

IF is a 2024 American live-action animated fantasy comedy film written, produced, and directed by John Krasinski. The film features an ensemble cast that includes Cailey Fleming, Ryan Reynolds, Krasinski, Fiona Shaw, Alan Kim, and Liza Colón-Zayas, along with the voices of Phoebe Waller-Bridge, Louis Gossett Jr., and Steve Carell. Its plot follows a young girl and her neighbor who find themselves able to see imaginary friends.

IF was theatrically released by Paramount Pictures in the United States on May 17, 2024. The film received mixed reviews from critics and has grossed \$63 million worldwide.

The film features the first posthumous performance by Louis Gossett Jr. who died before its release. The film is dedicated to his memory.^[5]

Plot

12-year-old Bea moves into her grandmother Margaret's apartment in New York while her father waits for heart surgery in the same hospital where her mother died of cancer years earlier. One night, Bea goes out to buy a charger for her mother's old camcorder and sees a strange creature, following it back to her grandmother's building.

The next day, she sees the creature again, accompanied by a man. Bea follows them to a nearby house where the man, Cal, retrieves a large furry purple creature named Blue. She also meets the other creature, a butterfly-like being named Blossom, and faints. She awakens in Cal's apartment where she learns that he has been working with imaginary friends, nicknamed IFs, to place them with new children as their original children have grown up and forgotten them. Initially reluctant, Bea eventually decides to help Cal.

The next day, Cal takes Bea to Memory Lane Retirement Home, a retirement community for IFs housed underneath a swing in Coney Island. There, he introduces Bea to Lewis, an elderly teddy bear who is the head of the facility. He inspires Bea to use her imagination to redesign the facility, much to the chagrin of Cal.

<i>IF</i>	
 <div>Theatrical release poster</div>	
Directed by	<u>John Krasinski</u>
Written by	<u>John Krasinski</u>
Produced by	<u>John Krasinski</u> <div><u>Allyson Seeger</u></div> <div><u>Andrew Form</u></div> <div><u>Ryan Reynolds</u></div>
Starring	<u>Cailey Fleming</u> <div><u>Ryan Reynolds</u></div> <div><u>John Krasinski</u></div> <div><u>Fiona Shaw</u></div> <div><u>Phoebe Waller-Bridge</u></div> <div><u>Louis Gossett Jr.</u></div> <div><u>Steve Carell</u></div>
Cinematography	<u>Janusz Kamiński</u>
Edited by	<u>Christopher Rouse</u>

Motivated by a young boy named Benjamin that she met at the hospital, Bea tries to match one of the IFs with him. She, Cal, and Lewis audition the IFs, but sadly, he is unable to see any of them. Feeling unmotivated, Bea talks with Lewis on the Coney Island pier. He gives her an idea that maybe IFs do not need new kids, but rather to reunite with their old ones.

Talking with her grandmother, she sees a picture of her as a young dancer and recognizes Blossom in the background of the picture. Realizing Blossom was her grandmother's IF, Bea decides to test Lewis' idea. Playing one of her grandmother's records inspires Margaret to dance and she remembers Blossom, instilling Bea with hope.

Following a tip, Bea, Cal, and Blue find Blue's original kid, Jeremy, now a grown man trying to launch a business. Though their initial attempt fails, Bea and Cal succeed in reminding Jeremy of Blue and reuniting them, giving Jeremy the confidence he needs to nail a presentation. After saying goodbye to Blue, Bea returns home that evening, to find a frantic Margaret telling her that something went wrong with her father's operation. Bea rushes upstairs to Cal, who comforts her. When Bea says she doesn't want to say goodbye to her dad, Cal tells her to tell him a story instead. At the hospital, Bea tells her father of how she tried to be a grown-up but her father kept trying to bring fun into her life and that she still needs him, which wakes him up. Bea goes to tell her grandmother and realizes that the IFs have vanished.

Bea goes upstairs to thank Cal, but no one answers the door. The landlady hears Bea knocking and reveals that the door opens into an old storage room. After her dad is released from the hospital, Bea and her dad pack up to go back home. While packing her things in the car, Bea finds an old picture she painted of her, her parents and a clown named Calvin. She suddenly realizes that Cal is her own IF, forgotten after the death of her mother. She closes her eyes and remembers, restoring her ability to see IFs, and reuniting with Cal. After they leave, Margaret asks Blossom if the two of them should go inside, causing Blossom to realize Margaret can see her.

