

MOVIE REVIEW

Rudd and Jonas hit the right notes in 'Power Ballad'

BY JAKE COYLE
AP FILM WRITER

Let's just say that the wedding band has never occupied the most exalted rung of the ladder in music.

Playing "September" and "Celebration" is often what's most required. As one member of the Bride and the Groove, the band at the center of John

Carney's new film, puts it: They're not rock stars. They're human jukeboxes.

But in "Power Ballad," a wedding band singer and pop star cross paths. For one night, all of the stratification of the music world falls away. "Power Ballad" starts like a fairy tale.

Since 2007's "Once," the Irish writer-director has focused his films on the redemptive capacity of music. Carney, who was once a bassist for the Frames, knows from experience. From "Sing Street" to "Flora and Son," he has made unabashedly earnest tales where a song, or just picking up an instrument, changes lives.

This can, undoubtedly, lead Carney into sentimental territory. Lucky for him, his chosen subject — music — is more worthy of sentiment than almost anything else. Yet the song doesn't quite remain the same in "Power Ballad," a movie that begins with the gentle sweetness Carney is known for, but detours into something more discordant.

Rick (Paul Rudd) is an American musician who gave up on his once-promising rock band's future to instead live with his wife (Marcella Plunkett) and teenage daughter (a spunky,



David Cleary/Lionsgate | AP Photo
This image released by Lionsgate shows Nick Jonas, left, and Paul Rudd in a scene from "Power Ballad."

POWER BALLAD

3 out of 4 stars:
MPAA Rating: R
Running Time: 108 minutes

underused Beth Fallon) in Dublin. His former group was called Octagon, a perfect former band name if there ever were one.

But for years, Rick has fronted the Bride and the Groove. It's an unromantic day job (or rather a night one) that hasn't entirely sapped his belief in his own songwriting. During an encore at one wedding, he plays an original tune and is mentally transported to an arena full of swaying fans. When he snaps out of it, he's staring at an empty dance floor and faces that say: That wasn't Kool & the Gang.

At another wedding at a castle, the band is asked to let a friend of the newlyweds sit in. They reluctantly agree, and are

surprised to see the very popular boy band veteran, Danny (Nick Jonas), step on stage. He sings Stevie Wonder's "I Wish," and it's great. Though Rick had just dismissed Danny's music as "manufactured content for young, excitable teens," he discovers Danny is a genuine musician.

But, later that night, something even more remarkable transpires. Rick bumps into Danny, and the two quickly hit it off. They begin jamming together and sharing songs that need work. They are both so jazzed by their unlikely collaboration that they play into the next morning.

The actual moment of artistic creation, and the craft it requires, is something the movies almost always skip over. But capturing collaborative juices flowing is exactly what Carney excels at. You can feel his joy in it. So it's fitting that one of the unfinished songs Rick plays for Danny, "How to Write

a Song (Without You)," is about creative invention.

It's here when you wonder where "Power Ballad" is headed. Is this, for Rick, the beginning of a beautiful friendship? Will they turn into the next great songwriting duo, lifting Rick out of weddings and proving to the world that Danny is more than a boy-band pretty face?

That is very possibly the movie Carney might have made a decade ago. But "Power Ballad," which he co-wrote with Peter McDonald (who also co-stars as a band member), shifts six months ahead in time. Rick is standing in a shopping mall when the familiar lyrics of "How to Write a Song" softly float through the stores. He stands dumbfounded in the gleaming halls of commerce, a befuddlement that slowly turns into outrage the bigger and bigger Danny's smash hit grows.

"Power Ballad" loses some of its steam in its second half, which follows Rick's struggle for justice. Making things considerably harder is that he can find no recorded demo of the song. His family and his band don't even really believe him.

But even as the movie struggles to sustain its opening refrain, Carney's film is always riffing on ideas of authenticity and aspiration in music. That Jonas is, himself, a former boy band star who has at times gone it alone, lends the movie a direct connection to contemporary music, where tussles over authorship are increasingly common.

