

Russell Mitchell

Exile Cycles

Russell Mitchell, who describes his company, **Exile Cycles**, as “the bastard child of the motorcycle industry,” is on the fast track to becoming a pop culture icon! Mitchell, with his full-body tattoo, spiky Mohawk and British accent is as recognizable as the hardcore, industrial choppers he has become famous for. A true Renaissance man, this “bad boy” biker practised as a veterinary surgeon before coming to the states to pursue a career as a model. Today, Mitchell is not only one of the most respected custom bike builders in the world, he is also the host of his own TV show, **Build or Bust**, and the proud single father of an eight year old boy.

The Show

Russell Mitchell has a personality as bright and colorful as the tattoos that cover his body, and his weekly show **Build or Bust** on the *Speed Channel* is as big a hit as his own line of Exile motorcycles. The show begins when a builder/contestant (who Mitchell nicknames “The Wrench”) is supplied with the parts and tools necessary to build the motorcycle of his or her dreams and is given only 30 days to complete the task. If the build is a hit and receives Russell’s seal of approval, The Wrench gets to keep the \$50,000 bike. If the build is a bust, The Wrench leaves the shop with nothing – not even his self esteem! **Build or Bust** recently wrapped its second season. Earlier this year Russell was the subject of **Motorcycle Mania IV**, a documentary that followed his antics at Daytona Bike Week building a bike for heartland rocker John Mellencamp. Russell and his colorful crew are also constantly featured on the *Discovery Channel*, as major characters in the **Great Biker Build Off** as well as the **World Bike Build Off**.

The Man

An Exile Cycle is instantly recognizable for its industrial European styling, but with his Mohawk mane and wall-to-wall tattoos, Russell Mitchell stands out even more than his bikes! A colorful character with an interesting back story, Mitchell has been a veterinarian, a punker, a model and an actor, but always a biker. These days you can add loving father and TV celebrity to that list. Born in the West of England, Russell started customizing motorcycles at the tender age of 16, just as soon as he got his motorcycle license. Even his early machines received widespread press, and the love of two-wheeled machinery has remained his life-long passion. He actually qualified as a veterinary surgeon and accepted a position at a practice in London, where he immersed himself in the local punk scene. Dr Mitchell’s combination of good-looks and a charming personality led to a position as the TV vet on *London Weekend Television*’s popular breakfast news show. Russell soon realized he enjoyed show business more than dogs with diarrhea and cats with colic. An invitation from a top Los Angeles model agency resulted in Russell’s so called “exile” in L.A. Instantly a fan of the warm weather and the

beautiful women, Russell now considers California his home. Predictably, modeling led to acting, but Russell's true passion remained motorcycles and he always made time to feed his addiction to building huge, powerful V-Twin machines. He continued to hone his skills, mastering all the varied disciplines required to become the world-renowned master bike builder he is today.

The publicity surrounding Exile Cycles and their **Build or Bust** TV show has caused Mitchell to become the most recognizable of the "biker celebrities", but with that ink and that haircut, he was never meant to blend in. Most weekends you will find him standing out from the crowd, whilst making a guest appearance at one of the many bike events around the country. Despite his outspoken persona, Russell is always happy to sign an autograph or take a photo with one of his many fans.

The Bikes

All of Russell's bikes are clean and tough, usually sporting black paint and brushed metal surfaces. The minimalist styling that has long been popular in Europe is now catching on fast here in America, and Exile Cycles leads this movement. In fact, Russell has been preaching this styling ethic for so long he has a virtual monopoly on it. Exile's choppers are a breath of fresh air amongst the over-painted, over-chromed customs that are the standard in the U.S. Ten years ago, Mitchell founded Exile Cycles in his Los Angeles garage as a part-time venture to satisfy demand for his unique custom parts. Endless praise from the motorcycle press ensured rapid growth, and the widespread popularity of Exile bikes and parts is now reflected in an annual turnover measured in millions. In its new 20,000 square foot facility, Exile Cycles manufactures nearly every component on a motorcycle, and sells these parts both direct to the public and through its network of over 1,000 dealers. Mitchell builds about twenty ground-up custom bikes each year, and these machines have garnered hundreds of magazine features around the globe. He has recently built bikes for the likes of actor George Clooney and rock stars Chris Cornell, John Mellencamp and Billy Joe Armstrong, all of whom are huge fans of the bikes that put the hard in "hardcore".

Russell and his badass customs have a major attitude, a controversial outlook on what "custom" means and a tenacious focus on originality that stops people dead in their tracks. His company has grown from modest beginnings into a multi-million dollar corporation, but the Exile mission remains unchanged: "We want to expose the American people to clean, tough European styling – whether they like it or not!" The countless magazine features, prestigious industry accolades, Master Builder status and a plethora of television coverage would suggest that they are, indeed, learning to like it – a lot!