Some time later, Cal begins reuniting the IFs with their original kids, now grown up. Benjamin meets his IF, a cartoonish dragon with glasses. Bea and her father return home, where he trips over Keith, his invisible imaginary friend.

	Andy Canny
Music by	<u>Michael Giacchino</u>
Production companies	<u>Sunday Night Productions</u> <u>Maximum Effort</u>
Distributed by	<u>Paramount Pictures</u>
Release dates	May 8, 2024 (France) May 17, 2024 (United States)
Running time	104 minutes ^[1]
Country	United States
Language	English
Budget	\$110 million ^[2]
Box office	\$63 million ^{[3][4]}

Cast

- Cailey Fleming as Bea, a young girl who can see IFs
- Ryan Reynolds as Cal, Bea's neighbor who can also see IFs
- John Krasinski as Bea's dad
- Fiona Shaw as Margaret, Bea's grandmother
- Alan Kim as Benjamin, a boy recuperating in the hospital
- Liza Colón-Zayas as Janet
- Bobby Moynihan as Jeremy

- Catharine Daddario as Bea's mom

Voices

- [Steve Carell](#) as Blue, a large purple furry monster who was Jeremy's childhood imaginary friend
- [Phoebe Waller-Bridge](#) as Blossom, a [rubber hose-style](#) humanoid butterfly who was Margaret's childhood imaginary friend
- [Louis Gossett Jr.](#) as Lewis, an elderly teddy bear who runs the Memory Lane Retirement Home
- [Awkwafina](#) as Pop, a bunch of bubbles that can pop and reconstruct itself
- [Emily Blunt](#) as Uni, a living unicorn
- [George Clooney](#) as Spaceman, an astronaut
- [Bradley Cooper](#) as Ice, an anthropomorphic glass of ice water
- [Matt Damon](#) as Sunny, a sunflower
- [Bill Hader](#) as a workout banana at the Memory Lane Retirement Home
- [Richard Jenkins](#) as Art Teacher, an animation figure
- [Keegan-Michael Key](#) as Steven, a blob of slime
- [John Krasinski](#) as a marshmallow whose head is always on fire
- [Blake Lively](#) as Octocat, a cat who wears an octopus costume
- [Sebastian Maniscalco](#) as an anthropomorphic mouse who dresses like a magician
- [Christopher Meloni](#) as Cosmo, a super-sleuth detective with an obscured face
- [Matthew Rhys](#) as Andromedus III, a crown-wearing ghost
- [Sam Rockwell](#) as Guardian Dog, an anthropomorphic dog who works as a superhero
- [Maya Rudolph](#) as Ally, an alligator
- [Amy Schumer](#) as a large gummy bear
- [Allyson Seeger](#) as Viola, an anthropomorphic violin with sunglasses
- [Jon Stewart](#) as Robot
- [Brad Pitt](#) as Keith, a silent and invisible IF

Production

In October 2019, [Paramount Pictures](#) outbid [Lionsgate](#) and [Sony](#), among others, to win the rights to *Imaginary Friends*, a project developed by [John Krasinski](#) and [Ryan Reynolds](#), with Krasinski set to write and direct it.^[6] In May 2021, Krasinski's [Sunday Night Productions](#) and Reynolds's [Maximum Effort](#) signed first-look deals with Paramount.^{[7][8]} In October 2021, [Phoebe Waller-Bridge](#) and [Fiona Shaw](#) joined the cast.^[9] In January 2022, [Steve Carell](#), [Alan Kim](#), [Cailey Fleming](#), and [Louis Gossett Jr.](#) joined the cast, with the film retitled *IF*. The film reunites Krasinski and Carell, who both starred in *The Office* (2005–2013) as Michael and Jim.^[10] In August 2022, [Bobby Moynihan](#) was added to the cast.^[11] [Brad Pitt](#) signed on to voice an invisible imaginary friend called Keith. Though the character had no dialogue, Pitt was still credited for the role.^[12]

