

# Blue Beetle (film)

***Blue Beetle*** is a 2023 American superhero film based on the [DC Comics](#) character [Jaime Reyes](#) / [Blue Beetle](#). Produced by [DC Studios](#) and the [Safran Company](#), and distributed by [Warner Bros. Pictures](#), it is the 14th film in the [DC Extended Universe](#) ([DCEU](#)). Directed by [Ángel Manuel Soto](#) and written by [Gareth Dunnet-Alcocer](#), the film stars [Xolo Maridueña](#) as Reyes, a recent college graduate who is bestowed with an armor that grants him superpowers after being accidentally chosen by an ancient alien relic known as the [Scarab](#). [Adriana Barraza](#), [Damián Alcázar](#), [Raoul Max Trujillo](#), [Susan Sarandon](#), and [George Lopez](#) also star in the film.

Development of a film featuring Reyes began by the end of November 2018 with Dunnet-Alcocer attached as screenwriter. Soto was hired to direct the film in February 2021 for the streaming service [HBO Max](#). Maridueña was cast that August, and the film was changed to have a theatrical release in December. Further casting took place in early 2022, before filming from late May to mid-July at [Wilder Studios](#) in [Decatur, Georgia](#), as well as in [El Paso, Texas](#), and [Puerto Rico](#). It is the first live-action superhero film with a Latino lead.

*Blue Beetle* premiered in El Paso on August 14, 2023, and was released in the United States on August 18. The film received generally positive reviews from critics and became the most streamed film on [Max](#), the successor to HBO Max, in the United States. However, it underperformed at the box office, grossing \$131 million worldwide against a production budget of \$104–125 million, which made it the lowest-grossing film in the DCEU. Its box office performance was attributed to factors such as the [2023 Hollywood labor disputes](#), the franchise's imminent reboot with the [DC Universe](#) (DCU), and [Hurricane Hilary](#).

## Plot

In the remote tundra of [Antarctica](#), members of [Kord Industries](#), led by the company's co-founder and CEO [Victoria Kord](#), locate an ancient alien artifact known as the [Scarab](#). Meanwhile, [Jaime Reyes](#) returns to his hometown of [Palmera City](#) after graduating from [Gotham Law University](#), only to learn that his family is facing eviction from their home due to financial difficulties. Jaime's sister [Milagro](#) manages to get him a job at Victoria's

### Blue Beetle



Theatrical release poster

<b>Directed by</b>	<a href="#">Ángel Manuel Soto</a>
<b>Written by</b>	<a href="#">Gareth Dunnet-Alcocer</a>
<b>Based on</b>	<a href="#">Characters</a> from <a href="#">DC</a>
<b>Produced by</b>	<a href="#">John Rickard</a> <a href="#">Zev Foreman</a>
<b>Starring</b>	<a href="#">Xolo Maridueña</a> <a href="#">Adriana Barraza</a> <a href="#">Damián Alcázar</a> <a href="#">Raoul Max Trujillo</a> <a href="#">Susan Sarandon</a> <a href="#">George Lopez</a>
<b>Cinematography</b>	<a href="#">Pawel Pogorzelski</a>
<b>Edited by</b>	<a href="#">Craig Alpert</a>
<b>Music by</b>	<a href="#">Bobby Krlic</a>

mansion. However, both are fired after Jaime stops a confrontation between Victoria and her niece Jenny. Jenny later tells Jaime to meet her at Kord Tower the next day to discuss a "job opportunity".

The next day, Jenny finds that Victoria is using the Scarab for her One Man Army Corps (OMAC) projects. She steals the Scarab and avoids security by giving it to Jaime, hidden inside a Big Belly Burger to-go box. At home, Jaime's family convinces him to open the Scarab box. When Jaime touches it, the Scarab activates and fuses with him, encasing him in an armored exoskeleton. Jaime later finds Jenny for answers, rescuing her from Victoria's armed forces. She tells Jaime that the Scarab is a sentient weapon and that it has willingly chosen Jaime to be its host. With the help of Jaime's uncle Rudy, Jaime and Jenny break into Kord Tower to retrieve a smartwatch that once belonged to Jenny's father Ted, but are attacked by Victoria's bodyguard Ignacio Carapax, who has an OMAC prototype infused in his body. The Scarab is revealed to be named Khaji-Da. It temporarily takes over Jaime's body and battles Carapax. Rudy and Jenny help incapacitate Carapax, then escape to Jenny's childhood home with Jaime.

