

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

Make the Bad Shit

Drew Mylrea and Evan Wolf Buxbaum on Sam Richardson, blue goo, and the Hail Mary that became Into the Sky

Interview by Paul Salfen · AMFM Magazine



Sam Richardson as Bobby in *Into the Sky*. First-look still via Collider / Fantastic Fest 2026. Not an AMFM photograph.

AUSTIN — Sam Richardson is face down in the wrong place again, naked, glazed in blue goo, and the movie has already shot out of a cannon. That is the bargain Drew Mylrea and Evan Wolf Buxbaum brought to Fantastic Fest: ninety-seven minutes of alien-abduction romance that refuses to behave like a polite calling card. *Into the Sky*, which the pair wrote and directed together, world-premiered at the 2026 festival at Alamo Drafthouse South Lamar, with Emmy winner Richardson opposite Sofia Black-D'Elia and David Cross.

All Bobby wants is to fix his marriage. His wife has split town and rented out their cabin. An impulsive event planner is living in his house. A clingy fellow abductee will not leave him alone. The sky keeps taking him anyway. When Paul Salfen sat down with the directors in Austin, the first question was the one every filmmaker in the lobby was already asking — what do you tell the people looking up at this and thinking, that's what I want to do?

FIND WHAT YOU LOVE

The answers did not match, which is the point of a partnership. One of them told Salfen to ignore the market math that festival week makes so loud. “My advice is find what you love and make that and just lean into it. It doesn't matter if you know exactly who's going to love it or what market you're making it for. Find what you love and share that with the world.”

The other one was less pastoral. “Make bad shit. Just fucking get out there and do it. And it's going to suck. And that's awesome, because then the next one's going to suck less, or suck in a different way, and you're going to learn something about yourself.” He knows the other failure mode, the one that looks like taste. “I know what it's like to sit there and think you're not good enough for the thing you're working on. It's not good enough, and you kind of hermit crab and don't make something. Do whatever you can. Just get out there and make stuff, and then it'll be cool because it's yours. It's you. It'll end up being sick.”

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— DREW MYLREA AND EVAN WOLF BUXBAUM

THE BIGGEST HAIL MARY

Salfen’s co-host is Drew Pearson, the Dallas Cowboys Hall of Famer who caught the Hail Mary. On the AMFM record, the question is a signature: at the moment you do not know if it will work, do you throw it anyway? Mylrea and Buxbaum did not have to reach for a metaphor.

“Our producer, who was our champion on this movie, told us, okay guys, write me a script that’s two people in a house that we can film for no money,” they said. “And we said, great. And then we went to a cabin for a week, and we came up with this. So it’s the biggest Hail Mary you could think of.”

What they came back with was not two people in a house. It was a man trying to get his wife back while aliens keep abducting him, a tenant who needs a fake colleague for a wedding, and a stalker with a plan bigger than Bobby understands. They handed it to their producer, their buddy Noah. “He said, what the fuck is going on here? And we said, what, did you like it? He’s like, it was great. I read it so quickly and it was really fun. And I’m like, all right, maybe some other people think so too. Let’s try to make it.”

Salfen laughed. The directors had already written the pull quote. “Basically our advice is, if you can create a panic attack for your producer, you’re probably on the right path.”

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— MYLREA AND BUXBAUM

SOMEONE YOU WANT TO HUG

The lead had to survive the premise. Bobby is put through what the directors cheerfully call a meat grinder: blue goo, public nudity, repeated abductions, the particular humiliation of coming home to find a stranger planning a wedding in your cabin. The audience still has to want to pull him in.

“He’s just so funny, so charming. He can just turn on a dime. He’s so nuanced,” they said of Richardson. “For us, with Bobby, we needed someone we could put through the meat grinder. We could cover with blue goo, that could run around naked. And during all that, you, as the audience member, say, God, I want to give this guy a hug. I don’t think there’s anyone else in the world that really fits that role.”

Richardson did not need a speech. “The first time we met him he was like, game set, man. Let’s go. Let’s go do it. He didn’t need to be convinced, which was cool. He was so generous in that way and so down to just do all this bananas stuff we were putting him through. Bobby as a character obviously goes through a lot. You see that on a movie screen. But Sam, as an actor, also went through a lot of stuff, and he was just so generous and so great to work with.”

Salfen noted the difference between being abducted once and being abducted on a loop, which is a scheduling problem as much as a cosmic one. Between setups, Richardson sang. “If we were setting up, doing a new camera angle, all of a sudden we would hear maybe the theme song from Hook, and he’s singing John Williams. And everyone else kind of starts singing along. And then at the wedding, he got everyone to karaoke and break out into song. All of those main characters at the wedding just start busting out singing while we’re setting up this shot. It was a fun atmosphere.”



