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# Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire

*Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* is a 2024 American supernatural comedy film directed by [Gil Kenan](#) from a screenplay he co-wrote with [Jason Reitman](#). It is the sequel to *Ghostbusters: Afterlife* (2021) and the fifth film in the *Ghostbusters* franchise. The film stars [Paul Rudd](#), [Carrie Coon](#), [Finn Wolfhard](#), [Mckenna Grace](#), [Celeste O'Connor](#), and [Logan Kim](#) reprising their roles from *Afterlife*, alongside [Bill Murray](#), [Dan Aykroyd](#), [Ernie Hudson](#), [Annie Potts](#), and [William Atherton](#) reprising their characters from the earlier films. [Kumail Nanjiani](#), [Patton Oswalt](#), [Emily Alyn Lind](#), and [James Acaster](#) also join the cast. Set three years after the events of *Afterlife*, the veteran Ghostbusters must join forces with their new recruits to save the world in [New York City](#) from a death-chilling god who seeks to build a spectral army.<sup>[9]</sup>

Following the success of *Afterlife*, [Sony Pictures](#) announced the sequel in April 2022, with Reitman returning as director. Co-writer and executive producer Kenan later took over as director from Reitman that December, with the latter staying on as a co-writer and co-producer. That same month, Rudd, Coon, Grace, Wolfhard, O'Connor, Kim, Murray, Aykroyd, Hudson, Potts and Atherton were all confirmed to reprise their roles. New cast members including Nanjiani, Oswalt, Lind and Acaster were announced in March 2023, with principal photography commencing that month and wrapping in June. [Dario Marianelli](#) was hired to compose the film's score, replacing *Afterlife* composer [Rob Simonsen](#). This is the first film in the *Ghostbusters* franchise to be released following the death of the franchise's co-creator and Jason Reitman's father [Ivan Reitman](#), who posthumously receives credit as a producer alongside his son and Jason Blumenfeld. The film is dedicated to Reitman's memory and celebrates the 40th anniversary of [the first film](#).<sup>[1]</sup>

*Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* had its world premiere at the AMC 13 Theater at [Lincoln Square](#) in [New York City](#) on March 14, 2024, and was released in the United States on March 22, by [Sony Pictures Releasing](#) under its [Columbia Pictures](#) label. The film was a [box-office disappointment](#), it received mixed reviews from critics,

*Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire*



Theatrical release poster

Directed by	<a href="#">Gil Kenan</a>
Written by	<a href="#">Gil Kenan</a> <a href="#">Jason Reitman</a>
Based on	<i>Ghostbusters</i> by <a href="#">Dan Aykroyd</a> <a href="#">Harold Ramis</a>
Produced by	<a href="#">Ivan Reitman</a> <sup>[a]</sup> <a href="#">Jason Reitman</a> <a href="#">Jason Blumenfeld</a>
Starring	<a href="#">Paul Rudd</a> <a href="#">Carrie Coon</a> <a href="#">Finn Wolfhard</a> <a href="#">Mckenna Grace</a> <a href="#">Kumail Nanjiani</a>

but generally positive feedback from audiences,<sup>[10]</sup> and has grossed over \$199 million worldwide, making it the ninth-highest-grossing film of 2024.

## Plot

Three years after the events in Summerville, Oklahoma,<sup>[b]</sup> Callie Spengler, her boyfriend Gary Grooberson, her children Trevor and Phoebe, and their close friends Lucky Domingo and Podcast, relocate to New York City to aid Winston Zeddemore and Ray Stantz in reestablishing the Ghostbusters. After the group captures a ghost in Hell's Kitchen, Walter Peck, the Ghostbusters' long-time opponent,<sup>[c]</sup> threatens to close them down on account of his authority as mayor. To appease him, Callie benches underage Phoebe. Upset, Phoebe attempts to control her emotions by playing chess in a nearby park, where she encounters and befriends Melody, a ghost chess prodigy, who died in a fire.

Meanwhile, Ray and Podcast are collecting cursed objects for examination. Nadeem Razmaadi visits and sells them a strange brass orb with ritual markings belonging to his late grandmother. Ray suspects it is an apotropaic trap. After he tests its PKE levels, the orb unleashes a psionic pulse, which damages the ecto-containment unit – dangerously near capacity – at the Ghostbusters' firehouse headquarters. Winston takes the orb to his privately owned paranormal research center, run by his associate, Dr. Lars Pinfield. Using an experimental extraction device to harness spiritual energy, Lars is unable to extract anything from the orb. To learn more, he joins Trevor and Lucky to see Nadeem, who reveals the orb was kept hidden by his grandmother within a brass-lined chamber. Peter Venkman, brought in to help, discovers Nadeem has latent pyrokinetic powers.

