

Killing Bono

✘ by John Kennedy

Killing Bono.

Comedy/Rock Music.

Dir. Nick Hamm.

Based on Neil McCormick's, 'Killing Bono: I Was Bono's Doppelganger', aspiring wannabe Dublin rock-star in waiting, Neil McCormick, (Ben Barnes) is doomed to making catastrophic, life-changing decisions. The tragedy is that they mostly impact on his younger muso brother, Ivan (Robert Sheehan).

Firstly, in that with his obsession to out-best the ex-school upstarts, U2, he neglects to pass on Bono's invitation for Ivan to join them, reasoning his chances were better staying with his band. The rest, as they say, became history: if not Ivan's. Secondly, a life-dependent loan from a Dublin psychogangster, to support their move to London is, likewise, kept from Ivan with inevitable, near terminal consequences.

There is a touching cameo from the terminally ill, Pete Postlethwaite, as Karl, their outrageous, camp landlord. The part was created specifically to accommodate his deteriorating condition. The film cracks on apace with plenty of well-crafted characters whose outraged frustration with Neil's ego and ability to head-butt every gift-horse in the mouth has some wonderfully, laconic dialogues reminiscent of 'The Commitments' also co-scripted by Clement and La Frenais. Director, Nick Hamm get the best from what is essentially a narrative-light plot but with many a comically, cringing set-piece of rock and roll excess in all areas. Martin McCann's Bono, is a convincing character interpretation whose stratospheric success in matched with sanguine modesty. All the more to enrage Neil as his own band begins to implode on the cusp of success, his fault of course. The film never gets

above itself. The contemporaneous setting is convincing, accents passable with Kieran McGuigan's observant cinematography sympathetically and snappily edited by Billy Sneddon.

As an increasingly unhinged Neil is about to confront Bono with his surely deserved nemesis, the climatic scenes tend to rush through in a melee of frantic resolutions. Nevertheless, they should be enjoyed for their embracement of the ludicrous, surreal world of the unstoppable rock and roll juggernaut, where the bonfire of rock-pomp vanities, profanities and irony-free pretensions illuminate and ultimately consume themselves. But Phoenix-like, man, you just form another band! Fortunately, credits relate that McCormick's day job is now a journalist.