

SPRING FESTIVAL RELEASES TO KEEP BOX OFFICE BUSY

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The impact of COVID-19 made 2022 a difficult year for China's film industry. The situation is expected to improve during the upcoming Spring Festival, which is traditionally a golden period for Chinese cinema.

Over the weeklong Spring Festival holiday, which runs from January 21 to 27, seven films with strong casts and a variety of styles and techniques will be released.

People expect them to revitalize the film business and boost confidence throughout the industry.

"The Wandering Earth 2," a prequel to the 2019 science fiction blockbuster and an adaptation of the work of renowned writer Liu Cixin, is without a doubt the most eye-catching production.

During the Spring Festival four years ago, the first installment of the series earned more than 4.6 billion yuan (US\$679 million) and sparked widespread interest in Chinese sci-fi films.

According to Maoyan, a Chinese movie ticketing and analytics website, the new installment with the IMAX edition is expected to gross between 2.8 billion and 3.8 billion yuan at the box office.

The film, directed by Guo Fan, had a production expenditure of more than 600 million yuan and will highlight the country's greatest level of



"Full River Red"

cinematography in the sci-fi genre.

Guo claims that they have narrowed the technological gap with Hollywood in special effects. The film's settings span 1 million square meters, almost the size of 100 football fields. The crew also captured some spectacular shots depicting Earth's fate in the future.

Unlike many other sci-fi blockbusters dealing with tragedy and the end of the world, the film features a characteristic Chinese philosophy about nature and motherland, which can resonate well with

Chinese audiences.

In numerous sci-fi films, when Earth becomes uninhabitable due to calamities, characters travel to other safe planets to find a solution. However, in "The Wandering Earth," when the solar system is ready to collapse, the Chinese people chose to take Earth — their motherland — with them on their long-term quest for salvation.

In addition to homeland and family, the new chapter will include philosophical thoughts on artificial life, as well as a digital approach to conserving



"Hidden Blade"

entangled in a conspiracy during traitorous minister Qin Hui's talk with a Jin Dynasty (1115-1234) envoy.

The film's title is derived from a famous lyric verse by Yue Fei (1103-1142), a loyal and patriotic military general who was framed and executed by Qin for fictional offenses. It also has an IMAX version to showcase the spectacular martial arts scenes.

Cheng Er's spy thriller "Hidden Blade," starring award-winning Hong Kong actor Tony Leung and Chinese mainland heart-throb Wang Yibo, is also tipped for box office success.

The film is part of Bona Film Group's "China's Victory Trilogy," which follows the success of "Chinese Doctors" and "The Battle at Lake Changjin." It is set in Shanghai after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941.

It depicts the efforts and sacrifices made by underground members of the Communist Party of China in sending sensitive communications to

Earth's natural life legacy.

Wu Jing, one of China's most popular actors, plays the lead role in the film. So far, his films, including the "Wolf Warriors" series, have grossed a total of 28.6 billion yuan at the Chinese box office, with comic star Shen Teng coming in second with 25.2 billion yuan.

Shen will battle against Wu in Zhang Yimou's suspense costume drama "Full River Red." The film, set in the Southern Song Dynasty (1127-1279) and starring heart-throb Yi Yangqianxi, centers on two soldiers who become