowd. What was the decision behind going into a more comical and surreal mode in that sequence as opposed to the rest of the film?

**Frost:** We wanted it to be like the 'Bourne Identity,' like a fight in that series. Instead of boxcars or bayonets, it was high kicking and furious rhythm. [laughs] At that point in the film, the audience has earned the right for it to get a bit silly. and otherworldly.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** Do you find the drama and pathos of Bruce to be more interesting to do as an actor or the comedy parts of the role?

**Frost:** I love it as a character he got up off his ass and did something. So many of us have made promises in life we never follow up on. But

he did it, he made that change, and stuck with it. I like that about him. And even though it starts about her, it ends up being about him, and doing it for himself.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** What about the responsibility of doing a lead role versus a supporting role?

**Frost:** I never thought about it. I'm the producer, involved in all the facets, so being that was my job it was all part of it. I felt like I was the lead in 'Shaun of the Dead,' 'Hot Fuzz,' all of them, because the three of us were involved in creating them. I led stuff on television before, but what was most difficult that as an instinctive comic, I always want to be funniest. It's the role that is good for the film, and it's never about me.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** Do you think the character of Bruce best represents your 'brand' as a movie character, or do you even have a brand?

**Frost:** He's a kick away from that brand, because I think what I do with Simon and Edgar is my brand. I mean, me doing a dance movie. It's f\*\*king ridiculous. For three years I kept the idea to myself, but then I thought, 'f\*\*k it, let's do it.' Like a great serial killer, I wanted to be caught into it. [laughs]

**HollywoodChicago.com:** When you are involved in the process a project such as this, or the stuff you, Edgar and Simon are involved in, what is the biggest drag in putting a movie together and what's the best way to get through that part of it?

**Frost:** I don't like the funding end of it. It interests me but I find it hard going around and asking, 'can I have a million dollars to make a movie?' I'm terrible with money, I don't bother with it much at all.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** You've had the opportunity to absorb a lot of American culture in your life. What still perplexes you about our culture, and have you ever been able to figure out why people act in that way here in America?

**Frost:** I do like American things like baseball – I was actually excited that I was here on opening day – it's amazing. When I watch television here, I'm fascinated by the culture of adverts. I mean here, they advertise medicines, we don't do that at home. And for a culture that is terrified of obesity, virtually every ad is food, or food on food.

Also I noticed that Subway has a new product called the 'Flatizza.' I could smash a 100 cups against the wall when that ad comes on. They brag about the fact that it's square and flat. Well, pizza is f\*\*king flat anyway! [laughs] It's not you're re-inventing the wheel. It would make more sense if they called it the 'Squarizza.' because at least pizza isn't square all the time. It's the language you use to describe food.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** Which of the 12 pubs in 'The World's End' do you think best represents your life now and why?

**Frost:** The King's Head, two away from The World's End. It's a small little pub, and you can sit in the back and not be bothered. Or you can actually sit at the bar and chat.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** Now that you are both a Saturday-Night-Fever-John-Travolta type and romantic leading man, what is your next fantasy role that would be designed to shock everybody?

**Frost:** It will be a wrestling picture. I will be the 'Cockney Lump.' [laughs] I'm always looking for training process that almost kills me.

**HollywoodChicago.com:** It's great to have a job in which you can fulfill any fantasy.

**Frost:** Yeah, I'm a terrible golfer but I love to play. Maybe I should write a movie where I become a pro, so I can be trained by Jim Furyk.

*"Cuban Fury" opens everywhere on April 11th. Featuring Nick Frost Rashida Jones, Chris O'Dowd, Ian McShane, Rory Kinnear and Tim Plester. Written by Jon Brown, based on an idea by Nick Frost. Directed by James Griffiths. Rated "R"*



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