Into the Sky world-premiered at Fantastic Fest 2026, Alamo Drafthouse South Lamar, Austin, September 17–24. Festival art via Alamo Drafthouse.

SOMEWHAT ON THE RAILS

Asked what each of them tells himself when it is time to get ducted into the day, the split in the partnership showed up again, cleaner this time.

One stays in lane. “I just try to stay centered as much as possible. There’s so many moving parts on a film set. I try to remind myself of the things that I can control and the things that I am there to make better. I try to stay in the lane of making the film better in the ways that I can, and bringing the best out of everyone around.”

The other uses the lane as permission. “Having a co-director and a co-writer is so awesome. We trust each other kind of implicitly. It gives us the freedom to go a little weird or a little crazy. We’ve got someone that knows you so well who’s like, yeah, that’s a cool crazy, or no, you’re off the freaking rails right now. It gives you the freedom to be super weird and super kooky. For me, going into a big project like this, it’s don’t try not to be scared, and just be weird. Just try to be as weird as you can. And when you’ve got such a great teammate there with you, you know you’re going to stay somewhat on the rails.”

Salfen did not let it pass. “I think that pretty much sums up this movie. Somewhat on the rails.” They agreed. It does.

NINETY-SEVEN MINUTES OF MAGIC

How do you describe it to friends without wrecking it? They let the logline work. “It’s about a guy trying to get back with his ex-wife, and he keeps getting abducted by aliens. We just leave it there.”

Salfen pushed past the fun, because Fantastic Fest Q&As do. What should people be thinking about when the goo comes off? The directors were stubborn about pleasure first. “What we wanted to give audiences is just 97 minutes where you can just have a blast. You don’t have to worry. You don’t have to stress. Yeah, there’s gore. Yeah, there’s blood. Yeah, there’s scares. There’s all this crazy stuff in there. But at the end of the day, it’s just 97 minutes of adrenaline-fueled fun.”

“It’s about finding someone who’s okay with your kind of weird and your kind of crazy. And that should be celebrated.”

— DREW MYLREA

Under the fun, they were after the oldest want in the genre. “Hopefully it reminds people — with aliens, we all kind of want to believe, right? We all want to believe in something bigger than ourselves. I hope people will just say, oh wow, the world might be kind of messed up. The world is fucked up. I got people I don’t like in my life, but there’s a lot of magic out here. There’s a lot of magic in the world.”

Mylrea put the thesis on the partnership itself. “The movie’s about finding your person, kind of like Evan and I found each other creatively. And Bobby and Nico find each other in the movie. It’s about finding someone who’s okay with your kind of weird and your kind of crazy. And that should be celebrated.”

The next one is already moving. “We got some stuff cooking,” they said, and left it there, which is how you talk at a festival when the current movie is still warm. Austin, at least, was simpler. They had made a rule: no gorging on barbecue before the screening. With the film played, they were unhooked. Beer, barbecue, and a room that had just watched a man try to win his wife back between abductions.

Salfen sent them back into it. “Thank you so much for bringing us such a fun movie. Can’t wait to tell everybody. Check it out.” Into the Sky is the rare Fantastic Fest premiere that knows exactly how strange it is and asks the audience to celebrate that, not sand it down. Somewhat on the rails. Sick, because it’s theirs.

FIND INTO THE SKY

World premiere: Fantastic Fest 2026, Alamo Drafthouse South Lamar, Austin, September 17–24. Runtime: 97 minutes. Wide release and distributor: not announced at press time.

Directed and written by Drew Mylrea and Evan Wolf Buxbaum. Starring Sam Richardson, Sofia Black-D’Elia, David Cross, Maddie Corman, Jonathan Rudnitsky, Annabel O’Hagan, and Fiona Rene.

Produced by David Grove Churchill Viste, Noah Lang, and Sam Richardson. Executive produced by Andrew Shaffer and Kyle B. Porter.

Press materials: the filmmakers’ Into the Sky drive folder, linked from AMFMMagazine.com coverage. Festival: fantasticfest.com.

Interview conducted by Paul Salfen for AMFM Magazine, October 2026.

Paul Salfen is Managing Editor of AMFM Magazine and a veteran interviewer of film, television, music, and sports figures. He is the author of Going For It!, a collection of Hail Mary moments from the artists and athletes he has spent two decades putting on the record.