<b>Production companies</b>	<u>DC Studios</u> <u>The Safran Company</u>
<b>Distributed by</b>	<u>Warner Bros. Pictures</u>
<b>Release dates</b>	August 14, 2023 (El Paso, Texas) August 18, 2023 (United States)
<b>Running time</b>	127 minutes <sup>[1]</sup>
<b>Country</b>	United States
<b>Languages</b>	English Spanish
<b>Budget</b>	\$104– 125 million <sup>[2][3][a]</sup>
<b>Box office</b>	\$130.8 million <sup>[5]</sup>

Jenny uses Ted's watch to activate his secret laboratory and reveals to Jaime that Ted was originally a vigilante named Blue Beetle who spent his life studying Khaji-Da before mysteriously disappearing, leaving his company in Victoria's hands. When they notice Victoria's helicopter flying toward Jaime's home, Jaime summons Khaji-Da and returns to protect his family. As they escape, however, Jaime's father Alberto collapses and dies from a heart attack, distracting Jaime and allowing Carapax to capture him. Jaime is taken to an island fortress near Cuba, where he is strapped to a machine that downloads information from Khaji-Da to the OMACs. While unconscious, Jaime sees a vision from his father, who encourages him to embrace his destiny as the new Blue Beetle. Jaime awakens and escapes as Carapax's OMAC suit activates and evolves into a more powerful form.

Jenny and the Reyes family use Ted's Bugship and its weapons arsenal to storm the island. Jaime reunites with his family, then encounters Carapax and battles him. Jaime nearly kills Carapax before Khaji-Da reveals to Jaime memories of Carapax's enslavement by Victoria for the OMAC experiments, including the death of Carapax's mother at Victoria's hands, leading Jaime to spare him. Carapax turns on Victoria and sets his OMAC suit to explode, destroying the island, himself, and Victoria as vengeance for his mother. As the Reyes family escapes from the island, they take time to mourn Alberto. In the aftermath, Jenny becomes the new CEO of Kord Industries and promises to repair the damage caused to the Reyes family, by helping them rebuild their home. As the neighbors gather around the remains of the Reyes family's home and provide support, Jaime kisses Jenny and then offers to fly her to the Kord Estate. In a mid-credits scene, a distorted recording is broadcast in Ted's laboratory, attempting to inform Jenny that he is alive.

## Cast

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- Xolo Maridueña as Jaime Reyes / Blue Beetle:  
A recent college graduate who gains superpowers when an alien Scarab grafts onto him,

forming a powerful reconfiguring exoskeleton around his body.<sup>[6][7]</sup>

- Adriana Barraza as Nana: Jaime's grandmother.<sup>[8][9]</sup>
- Damián Alcázar as Alberto Reyes: Jaime's father.<sup>[8][9]</sup>
- Elpidia Carrillo as Rocio Reyes: Jaime's mother.<sup>[8][9]</sup>
- Bruna Marquezine as Jenny Kord: The daughter of Ted Kord and Jaime's love interest.<sup>[10][9][11]</sup> Isabella Aparicio portrays a younger Jenny.<sup>[12]</sup>
- Raoul Max Trujillo as Ignacio Carapax / OMAC: A lieutenant and bodyguard working for Victoria Kord.<sup>[13][11]</sup> Ayden Rivera portrays a child Carapax, while Xol Gonzalez portrays a teen Carapax.
- Susan Sarandon as Victoria Kord: The CEO of Kord Industries and the sister of Ted Kord who is hellbent on acquiring the Scarab.<sup>[14][15]</sup> Sarandon says Victoria represents the theme of "imperialism in the name of democracy", and that she is driven by a need to be ambitious and prove herself, after her brother mysteriously disappears and leaves his company behind.<sup>[11]</sup>
- George Lopez as Rudy Reyes: Jaime's uncle.<sup>[8]</sup>
- Belissa Escobedo as Milagro Reyes: Jaime's younger sister;<sup>[10]</sup>
- Harvey Guillén as Dr. Jose Francisco Morales Rivera de la Cruz / "Sanchez": a scientist who works for Victoria.<sup>[9][15]</sup>