Jonas has been good in other films (notably the "Jumanji" movies), but this is his most

ambitious and convincing performance to date. It's a testament to the movie that Danny's theft isn't a purely villainous act. He gives the song a bridge and the vocal power to take it to another level. He's under mounting pressure from his label to deliver a hit. An executive (Jack Reynor) wants "Danny 2.0" but has little faith he can supply it.

But it's an even more well-tailored role for Rudd. He memorably and very goofily played a bassist in the 2009 comedy "I Love You, Man." But while he sings well, it's not his musical chops that lift the performance. It's more that Rick, a contented family man with unrealized rock-star dreams, gives the exceptionally genial Rudd more notes to play as an actor. Rudd makes for a very likeable everyman out to convince the world he is capable of a beautiful song.

And that's the abiding belief of Carney's. No matter all the struggles, the artistic injustices, the corporate hegemony, he still believes that if you make something truly soulful, it will break through. It will claw its way to the surface, and move people. It's undoubtedly gotten harder since "Once," this movie seems to admit. The world is against you. But what one person can offer, a ballad or otherwise, still has power. Fairy tale or not, that's worth believing in.

"Power Ballad," a Lionsgate release in theaters Friday, is rated R by the Motion Picture Association for "language throughout and some drug use." Running time: 108 minutes. Three stars out of four.

Spielberg on his faith in alien life, the future of movies

BY JAKE COYLE
AP FILM WRITER

NEW YORK — A moment early on in "Disclosure Day" will instinctively feel familiar to anyone who grew up with Steven Spielberg films. A TV weather report predicts hail. The camera pans downward, from television set to kitchen table. Plinking sounds begin. Cereal falls into a bowl.

"Those were Froot Loops," Spielberg says, smiling. "My favorite."

Spielberg's latest, like some of his earliest and most beloved films, again concerns what might fall from above. "Disclosure Day," which Universal Pictures releases June 11, returns Hollywood's pre-eminent big-screen craftsman to one of his most abiding questions: Are we alone?

Coming nearly half a century after "Close Encounters of the Third Kind," "Disclosure Day" is a grand bookend for one of the most cosmically-minded moviemakers of our time, whose dreams of extraterrestrial life have shaped all of ours. It's a distant answer to the final notes of "Close Encounters." But while Spielberg grants his 1977 film was "speculative," "Disclosure Day," he insists, is the real deal.

"It's my first film that will be considered science fiction that I do not consider to be science fiction," Spielberg said in a recent interview. "It's much more reflective of the world as it is evolving and discoveries that are being made as we speak."

Spielberg, at 79, is trying to revive and reconsider the alien wonder that's long lingered in his mind, from "E.T." to "War of the Worlds." "Disclosure Day," Spielberg's first summer movie in a decade, is already being hailed as one of his best in years. But this time, Spielberg is testing whether he can conjure some of his trademark movie magic less with imagination than with conviction.



Niko Tavernise/Universal Pictures and Amblin Entertainment | AP Photo
This image released by Universal Pictures shows director Steven Spielberg, center, on the set of "Disclosure Day."

"I've been a believer since I made 'Close Encounters' 50 years ago," Spielberg says. "But I would always say: Until I've seen a UAP or a UFO with my own eyes, I'm not going to categorically state that life from out there has come here."

"But I've changed that," he adds. "I'm now willing to change my mind because of the circumstantial evidence which is overwhelming."

ALIENS AGAIN, BUT DIFFERENT

"Disclosure Day" stars Josh O'Connor as a cybersecurity whistleblower with government evidence, long suppressed, chronicling a history of alien encounters. Guiding him in his escape from a corporate executive (Colin Firth) trying to keep it all under wraps is the disclosure movement's leader (Colman Domingo). Meanwhile, a meteorologist named Margaret Fairchild (Emily Blunt) begins having a mysterious epiphany.

When he first began thinking about the movie, Spielberg called up the screenwriter David Koepp, a longtime collaborator who wrote "Jurassic Park" and "War of the Worlds."

