

'Ghostbusters: Afterlife' stars share how new movie expands franchise's legacy

By Peter Sblendorio
New York Daily News

NEW YORK — It wasn't hard for the stars of "Ghostbusters: Afterlife" to get into the spirit of the beloved movie franchise.

Carrie Coon, Finn Wolfhard, McKenna Grace and other cast newcomers relished adding another chapter to a film series that began in 1984 with the story of parapsychologists catching ghosts in New York City.

"I think what people don't remember about the original film so much is that it was very innovative for its time," Coon said during a New York Comic Con panel on Friday, Oct. 8.

"This was one of the first times we had comedy and action and horror in one film. Nobody had read anything quite like that before, so when somebody calls and says, 'You're going to be part of the new 'Ghostbusters' movie,' I think you just say, 'Yes.'"



Astrid Stawiarz/Getty Images for Sony Pictures/TNS
Carrie Coon, left, Finn Wolfhard, center, and McKenna Grace speak onstage during the "Ghostbusters: Afterlife" cast and filmmakers panel at New York Comic Con on Friday, Oct. 8, 2021, in New York City.

Coon, 40, stars as Callie, the daughter of ghostbuster Egon Spengler, portrayed by the late Harold Ramis in the first two films.

"Ghostbusters: Afterlife" — in theaters Nov. 19 — follows Callie and her two children, portrayed by Wolfhard and Grace, as they move to a farmhouse in Summerville, Oklahoma, and uncover secrets about their family as paranormal phenomena wreaks havoc in the small town.

Wolfhard, who plays Mike Wheeler on the supernatural Netflix series "Stranger Things," only

knew he was being considered for a movie directed by Jason Reitman when he tried out for the film.

"I had no idea what I was auditioning for, but what's brilliant about it is that it wasn't like a scene with action or anything," said Wolfhard, 18. "It wasn't like a talking-about-ghosts scene. It was just a scene between a ... brother and a little sister."

The film brings back original "Ghostbusters" stars Bill Murray, Dan Aykroyd and Ernie Hudson, while giving big roles to new characters like Wolfhard's Trevor and

Grace's Phoebe.

"She's just this weird, awkward little girl," Grace, 15, said of her character. "She has her brother and her mom, but she's different from them, you know? And she goes to this farmhouse and she kind of is finding out who her family was and connecting to her grandfather, who she never knew."

Reitman — whose father, Ivan Reitman, directed "Ghostbusters" and "Ghostbusters II" — is a two-time best director Oscar nominee, for "Juno" and "Up in the Air."

He said he was often asked if he'd ever consider directing a "Ghostbusters" movie, and ultimately he came up with a vision to continue the series.

"We wanted another 'Ghostbusters' movie," Jason Reitman

said. "We wanted to get back into Ecto-1 again. We wanted to pick up the proton pack again, and that's where it came from."

The new film also stars Paul Rudd as the local schoolteacher Mr. Grooberson, as well as Celeste O'Connor and Logan Kim as two of the kids in Summerville who get caught up in the movie's mysteries.

The stars are excited for audiences to experience "Ghostbusters: Afterlife" after the much-anticipated movie, originally slated for a July 2020 release, was forced into multiple delays during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"For me, the most amazing part about being a part of this franchise is the legacy behind it," Wolfhard said, "and feeling like you're actually part of a family."

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