Additionally, Becky G provides the voice of Khaji-Da, a sentient entity that imbues and controls the Scarab,<sup>[16]</sup> while Bobby McGruther has a voice-only cameo as Ted Kord, a previous Blue Beetle, in the mid-credits scene.<sup>[17]</sup>

## Production

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### Development



Ángel Manuel Soto, the director of *Blue Beetle*

Warner Bros. Pictures and DC Films were developing a film based on Jaime Reyes / Blue Beetle by the end of November 2018, with Mexican-born Gareth Dunnet-Alcocer writing the screenplay. Zev Foreman was executive producing the project for Warner Bros., which was set to be the first DC Extended Universe (DCEU) film as well as the first live-action superhero film starring a Latino lead.<sup>[18]</sup> By December 2020, DC Films was planning to release several mid-budget films a year exclusively on the streaming service HBO Max, rather than in theaters, as part of new DC Films president Walter Hamada's plan for the DCEU,<sup>[19]</sup> with *Blue Beetle* listed as one such project in 2021.<sup>[20]</sup> Puerto Rican director Ángel Manuel Soto was hired to direct the film in February 2021.<sup>[21]</sup> During a call received from Warner Bros., Soto had pitched various ideas, including a

film about Bane's origin story, but Warner Bros. had intended for him to direct a film based on Reyes' Blue Beetle.<sup>[22]</sup> In April, *Blue Beetle* was included on DC's slate of films that were expected to be released in 2022 or 2023.<sup>[23]</sup>

John Rickard, the president of production at the Safran Company, was producing the film for HBO Max by that August,<sup>[24][25]</sup> when filming was expected to begin in early 2022.<sup>[7]</sup> In December 2021, Warner Bros. revealed that the film would be receiving a theatrical release in August 2023 instead of being produced directly for HBO Max; Though the film was originally intended to be released as an HBO Max exclusive,

the studio decided to release it theatrically after they enjoyed Soto's creative vision.<sup>[26][27]</sup> In mid-April 2022, Soto and cinematographer Pawel Pogorzelski visited El Paso, Texas, to meet with local artists, muralists, musicians, and historians to understand the feel of the city.<sup>[28]</sup> Peter Safran was revealed as a producer that October,<sup>[25]</sup> and worked on the film until he became the co-chairman and co-CEO of DC Studios alongside James Gunn the next month;<sup>[29][30]</sup> Rickard and Foreman were ultimately credited as the producers.<sup>[9]</sup>

## Writing

In October 2021, Soto said Dunnet-Alcocer's script featured "the Latino family at its core",<sup>[31]</sup> while star Xolo Maridueña said in August 2022 that the family aspect of the film and character were "inherent to the comics" and felt had not been explored as much with other superhero films.<sup>[32]</sup> Soto did not want the film to be "another story where 15 minutes in, something happens, and 50 minutes later, he's dominating the experience, and by the end, he's saving the world" and instead wanted to explore his growth, saying that "He's [Reyes] not going to save the world yet; he doesn't deserve to yet". Soto and Dunnet-Alcocer had decided to do so by taking a grounded approach towards his character while exploring his relationship with his family and Khaji-Da, the symbiotic alien that provides Reyes's powers. Soto also took inspiration from DC's The New 52 comics, and the Mission: Impossible and Indiana Jones franchises.<sup>[33][26]</sup>

