

Film Review: A Perfect Paul Rudd, Michael Peña Bring Often-Overlooked Humor to ‘Ant-Man’

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CHICAGO – In 1989, Rick Moranis played a scientist father in “Honey, I Shrunk the Kids” who accidentally shrinks kids to the size of insects. But dating back to a first appearance in 1962, Marvel Comics first published the Ant-Man character. His persona was the superhero alias of the scientist Hank Pym after inventing a substance that allowed him to shrink himself.



Rating: **4.0/5.0**

Marvel has come a long way since publishing “Tales to Astonish #27” in 1962 and, thankfully, Paul Rudd was born seven years later in 1969. Without his low-key, sardonic sense of humor, sarcastic wit and deadpan delivery, “Ant-Man” would have been yet another mediocre way to spend a lot of money making a movie. Instead, the film is a charming, action-packed and actually funny summer blockbuster than parents can marvel at with their kids. The light-hearted, “PG-13” film is one of the most kid-friendly Marvel films in quite some time.

While Marvel films and superhero movies in general are always peppered with a few comedic one-liners so they can say they have some humor, comedy is more at the heart of “Ant-Man” than most films like it. It’s still billed as an action/sci-fi like most of these films, but it’s just as much a comedy, too.

Much of the humor comes from Paul Rudd’s leading role as Scott Lang and Ant-Man, but a supporting star that brings the balance is Chicago’s own Michael Peña as Luis. He plays a small-time crook who has a hilarious knack for telling stories. In a few scenes, the film uses Peña’s voice over other actors mouthing his words. It’s the funniest way I’ve seen a film tell a “he said, she said” story in quite some time.



[Read Adam Fendelman’s full review of “Ant-Man”.](#) [19]

Staying true to showing cohesiveness within the Marvel universe, “Ant-Man” weaves in “The Avengers” in an entertaining way through an Ant-Man fight with Anthony Mackie as Falcon. While Falcon proves a worthy adversary to Ant-Man, the inclusion of Falcon instead of, for example, Tony Stark as Iron Man feels a bit like the film could only afford the cheaper Anthony Mackie versus a more expensive Robert Downey Jr.

Falcon does seem out of place, too. His inclusion appears to be written in so the film can say it appropriately tied in “The Avengers”. Ant-Man’s mission to Tony Stark’s not-defunct facility, which Ant-Man’s team thought would be vacant, was quite convenient to get a piece of technology that he didn’t *really* need to further the story.

“Ant-Man” stars Paul Rudd, Michael Douglas, Corey Stoll, Evangeline Lilly, Bobby Cannavale, Judy Greer, Michael Peña, T.I., David Dastmalchian and John Slattery from director Peyton Reed and writers Edgar Wright and Joe Cornish. The film, which has a running time of 117 and opened on July 17, 2015, is rated “PG-13” for sci-fi action violence.



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Paul Rudd as Ant-Man in “Ant-Man”.
Image credit: Walt Disney Studios

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