Meanwhile, Ray, accompanied by Phoebe and Podcast, visits Dr. Hubert Wartzki, a New York Public Library research librarian. Wartzki explains the orb was built by four sorcerers called the Firemasters to imprison Garraka, a demonic god who sought to conquer the world with a ghost army, feeding on negative emotions<sup>[d]</sup> to lower temperatures to absolute zero. They learn Nadeem's grandmother was descended from one of the Firemasters who prevented Garraka from accidentally escaping the orb in 1904 during a mock ritual conducted by members of the Manhattan Adventurers' Society, whom Garraka froze to death. Garraka was confined in the orb due to being vulnerable to copper alloys combined with fire and lacking his devil horns as a power source.

When the trio attempt to stop a ghost from stealing a phonographic recording of the club's ritual, Peck exploits Phoebe's involvement to shut down the Ghostbusters. After an argument with Gary and her mom, Phoebe runs away and takes Melody to Winston's research center. She uses his extraction equipment to project herself as a ghost for two minutes so the pair can physically interact. Melody reveals she had been secretly working with Garraka, offering to free him in exchange for passage to the afterlife. Forcing Phoebe

	<u>Patton Oswalt</u> <u>Ernie Hudson</u> <u>Annie Potts</u>
<b>Cinematography</b>	<u>Eric Steelberg</u>
<b>Edited by</b>	<u>Nathan Orloff</u> <u>Shane Reid</u>
<b>Music by</b>	<u>Dario Marianelli</u>
<b>Production companies</b>	<u>Columbia Pictures</u> <u>Ghost Corps</u> <u>Bron Creative</u> <sup>[3][4]</sup> <u>Right of Way Films</u>
<b>Distributed by</b>	<u>Sony Pictures Releasing</u>
<b>Release dates</b>	March 14, 2024 ( <u>New York City</u> ) March 22, 2024 ( <u>United States</u> )
<b>Running time</b>	115 minutes <sup>[5]</sup>
<b>Country</b>	<u>United States</u>
<b>Language</b>	<u>English</u>
<b>Budget</b>	<u>\$100 million</u> <sup>[6]</sup>
<b>Box office</b>	<u>\$199.2 million</u> <sup>[7][8]</sup>

to recite the ritual chant, Garraka escapes, locates his horns and freezes the city. Realizing Garraka will free the ghosts in the containment unit, the Ghostbusters gather to defend their headquarters, aided by Nadeem, who dons his grandmother's brass armor and attempts to master his powers.

Garraka overpowers them and breaches the containment unit. Phoebe reconfigures her proton pack with copper alloys to strengthen it; Melody, betrayed by Garraka, atones by helping Nadeem utilize his powers to weaken Garraka. Ray, with the help from the veteran Ghostbusters, entraps the god by utilizing the ruptured containment unit. Melody reconciles with Phoebe before departing for the afterlife to reunite with her family. As the city thaws, the Ghostbusters are hailed as heroes, with Peck forced to support the team and reinstate Phoebe. The Ghostbusters begin pursuing escaped ghosts across New York City.

## Cast

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- [Paul Rudd](#) as Gary Grooberson
- [Carrie Coon](#) as Callie Spengler
- [Finn Wolfhard](#) as Trevor Spengler
- [Mckenna Grace](#) as Phoebe Spengler
- [Kumail Nanjiani](#) as Nadeem Razmaadi<sup>[11]</sup>
- [Patton Oswalt](#) as Dr. Hubert Wartzki<sup>[11]</sup>
- [Celeste O'Connor](#) as Lucky Domingo
- [Logan Kim](#) as Podcast<sup>[12]</sup>
- [Emily Alyn Lind](#) as Melody
- [James Acaster](#) as Dr. Lars Pinfield<sup>[11]</sup>
- [Bill Murray](#) as Dr. Peter Venkman<sup>[13]</sup>
- [Dan Aykroyd](#) as Dr. Raymond "Ray" Stantz<sup>[14]</sup>
- [Ernie Hudson](#) as Winston Zeddemore<sup>[15]</sup>
- [Annie Potts](#) as Janine Melnitz<sup>[16]</sup>
- [William Atherton](#) as Mayor Walter Peck<sup>[17]</sup>