The film also features Reyes's family witnessing his first transformation into Blue Beetle. The intention was twofold, as Soto had amusingly felt Latino families were "very nosy" while also showing that "family is our superpower to some extent". He also described Reyes' transformation as being similar to the works of David Cronenberg but for kids and wanted the film to be fun.<sup>[33][22]</sup> He also focused on the pronunciation of names in the film, and included a scene in which Victoria Kord called an employee Sanchez despite it not being his name. The decision to include the scene was to show that "Latinos are not a monolith", with Soto further adding that the audience would feel the warmth of Reyes' family and become familiarized with them after the first act.<sup>[33]</sup> Fellow star Susan Sarandon revealed the following month that the film would have several scenes spoken in Spanish, with subtitles being provided.<sup>[34]</sup> Soto affirmed this, saying the film would feature "Spanglish", saying Spanish will be used for scenes that feature elder characters and also when characters "speak from the heart".<sup>[26]</sup> The final writing credits were given to Dunnet-Alcocer, with off-screen additional literary credit given to Gary Dauberman.<sup>[35]</sup> Soto had also stated that the film would explore Victoria Kord's relationship with her brother Ted Kord. He had also stated that the presence of Ted's daughter, his gadgets, and the idea of Ted and Dan Garrett would also impact the film's story, although it would be contextualized through Reyes's perspective.<sup>[22]</sup>

The film is set in the fictional Palmera City, which was an original creation for the film, rather than El Paso, Texas as is featured in the comics.<sup>[36]</sup> Soto said this was to create a world specific to Jaime Reyes on a similar level to Metropolis for Superman and Gotham City for Batman, and to help position the character as "a potential leader" in the new DC-based franchise the DC Universe (DCU),<sup>[37]</sup> while stating that Gunn and Safran felt that the film could be included anywhere in the DCU timeline.<sup>[38]</sup> Soto had explained that the creative team had created the city as a "metropolitan of Latinos", and that the city was divided into two parts: Reyes's neighborhood and the affluent financial district. He had also identified Reyes's upbringing as being more humble, as his family had come from the working class, had been struggling, and was also a part of "marginalized communities under the threat of gentrification".<sup>[22]</sup> Inspiration for the film came from the video game Injustice 2 (2017) and the comic book storyline "Infinite Crisis" (2005–2006), in which

Jaime Reyes debuted, along with the comics in *The New 52* for the design of the suit, while the comic book miniseries *Blue Beetle: Graduation Day* (2022–2023) incorporated elements from the film, such as Palmera City and Victoria Kord.<sup>[37]</sup>

## Casting



Xolo Maridueña was Soto's first choice to portray Reyes, with Soto explaining that he "couldn't stop seeing [Maridueña] as the character" since he was hired to direct the film, enjoying his performance in *Cobra Kai*. He also noted that his experience with martial arts while filming *Cobra Kai* would help with his role as Blue Beetle.<sup>[7][22]</sup> Soto and Warner Bros. offered the role to Maridueña on August 1, 2021,<sup>[39]</sup> he was publicly revealed to be in talks for the film the next day,<sup>[6]</sup> and his casting was officially confirmed later that day at the premiere for the DCEU film *The Suicide Squad* (2021).<sup>[7][39]</sup> When learning of the role, Maridueña was most excited that Reyes is a Latino character and he could bring Latino representation to a superhero project.<sup>[7]</sup>

In early March 2022, Bruna Marquezine was cast as Reyes's love interest, Jenny Kord,<sup>[10][9]</sup> with Belissa Escobedo playing Reyes's sister Milagros,<sup>[10]</sup> and Harvey Guillén cast as Dr. Delacruz.<sup>[10][9]</sup> Later that month, the rest of Reyes's family was cast: George Lopez as uncle Rudy, Adriana Barraza as Nana, Elpidia Carrillo as Rocio, and Damián Alcázar as Alberto. Soto said he wanted to create an authentic Mexican family with real accents and experiences, and also wanted the elder members of the family to be portrayed by "beloved" Mexican actors from Latin American cinema who had also crossed over to United States cinema and paved the way for members of the younger generation, such as Maridueña and Escobedo.<sup>[8]</sup> By the end of the same month, Sharon Stone was in talks to play the villain Victoria Kord, an original creation for the film which was believed to be the wife of Ted Kord, the second Blue Beetle in the comics.<sup>[40]</sup> Raoul Trujillo also joined the cast then as Carapax the Indestructible Man.<sup>[13]</sup> In mid-April 2022, Susan Sarandon was cast as Victoria Kord after negotiations with Stone ended.<sup>[14]</sup> In June 2023, Becky G announced that she would be providing the voice of Khaji-Da for the film.<sup>[16]</sup>

