

Will 'Left Behind' Rapture Theme Scare People Into Heaven?

Stoney Lake Entertainment has announced that *Left Behind*, the star-studded reboot of the hit book and film franchise, is slated to release in theaters nationwide Oct. 3.

The rapture-themed movie stars Academy Award winner Nicolas Cage (*National Treasure*, *City of Angels*, *The Croods*) as Rayford Steele, as well as Chad Michael Murray, Cassi Thomson, Nicky Whelan, Lea Thompson and Jordin Sparks.

Slated for release on 1,800 screens, the movie is directed by veteran filmmaker, Vic Armstrong (*Thor*, *Amazing Spider-Man*, *War of the Worlds*), who is renowned for directing action sequences. Entertainment One has acquired the domestic home video rights.

"We're seeing a number of big, biblical movies on the calendar this year, particularly *Son of God*, *Noah* and *Exodus*," said Paul Lalonde, producer of *Left Behind* and CEO at Stoney Lake Entertainment. "What makes *Left Behind* different is that it is a contemporary story that could actually happen at any moment.

"It's also a historical account, in a sense, because it's based on a true story," he added. "It just hasn't happened yet, so it's very important to us that the core story not be changed. We had offers from three of the major studios in Hollywood to distribute this movie, but none would allow final control of the story to be left in our hands."

Left Behind is based on the *New York Times* best-selling book series of the same name, co-authored by Jerry B. Jenkins and Tim LaHaye. Published in 32 languages, the series has sold more than 65 million copies and is one of the best-selling

fiction series of all time. Three earlier films based on the series were produced by Cloud Ten Pictures, the most recent in 2005.

"I believe it does justice to the novel and will renew interest in the entire series," Jenkins said of the reboot.

"It is the best movie I have ever seen on the rapture," added LaHaye.

Left Behind follows Steele who is piloting a commercial airliner just hours after the rapture when millions of people around the globe simply vanish. Thirty-thousand feet over the Atlantic, he is faced with a damaged plane, terrified passengers and a desperate desire to get back to his family. On the ground, his daughter, Chloe Steele (Thomson) is among those left behind, forced to navigate a world of madness as she searches for her lost mother and brother.