Additionally, [Kevin Mangold](#) and [Ian Whyte](#) serve as the puppeteers for [Slimer](#) and Garraka, respectively, though the latter's voice performers were uncredited. [Shelby Young](#) and [Ryan Bartley](#) also appear uncredited as the voices of the Mini-Pufts, tiny versions and replicated forms of the [Stay Puft Marshmallow Man](#), with Young returning from [Afterlife](#).<sup>[18]</sup>

## Production

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### Development

Following the release of [Ghostbusters: Afterlife](#) in November 2021, [Dan Aykroyd](#) expressed interest in having the surviving cast of the original *Ghostbusters* team reprise their roles in up to three sequels.<sup>[19]</sup> In April 2022, it was announced that a sequel to *Afterlife* was in early development at [Sony Pictures](#).<sup>[20][21]</sup>

In June 2022, the film was confirmed by director [Jason Reitman](#) under the working title *Firehouse*.<sup>[22]</sup> That same month, it was announced that the sequel would take place in [New York City](#).<sup>[23]</sup> On October 5, 2022, [Mckenna Grace](#) announced that she would reprise her role.<sup>[24]</sup> The following month, [Ernie Hudson](#) revealed he read a script for the film.<sup>[25]</sup>

In December 2022, it was announced that Gil Kenan would take over as director from Reitman, who still remains as a writer and producer. It was also announced that Paul Rudd, Finn Wolfhard and Carrie Coon would return.<sup>[26]</sup> In March 2023, it was announced that Kumail Nanjiani, Patton Oswalt, James Acaster and Emily Alyn Lind had been cast in the film.<sup>[27]</sup> Lind's role was establishing during pre-production in secrecy. She met Reitman, Kenan, and casting director John Papsidera prior to filming, and was not aware she had the role shortly prior to filming.<sup>[28]</sup>

According to Nanjiani, the filmmakers drew inspiration from the animated series *The Real Ghostbusters* (1986–1991), noting they "wanted to make a long episode of the animated series".<sup>[29]</sup>

Instead of a Motorola MT-500 as seen in previous iterations, the controversial Baofeng UV-5R ham radio was used as a prop.<sup>[30]</sup>

## Filming

Principal photography began on March 20, 2023, in London,<sup>[31]</sup> under the working title *Firehouse*, with Eric Steelberg serving as the cinematographer.<sup>[15][32]</sup> On April 25, 2023, Hudson indicated that Dan Aykroyd, Bill Murray, and Annie Potts would reprise their roles from previous *Ghostbusters* movies in the film;<sup>[33]</sup> Aykroyd confirmed he would return for the sequel in June 2023.<sup>[34]</sup>

Filming was spotted in New York City, where Casey Neistat was caught filming a stunt scene in a video posted on June 7, 2023, while documenting the effects of the 2023 Canadian wildfires in New York City.<sup>[35]</sup> Filming wrapped on June 23.<sup>[36]</sup>

## Music

On January 18, 2024, Dario Marianelli was confirmed to compose the film's score, replacing *Afterlife* composer Rob Simonsen. This marked Marianelli's second collaboration with Gil Kenan after *A Boy Called Christmas* (2021). He recorded his score on the Barbra Streisand Scoring Stage in the John Williams Music Building on the Sony Pictures Studios lot in Culver City.<sup>[37]</sup> Peter Bernstein returned as score consultant, after doing so for *Afterlife*.<sup>[38]</sup>

On March 7, 2024, Japanese girl group Atarashii Gakko! released a track called "Ghostbusters: Frozen Summer" as a collaboration with Sony Pictures Entertainment Japan.<sup>[39]</sup> It samples Ray Parker Jr.'s song.

## Release

### Theatrical

*Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* had its world premiere in New York City on March 14, 2024,<sup>[40]</sup> and was released by Sony Pictures Releasing on March 22, 2024.<sup>[2]</sup> It was previously scheduled to be released on December 20, 2023,<sup>[41][42]</sup> but was delayed to March 29, 2024 (taking over the original release date of Sony Pictures Animation's *Spider-Man: Beyond the Spider-Verse*, another film made by Sony Pictures) in July 2023 due to the SAG-AFTRA strike,<sup>[43]</sup> before being moved up a week to March 22.<sup>[2]</sup>

### Marketing

On November 8, 2023, Sony released the first teaser trailer, which officially revealed the title as *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire*, as well as revealing the synopsis for the film.<sup>[44]</sup>