## Design

Blue Beetle's suit was designed by Mayes C. Rubeo and the team from Nine B Collective. The design team was inspired by artist Cully Hamner's original design of the comic book character and from his appearance in *Infinite Crisis* #3, the *Injustice* games, *Young Justice*, and *Batman: The Brave and the Bold*. They had difficulty in creating the mask to fit Maridueña's full face but also allow him to be emotive, particularly for the mouth area. As such, the team had decided to merge the designs of organic alien technology and insectoid features within his suit. Visual inspiration for Palmera City came from *Akira* (1988), *Neo Tokyo* (1987), and Miami.<sup>[22]</sup> Soto decided to insert a Nintendo Power Glove for Blue Beetle following the inclusion of a shield in the script.<sup>[41]</sup>

## Filming

Principal photography began by May 25, 2022,<sup>[42]</sup> during the COVID-19 pandemic,<sup>[43]</sup> taking place in the Atlanta metropolitan area, primarily at Wilder Studios in Decatur, Georgia,<sup>[44]</sup> using the working title *Mofongo*.<sup>[45]</sup> Pawel Pogorzelski served as the cinematographer.<sup>[28]</sup> Scenes for the film's third act took place at the Castillo San Felipe del Morro, a 500-year-old Spanish fortress located in the Old San Juan, Puerto Rico.<sup>[46]</sup> Filming also occurred in El Paso.<sup>[47]</sup> Sarandon completed filming her scenes by the end of June,<sup>[48]</sup> and Trujillo said in early July that filming was almost complete.<sup>[47]</sup> Filming wrapped on July 18 in Puerto Rico.<sup>[49]</sup> Two days of additional photography took place in February 2023.<sup>[30]</sup>

The film was primarily shot on location with a heavy use of practical effects, such as for the Blue Beetle suit. Soto felt that the use of real-life locations allowed for the practical effects to be better integrated into the film. He said he wanted to prevent the film from relying too heavily on visual effects, which he described as "a tool, not a dependency", to avoid overworking the visual effect artists.<sup>[46]</sup>

## Editing and visual effects

Craig Alpert edited the film while Kelvin McIlwain served as the visual effects supervisor, after previously working on the DCEU films *Aquaman* (2018) and *The Suicide Squad* (2021).<sup>[9]</sup> Visual effects were provided by Digital Domain, Rise FX, Rodeo FX, and Industrial Light & Magic.<sup>[50]</sup>

The film features a stop-motion sequence featuring the eponymous character from the Mexican television series *El Chapulin Colorado* (1973–1979), recreating the 1979 intro of the series; the sequence was animated at Achó Studios, with Quique Rivera serving as animation director on the sequence.<sup>[51]</sup> The sequence was conceived by Soto and Dunnet-Alcocer, both of whom grew up watching the series and wanted to include an homage to it.<sup>[52][53]</sup>

## Music

Bobby Krlic was confirmed to score the film by the trailer's release in April 2023.<sup>[54]</sup> A soundtrack album featuring his score was released by WaterTower Music on August 18, 2023;<sup>[55]</sup> a track from the soundtrack album, "*Blue Beetle Suite*", was released as a single on August 11.<sup>[56]</sup>

## Marketing

Soto, Dunnet-Alcocer, and Maridueña promoted the film at the virtual DC FanDome event in October 2021, where they discussed their preparation for filming and revealed concept art for the film.<sup>[57]</sup> The first trailer for the film was released on April 3, 2023, revealing that the film takes place in Palmera City, an



original location created for the film. It also showed a first look at the costumes of Dan Garrett and Ted Kord, the previous Blue Beetles before Jaime.<sup>[36]</sup> *The Verge*'s Ash Parrish thought that the trailer looked "fun" and stated: "I didn't immediately roll my eyes at yet another superhero flick, so that might be a good sign DC has something decent on its hands."<sup>[58]</sup> Devan Coggan from *Entertainment Weekly* thought Lopez comparing Jaime's situation to Batman was an amusing moment, while noting the trailer had posited Jaime's character as being "an aimless college grad, who's close with his family but a bit directionless".<sup>[59]</sup>

