

Rudd and Mann revive “Knocked Up” roles in raunchy spinoff

Written by Kam Williams, Film Review



When we first met Pete (Paul Rudd) and Debbie (Leslie Mann) in *Knocked Up* (2007), the couple was in crisis, primarily on account of her controlling behavior. She unreasonably suspected her husband of cheating because of the odd hours he kept as a Rock and Roll talent scout.

Their subplot simply provided an amusing diversion from a front story revolving around the farcical plight of a popular TV host who ended-up impregnated by a slacker after a one-night stand. With "This Is 40," miserably-married Pete and Debbie have graduated from peripheral characters to the protagonists of their own battle-of-the-sexes comedy.

At the point of departure, we find them both on the verge of turning 40 years-old. She's in denial, still trying to pass for 38, and generally dreading the impending arrival of her birthday.

Meanwhile, he's regressed behaviorally, and routinely undermines any potential romantic mood by flaunting unappetizing bodily functions ranging from flossing to flatulence. So, it comes as no surprise that the spark has gone completely out of their relationship.

This sad state of affairs is established during the picture's opening tableaux when we see how, between work and raising two high-maintenance daughters (Maude and Iris Apatow), Pete and

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Debbie are too drained by the end of the day to even think about lovemaking. In fact, the most passion either exhibits is for their jobs.



He's the CEO of a struggling, retro record company representing obscure has-beens like Gram Parker, and she owns a trendy boutique facing its own financial woes following embezzlement on the part of a trusted employee (Megan Fox or Charlyne Yi). On top of the burning question “Can Pete and Debbie get their groove back?” this raunchy sitcom ratchets up the tension around the prospect of losing their multimillion-dollar McMansion.

It's important to note that "This Is 40" was written and directed by Judd Apatow, master of the shocksploitation genre whose gross-out productions have basically glorified profanity, potty humor, graphic sexuality and gratuitous nudity. This offering won't disappoint his diehard fans in that regard, and even has the rudiments of a plot for folks whose IQs have reached room temperature.

A midlife crisis comedy marking the milestone with a tribute to immaturity!

Very Good (2.5 stars)

Rated R for sexuality, nudity, crude humor, drug use and pervasive profanity

Running time: 134 minutes

Distributor: Universal Pictures

To see a trailer for "This Is 40", visit:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jz2m9aGjEgo>