

# What's On

## Couch slouch

### 'Star Trek' to get Governors Award

## 'Sons' at 10: Kurt Sutter reflects on biker drama

LOS ANGELES, Sept 2, (RTRS): Ten years ago, "Sons of Anarchy", Kurt Sutter's crime drama about a gun-running motorcycle gang in the fictional town of Charming, Calif, premiered on FX. Over the course of the seven-season run that followed, the show became the top-rated show on the cable network and developed a dedicated audience on social media before concluding in 2014.

Starring Ron Perlman as MC president Clay Morrow, and Charlie Hunnam as vice-president and Clay's stepson, the show offered up themes of brotherhood, redemption, and most of all, family. Loosely framed around the story of Shakespeare's "Hamlet", the members of the motorcycle club clashed with rival MCs, forged uneasy alliances with other criminal outfits, they worked constantly to earn a living while staying one step ahead of the law.

Prior to "Sons", Sutter was working on "The Shield" for the cable, starting as a staff writer there but ultimately promoted to executive producer.

"My experience really was limited, in that I had only written for table," says Sutter of the time he was developing "Sons". "I hadn't really done anything, nor have I really ever done anything, that was broadcast television. I was used to the creative landscape of that medium, and obviously working with FX."

Sutter believes that his own creative growth was intertwined with the evolution of the show itself.

"The stuff that I learned on 'Sons', the education of how to tell stories, was part of that mythology," Sutter says. "It's hard to look at it and go, 'Oh, if I knew this, I would have done it this way,' because the fact is I like to think that all that sort of unraveled as it was supposed to. And not just in terms of story, but in terms of where I was at and the creatives I surrounded myself with."

When "The Shield" concluded its run in November 2008, the current era of peak TV was beginning to take hold. HBO series such as "The Sopranos" and "The Wire" had helped pave the way, while AMC's "Breaking Bad" and "Mad Men" were just starting to tell complex stories of their own. With these shows came a new, creator-driven market for television, and Sutter felt ready to tell the story of "Sons of Anarchy".

"My opinion was somewhat excited about it," says Sutter.

### Comfort

After pitching the show to various networks, he opted to stay with FX "not because I had a comfort level, but because I really believed that they were the right world for it."

His experience on "The Shield" helped him feel confident FX was the right place to "foster" the show, not only in the production stages but also marketing. "I really felt like their brand was the right fit," he says. "To me, it was all of the variables in the right place."

Knowing where the show would live was only one part of the equation, though.

"I knew from being on 'The Shield', and having some experience in the financials of all of it, that after seven seasons the production model changes and reverts back. It becomes a much more expensive show to do and perhaps the economic feasibility of it somewhat goes away," Sutter says.

Sutter admits he did not initially set out specifically with a seven-year plan, but he felt if he was "lucky enough to have a full run" of the story, that would be his "yardstick" by which to measure success.

Sutter did have a "general sense of how I wanted Jax to evolve and perhaps what the end game might be," from the outset. Subsequently, he went into each season with a "blueprint" of what it should be.

"I learned that the looser my grip was on that, the better the show was. Meaning, most of the time I hit all those [individual characters'] mile markers, and I moved the mythology forward in the way I wanted to, but what creatively got me excited about the work was that I never knew how we were going to get there. I never knew what the stories were going to be. I didn't know how the characters would evolve. I didn't know which characters would become essential in the revealing of the mythology," he says.

In order to flesh out those elements, Sutter relied on collaboration with his staff writers to help understand the world he was building.

"That all happened as a result of down with five or six other talented writers and breaking story. That, to me, was the exciting part," he says.

In that collaboration, Sutter admits he "let the story unravel as organically as possible." "At that point, the train was just off the tracks," he recalls. "It was just this sense of 'the reckoning has come'."

Sutter admits her death was "really hard," in part because so much was happening in the final few episodes of the series that "you didn't really have time to process that death before the ultimate climax of the show."

Looking back on "Sons of Anarchy's" seven seasons overall, Sutter still exhibits pride in the world he created, which is continuing with spinoff "Mayans MC", premiering 10 years and one day after "Sons" initially bowed.

### Also:

**LOS ANGELES:** "Star Trek" is going to live long and prosper.

The classic television franchise will receive the 2018 Governors Award from the Television Academy, in recognition of its storied legacy in advancing science, society and culture.

The Governors Award, which debuted in 1978, honors an individual or organizational achievement in the television arts and sciences that is exceptional and universal in nature and goes beyond the scope of annual Emmy Awards recognition. Previous recipients include ITVS, "American Idol", A+E Networks, "Masterpiece Theater" and "Comic Relief".

"Star Trek is the first television program I can remember watching as a child, and has always been ahead of its time," said Mark Spatny, chair of the Governors Award committee in a statement. "Not only have all the franchises promoted inclusiveness and acceptance of all people, and inspired creative thought about space exploration and our future, but the technical innovations sparked by the franchise are incredibly significant to the evolution of television production, and also to the communication and computer tools we use in our daily life."

A flyer of the event

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## tv highlights

## Cinema

Cinema programme from Thursday 30/8/2018 to Wednesday 5/9/2018

Time	Movie	Genre	Rating	Locations
18:20, 22:25	Bekia (Egyptian Film)		360°	Ajial, Al-Kout, Avenues
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11:50, 16:00, 16:55, 20:00 (Daily Exc Fri)	Christopher Robin		360°	Sharqia, Avenues
16:00, 16:55, 20:00 (Fri)				
14:45, 19:00				Bairaq, Fanar, Al-Kout, Avenues
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12:00, 16:30, 18:40 (Daily Exc Fri)				
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