A second trailer was released on July 11, 2023, through *Entertainment Tonight*. Andy Behbakht, writing for *Screen Rant*, felt the trailer contained more action scenes than the first and focused on Jaime's relationship with the Scarab.<sup>[60]</sup> For *Empire*, James White opined that the trailer's tone was a "blend" of other films such as *Iron Man* (2008), *Spider-Man* (2002), and *Spy Kids* (2001) and remarked that the trailer "promises action over angst".<sup>[61]</sup> Griff Griffin from *Men's Journal* felt the CGI in the trailer was better, and described the suit as being an "insectoid version of Iron Man's nanotech" from *Avengers: Infinity War* (2018).<sup>[62]</sup> However, Kat Bailey from *IGN* felt that while the trailer offered a "more straightforward look at Reyes' powers" and fan reception was positive, fans were also worried about the film's success due to the critical and commercial failure of DC's previous 2023 films.<sup>[63]</sup>

Toyota entered a 360-degree marketing campaign with Warner Bros. to cross-promote the film and the 2024 Toyota Tacoma model pickup truck across digital and social media platforms, television programs, and in-theater advertising spots. The 2024 Tacoma model was featured in the film along with a 2018 model named "Taco" as the personal vehicle of Uncle Rudy. Toyota Motor North America's group vice president of marketing Lisa Materazzo said the film appealed to the company due to its high anticipation and to showcase the heritage of the Tacoma truck, which she said were aligned with the characters in the film and what they wanted to emphasize with the Tacoma.<sup>[64]</sup>



The 2024 Toyota Tacoma pickup truck designed after the Blue Beetle suit to cross-promote the film

## Release

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### Theatrical

*Blue Beetle* premiered in El Paso, Texas on August 14, 2023, in partnership with the *El Paso Times*,<sup>[65]</sup> and had its red carpet premiere at the TCL Chinese Theatre on August 15. Due to the then-ongoing 2023 SAG-AFTRA strike, the cast of the film did not attend the premiere, with Soto praising them as "heroes".<sup>[66]</sup> *Blue Beetle* was theatrically released in the United States on August 18.<sup>[27]</sup>

### Home media

*Blue Beetle* was released on digital download on September 26, 2023, and on Ultra HD Blu-ray, Blu-ray, and DVD on October 31, by Warner Bros. Home Entertainment.<sup>[67]</sup> The film became available for streaming on Max, the successor to HBO Max, on November 17, 2023,<sup>[68]</sup> where it debuted as the most streamed film on the platform in the United States.<sup>[69]</sup>

## Reception

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### Box office

*Blue Beetle* grossed \$72.5 million in the United States and Canada, and \$58.3 million in other territories, for a worldwide total of \$130.8 million.<sup>[5]</sup> It is the lowest-grossing film in the DCEU, behind *Shazam! Fury of the Gods* (2023), and underperformed at the box office.<sup>[2][70][64]</sup>

In the United States and Canada, *Blue Beetle* was released alongside *Strays*, and was projected to gross \$25–32 million from 3,871 theaters in its opening weekend.<sup>[71][3]</sup> The film earned \$10 million on its first day, including \$3.3 million from Thursday night previews. It went on to debut to \$25 million, topping the box office and becoming the first film to dethrone *Barbie*; 39% of the opening weekend audience was Hispanic, while 66% was male.<sup>[2]</sup> The film's \$43 million global opening was described by *Variety* as "one of the softest starts in the history of the DC Cinematic Universe",<sup>[72]</sup> which was attributed to two concurrent strikes in Hollywood, and a tepid audience awaiting the arrival of Gunn and Safran's DCU slate.<sup>[2]</sup> Warner Bros. cited the effects of Tropical Storm Hilary as a reason behind the poor domestic opening, given it affected Los Angeles which was one of the film's top markets.<sup>[73]</sup> The film earned \$12.2 million in its second weekend (a drop of 51%), finishing third behind newcomer *Gran Turismo* and *Barbie*.<sup>[74]</sup> National Cinema Day, a day where movie theaters offer discounted tickets for moviegoers, was credited for boosting the film's Sunday numbers in its second weekend.<sup>[75]</sup> It earned \$7.1 million in its third weekend (and a total of \$9.4 million during the four-day Labor Day weekend), remaining in third place.<sup>[76]</sup>