"I said, 'Sure, what's it about?'" he recalls Koepp. "And he said, 'Oh, you know, aliens again. But different this time.'"

Spielberg was coming off an unusually long break by his breakneck standards. His 2022 film "The Fabelmans" pulled from his own

childhood, dramatizing his parents' painful divorce and his own origins as a filmmaker. Spielberg's first gut-wrenchingly autobiographical movie left him unsure of what was next.

"It was the hardest question I ever had to ask myself because there was such completion in resolving so many personal issues that I had never aired in public before 'The Fabelmans,'" Spielberg says.

"I didn't care whether people thought 'The Fabelmans' was just a tale, a yarn, or if they cared that it was all true. I didn't care about that. It was something I did for myself. I always used to say it was \$40 million of therapy that I didn't have to pay for. Uni-

versal did," he says, laughing.

But Spielberg, having long followed reports of alleged alien encounters, was inspired by the 2023 House Subcommittee on National Security hearing on UAPs: Unidentified Anomalous Phenomena. Among the witnesses was whistleblower and former Air Force intelligence officer David Grusch, who testified that the government concealed a program investigating UAPs.

The Pentagon then denied it. Yet in April, President Donald Trump said the Pentagon is preparing to release some "very interesting" UFO files.

Those 2023 testimonies and others so fueled Spielberg that he produced a 50-page treatment on what would become "Disclosure

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CASE NUMBER 26-P-281 NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Notice of administration in the Daviess District 1 Court II in the matter of the estate of James D. Fallaway, deceased. Notice is hereby given that Kenneth Fallaway in District Court 1 was on the 12th day of May, 2026, appointed Executive-Administrator of the estate of James D. Fallaway, deceased who died on the 22nd day of March, 2026. All persons who have claims against this estate, whether or not docketed, must file the claim in the office of the clerk of this court within 6 months of the first publication of this notice or the claims will be forever barred. Dated this 12th day of May, 2026.
Executive-Administrator, Kenneth Fallaway, 822 Locust Street, Apt., Owensboro, KY 42301 270-993-7345

LEGAL
Travis Bradley LLC located at 222 Allen Street Owensboro, KY. 42303 hereby declares intention(s) to apply for a **NQ2- Restaurant Liquor** no later than **July 6th, 2026** The licensed premises will be located at **210 Allen St. Owensboro, KY. 42301** Doing business as: **City Walk Cafe** The owner(s); Principal Officers and Directors; Limited Partners; or Members) are as follows: **Owner, Travis Tong of 1906 Lexington Ave. Owensboro, KY. 42301** Any person, association, corporation, or body politic may protest the granting of the license(s) by writing the Dept. of Alcoholic Beverage Control Mayo-Underwood Building 500 Mero St., 2NE33 Frankfort, Ky. 40601, within 30 days of the date of this legal publication.

Day." During the writing process with Koepp, he texted him more notes, he says, "than I've ever sent to anyone in my life."

"There was a period in there where I believe he re-read the script every single day for a year," Koepp

says. "We'd be in different time zones and I would wake up to 30 or 35 texts from his most current reading of the script. When the leader of the project has that level of commitment, it tends to bring along everyone. You up your game."

LEGAL NOTICE

DAVIESS COUNTY FISCAL COURT
NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF ORDINANCE

After having summary second reading at its meeting on May 28, 2026, the Daviess County Fiscal Court adopted:
03-2026 KOC 921.690 (2026) – An Ordinance Imposing a Temporary Moratorium on the Acceptance and Processing of Applications Related to I.T. Infrastructure Facilities (Including Data Centers)
Copies of the full text of the ordinance is available for public inspection in the County Judge/Executive's Office, Courthouse, Room 202, 212 St. Ann Street, Owensboro, Kentucky, Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. & on-line at www.daviessky.org.
The Daviess County Fiscal Court certifies that the summary above is true and correct and written in a way calculated to inform the public of its content.

Daviess County Fiscal Court
By: Brooke Hagan
Fiscal Court Clerk

PREPARED BY:
John Burew
Daviess County Attorney

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