Principal photography began on August 31, 2022, with [Janusz Kamiński](#) as cinematographer, and wrapped by early May 2023.^{[13][14]} Animation director [Arslan Elver](#) and VFX supervisor [Chris Lawrence](#) worked alongside [Krasinski](#) on set and during pre- and post-production.^{[15][16]} [Framestore](#) provided the visual effects and animation.^{[17][18]} [Michael Giacchino](#) composed the film's score.^[19]

Release

IF was released by [Paramount Pictures](#) in France on May 8, 2024,^[4] and later in the United States on May 17, 2024,^[20] after its originally scheduled release date of November 17, 2023 was first pushed to May 24, 2024 and then shifted forward by one week.^[21]

Reception

Box office

As of May 21, 2024, *IF* has grossed \$39 million in the United States and Canada and \$24 million in other territories, for a worldwide total of \$63 million.^{[4][3]}

In the United States and Canada, *IF* was released alongside *The Strangers: Chapter 1* and *Back to Black*, and was originally projected to gross around \$40 million from 4,041 theaters in its opening weekend.^[22] After making \$10.3 million on its first day (including \$1.8 million from Thursday night previews), weekend estimates were lowered to \$30 million. It went on to debut to \$33.7 million, topping the box office.^[23]

In France, the film made \$3.3 million during its opening weekend in 621 cinemas.^[4]

Critical response

On the review aggregator website [Rotten Tomatoes](#), 48% of 162 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 5.9/10. The website's consensus reads: "A sweet ode to rediscovering one's inner child, *IF* largely works as old-fashioned family entertainment despite an occasionally unfocused and unnecessarily complicated plot."^[24] [Metacritic](#), which uses a weighted average, assigned the film a score of 46 out of 100, based on 38 critics, indicating "mixed or average" reviews.^[25] Audiences polled by [CinemaScore](#) gave the film an average grade of "A" on an A+ to F scale, while those polled by [PostTrak](#) gave it an 84% overall positive score, with 64% saying they would definitely recommend it.^[23]

[Adrian Horton](#) of *The Guardian* awarded the film 3 out of 5 stars, writing that it "checks the boxes" on the elements of a family-friendly movie, but also noting that it does not "fully conjure the magic" of other films in the genre.^[26] Another mixed review was published on [NPR](#) by [Bob Mondello](#), who wrote, "But mostly the filmmakers detour, decorate and digitize their story rather than telling it, and that doesn't mesh well with the real-world stuff — dad's surgery, for instance, and Bea's wandering all over Brooklyn without her grandma seeming to notice. And yes, I know: *IF* is a kid-flick, but it still needs grounding. We're in Brooklyn, not Willy Wonkaland."^[27] [RogerEbert.com](#) called the film "a well-intentioned misfire".^[28]

[Tomris Laffly](#) of *Variety* wrote that the movie was "in desperate need of some coherent world-building", while praising the performance of [Cailey Fleming](#) in the lead role.^[29] In a more negative review for *The Hollywood Reporter*, [Frank Scheck](#) criticised the film as "plagued by significant tonal shifts and pacing issues".^[30] *The Chicago Reader* was even more dismissive, stating, "*IF* makes you wish you were

watching some other movie. (...) There's a fine line between the whimsical dream logic of Roald Dahl and irritating, incoherent nonsense. Director John Krasinski's new kids film *IF* is nowhere near that line. Despite the best efforts of the extremely talented child actor Cailey Fleming, *IF* makes no sense, narratively, emotionally, or visually."^[31]

Several critics noted the film's sharing some similarities with the Cartoon Network animated series, *Foster's Home for Imaginary Friends*.^[a]

Notes

a. Attributed to multiple references:^{[32][33][34][35][36]}

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External links

- [Official website](https://www.if.movie) (<https://www.if.movie>) 
 - *IF* (<https://www.imdb.com/title/tt11152168/>) at IMDb
 - *IF* (<https://www.allmovie.com/movie/vm14279334680>) at AllMovie
 - *IF* (<https://www.boxofficemojo.com/title/tt11152168/>) at Box Office Mojo
 - *IF* (https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/if_2024) at Rotten Tomatoes
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