## Home media

In April 2021, Sony signed deals with Netflix and Disney for the rights to their 2022 to 2026 film slate, following the films' theatrical and home media windows. Netflix signed for exclusive "pay 1 window" streaming rights, which is typically an 18-month window and included *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* and past *Ghostbusters* films. Disney signed for "pay 2 window" rights for the films, which would be streamed on Disney+ and/or Hulu as well as broadcast on Disney's linear television networks.<sup>[45]</sup>

*Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* was released digitally on May 7, 2024,<sup>[46]</sup> and will be released on 4K Blu-ray, Blu-ray, and DVD on June 25, 2024.<sup>[47]</sup>

## Reception

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### Box office

As of May 20, 2024, *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* has grossed \$112.2 million in the United States and Canada and \$87 million in other territories, for a worldwide total of \$199.2 million.<sup>[8][7]</sup>

In the United States and Canada, *Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* was released alongside *Immaculate* and *Late Night with the Devil*, and was projected to gross \$43–45 million from 4,345 theaters in its opening weekend.<sup>[6]</sup> The film made \$16 million on its first day, including \$4.7 million from Thursday night previews, slightly topping *Afterlife*'s \$4.5 million. It went on to debut to \$45 million, landing between the opening weekends of *Ghostbusters* (\$46 million in 2016) and *Afterlife* (\$44 million in 2021), topping the box office, and pushing the *Ghostbusters* franchise past the \$1 billion mark. Deadline Hollywood credited Sony's marketing efforts for boosting the opening weekend, but suggested that the franchise would perform better if it returned to the original movie's focus on "wall-to-wall humor" and "big comedy stars."<sup>[48]</sup> In its second weekend the film made \$15.7 million (a drop of 65%), finishing second behind newcomer *Godzilla x Kong: The New Empire*.<sup>[49]</sup>

### Critical response

On the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, 43% of 286 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 5.2/10. The website's consensus reads: "*Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* offers a certain amount of nostalgia-fueled fun for fans of the original, but a crowded cast and surprisingly serious tone prevent this sequel from truly sparking."<sup>[50]</sup> It is the lowest-rated installment in the franchise on the site.<sup>[51]</sup> Metacritic, which uses a weighted average, assigned the film a score of 46 out of 100, based on 50 critics, indicating "mixed or average" reviews.<sup>[52]</sup> Audiences surveyed by CinemaScore gave the film an average grade of "B+" on an A+ to F scale, while those polled by PostTrak gave it an 80% overall positive score, with 64% saying they would definitely recommend the film.<sup>[48]</sup>

Jake Wilson of *The Age* gave it 2.5/5 stars, writing: "Aykroyd and Grace are the soul of the thing, to whatever degree a soul exists. At this point, Aykroyd has shed any pretence of ironic distance, emerging as the mournful weirdo he surely always was."<sup>[53]</sup> CNN's Brian Lowry called it "a very busy movie that lacks

the emotional hook of its predecessor, while spending too much time on the wrong characters in a way that yields a rather lifeless, chilly affair."<sup>[54]</sup>

Richard Roeper of the *Chicago Sun-Times* gave the film three stars out of four, writing that it "carries the same endearingly goofy, science-nerd spirit of the first film and delivers a delightful balance of slimy ghost stuff, sharp one-liners, terrific VFX and a steady stream of callbacks to various characters, human and otherwise, from the 1984 movie."<sup>[55]</sup> Jake Coyle of the *Associated Press* gave it 2.5/4 stars, saying that it was "A significant upgrade from *Afterlife*" and "a breezier, more serviceable sequel that has a modest charm as an '80-tinged family adventure."<sup>[56]</sup>

## Future

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In February 2024, Gil Kenan revealed that ideas for multiple future films in the *Ghostbusters* franchise had been discussed.<sup>[57][58]</sup>

## Notes

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- a. Although Reitman died in 2022, he received a posthumous producer credit on the film.<sup>[1][2]</sup>
- b. As depicted in *Ghostbusters: Afterlife* (2021)
- c. As first depicted in *Ghostbusters* (1984)
- d. As established in *Ghostbusters II* (1989) that powerful evil beings draw strength from them.

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## External links

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- Official website (<https://www.sonypictures.com/movies/ghostbustersfrozenempire>) 
  - Ghostbusters: Frozen Empire* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt21235248/>) at IMDb
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