

53b yuan

China's 2023 box office has topped 53 billion yuan (US\$7.42 billion) as of December 19.

Restorative growth trend

"This indicates an overall positive recovery trend in the film market, with both the film supply and audience demand gradually returning to pre-pandemic levels," said Liu Peng, director of the Maoyan Research Institute.

Looking back on the year, the Spring Festival box office generated 6.7 billion yuan, making it the second-highest box office for the holiday ever, second only to 2021. The summer box office was particularly noteworthy, raking in 20.6 billion yuan, marking the first time China's summer box office has broken the 20-billion-yuan mark. The October National Day box office reached 2.7 billion yuan, although significantly lower than the approximately 4 billion yuan for the same holiday in the three consecutive years from 2019 to 2021, still higher than the 1.5 billion yuan of 2022.

The films are diverse in type and theme. Movies like "Full River Red" and "The Wandering Earth II" resonated with patriotic sentiments among the people, while realistic genre films "No More Bets" "Lost in the Stars" "Never Say Never" and "Under the Light" garnered high attention for their relatability to everyday life. "Creation of the Gods I: Kingdom of Storms" was acclaimed as an epic mythological masterpiece, and "Chang An" tells a new historical story from a unique perspective.

"Overall, Chinese films have remained true to a realist path, inheriting the traditional narrative patterns, engaging in constructive dialogue with present-day mainstream audiences, and continuously enhancing film industrialization levels, leading to the overall development

of Chinese movies," said Rao Shuguang, president of the China Film Critics Association, noting the restorative growth trend in Chinese film consumption.

Hollywood films' appeal waning

To date, around 83 percent of the 2023 Chinese box office revenue is contributed by domestic films, according to the film data platform Beacon. This year's top 10 box office earners are all domestic films, and the American film "Fast X" ranks 12th with a box office revenue of 980 million yuan, the highest-ranking foreign film.

The increasing attention given to domestic films, as noted by industry observers, corresponds to the diminishing attractiveness of Hollywood films to Chinese moviegoers.

Hollywood's primary means of attracting audiences hinges on Marvel movies and established film franchises, according to Rao. "Although they present visually impactful spectacles, over time, Chinese audiences have also grown weary of them," he said, adding that the intrinsic disconnection of American films from Chinese realities naturally impedes the evocation of empathy.

Liu said that Hollywood films usually excel in industrialization and visual effects, but in recent years, Chinese blockbusters with impressive visual effects have become increasingly common, making the decline in the attractiveness of Hollywood films inevitable.

"If a Hollywood film is not a word-of-mouth hit and at the same time domestic film choices are diverse, it will be natural for audiences to opt for local films," he said.

(Xinhua)



1. "Full River Red"
2. "Chang An"
3. "Under the Light"
4. "Never Say Never"
5. "Creation of the Gods I: Kingdom of Storms"