### Critical response

On the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, 78% of 274 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 6.4/10. The website's consensus reads: "Led by Xolo Maridueña's magnetic performance in the title role, *Blue Beetle* is a refreshingly family-focused superhero movie with plenty of humor and heart."<sup>[77]</sup> On Metacritic, the film holds a weighted average score of 61 out of 100 from 52 critics, indicating "generally favorable reviews".<sup>[78]</sup> Audiences polled by CinemaScore gave the film an average grade of "B+" on an A+ to F scale, while PostTrak reported that moviegoers gave the film a 82% positive score, with 65% saying they would definitely recommend it.<sup>[2]</sup>

Mark Kermode of *The Guardian* gave the film 4/5 stars, writing, "*Blue Beetle* may be frontloaded with visual fireworks that neatly meld the practical and the virtual, but it is the likable interplay between its down-to-earth characters that gives the film oomph, making it more than just a *Shazam*-style romp."<sup>[79]</sup> Odie Henderson of *The Boston Globe* gave the film 3/4 stars, calling it "a watchable time-waster made better by the actors and the cinematography by Pawel Pogorzelski."<sup>[80]</sup> *The A.V. Club*'s Justin Lowe gave it a B− grade, writing, "the filmmakers and the SFX team have created a memorable visual style for the film, supported by a wide array of Latino talent that underpins the authenticity of the narrative and the



visuals."<sup>[81]</sup> *The Independent*'s Clarisse Loughrey gave it 3/5 stars, calling it "a likeable, if predictable, take on the superhero origin story that at no point invokes time travel, the multiverse, or a ginormous portal in the sky. And thank god for that."<sup>[82]</sup>

Jake Wilson of *The Age* was more critical, writing, "Director Angel Manuel Soto and writer Gareth Dunnet-Alcocer do their best to weave a few additional progressive elements into this basically routine production, evidently aimed at younger viewers." He gave the film 2.5/5 stars.<sup>[83]</sup> Ed Pott of *The Times* gave it 2/5 stars and wrote, "*Blue Beetle* is the latest product off the superhero production line and it's as tediously familiar as rail strikes and rainy Augusts. The only thing that differentiates this DC Comics adaptation from its scores of predecessors is the fact that its characters are mostly Latino-American."<sup>[84]</sup> *CNN Entertainment*'s Brian Lowry praised the casting and action sequences, but criticized the villain as "lousy". He concluded, "*Blue Beetle* might be able to soar into the stratosphere, but that feels like a hurdle the movie just doesn't clear."<sup>[85]</sup>

## Accolades

At the 51st Saturn Awards, *Blue Beetle* was nominated for Best Superhero Film and won for Best Younger Performer in a Film (Maridueña).<sup>[86]</sup> *Blue Beetle* was nominated for the Emerging Technology Award at the 22nd Visual Effects Society Awards for the development of "Machine Learning Cloth".<sup>[87]</sup>

## Future

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In January 2023, Gunn said the film was "disconnected" from previous DCEU entries and could connect to the DCU.<sup>[88]</sup> By April, the Blue Beetle character was reportedly part of Gunn and Safran's plans for the DCU.<sup>[9]</sup> In June, Gunn said Blue Beetle would be the first DCU character while noting *Superman* (2025) is the first DCU film,<sup>[89]</sup> while Safran soon clarified that Maridueña's Reyes would continue in the DCU but the film itself would stand on its own.<sup>[90]</sup> Later that month, Soto said *Blue Beetle* was a part of the DCU and future plans for the franchise, but was not connected to all prior DCEU films, explaining the film "lives in the world where superheroes exist. But that doesn't mean that a certain event, or certain alliance, or certain things from the past dictate where our film is going". He also expressed interest in the film being the first part of a trilogy.<sup>[91]</sup> In September, Gunn reiterated that Maridueña would continue to play Reyes in the DCU, and clarified that any DC media released before the first projects for the DCU in 2024 would not be canon to that franchise.<sup>[92]</sup>

## Notes

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- a. *Deadline Hollywood* reported that *Blue Beetle* had a budget of \$104 million,<sup>[2]</sup> while *Variety* reported a \$125 million figure,<sup>[3]</sup> and *TheWrap* reported it cost \$120 million.<sup>[4]</sup>

## References

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## External links

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