



SUNDAY, JANUARY 12, 2025

MICHAEL GILTZ AT WORK

WORLDWIDE BOX OFFICE FOR WEEK
ENDING JANUARY 12, 2025

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2025

A film's gross for the last seven days, followed by its total worldwide
gross. I begin with data from

Comscore and then pull from every other source available.

- 1. **Mufasa: The Lion King**—\$64m / \$540m worldwide
- 2. **Sonic The Hedgehog 3**—\$49m / \$385m ww
- 3. **Nosferatu**—\$36m / \$136m ww
- 4. **Game Changer**—\$31m www debut
- 5. **Moana 2**—\$30m / \$990m
- 6. **Octopus With Broken Arms aka Wu Sha 3 (Manslaughter 3)**—\$20m / \$96m ww
- 7. **Den of Thieves 2: Pantera**—\$20m
- 8. **Wicked**—\$17m / \$698m ww
- 9. **Big World**—\$13m / \$92m ww
- 10. **Babygirl**—\$12m / \$28m ww
- 11. **Honey Money Phony**—\$11m / \$41m ww
- 12. **Finist. The First Warrior**—\$11m / \$20m ww
- 13. **A Complete Unknown**—\$9m / \$51m ww
- 14. **Conclave**—\$8m / \$69m ww
- 15. **Gladiator II**—\$5m / \$455m ww



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FAVORITE LINKS

- Americablog
- Five O'Clock Lightning baseball blog
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Adventure and Mystery -- Bruce
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BLOG ARCHIVE

- ▼ 2025 (38)
 - March (7)
 - February (25)
 - ▼ January (6)

16. Paddington in Peru—\$5m / \$56m ww
17. Harbin—\$3m / \$27m ww
18. Detective Conan: Crossroad in the Ancient Capitol (2003)—\$2m / \$48m ww
19. The Prosecutor—\$2m / \$34m ww
20. The Lord of the Rings: The War of the Rohirrim—\$2m / \$20m ww
21. Homestead—\$2m / \$19m ww
22. Better Man—\$2m / \$10m ww
23. Hot Pot Artist aka Huo Guo Yi Shu Jia —\$2m / \$4m ww
24. The Last Showgirl—\$2m ww debut
25. Fake Dad—\$2m
26. Red One—\$1m / \$186m ww
27. The Firefighters—\$1m / \$24m ww
28. The Fire Inside—\$1m / \$8m ww
29. The Brutalist—\$1m / \$3m ww

Bold: movies that have or likely will triple their reported budgets. That's my standard for a movie being a box office hit from theatrical alone. Many films will be profitable for a studio even if they don't triple their reported budget, but it's a good marker to indicate a big hit.

ANALYSIS

Boy, is it January! I went to see *A Complete Unknown* at my local multiplex on Sunday afternoon and the parking lot was practically empty. After a huge run from Thanksgiving to New Year's and lots of different movies doing well, everyone needed a break, apparently. The massive winter storm didn't help either. Oscar hopefuls like *The Brutalist* and *Nickel Boys* are expanding nicely while *A Complete Unknown* holds well. Meanwhile, Nicole Kidman proves her star power as *Babygirl* passes \$30m worldwide. (He makes her drink milk! I just wish he'd made her wear that AMC promo spangly pant suit.)

Wicked foolishly went to Premium Video on Demand, even though the blockbuster film could expect two more months of attention from Oscar nominations and sing-along screenings and needs to raise its profile in other countries. (Unlike most big Hollywood spectacles, it made most of its money in North America. But a sequel comes in November and they should position it to do even better overseas.) Nonetheless, the film went to PVID and Universal proudly announced it grossed \$70m right off the bat. They're thrilled of course: the studio gets roughly 80% of PVID grosses but only 50-60% or so from box

THE ULTIMATE GRAMMY
PREVIEW: THE BEST
ALBUMS OF 2024

WORLDWIDE BOX OFFICE
FOR WEEK ENDING
JANUARY 26, 2025

THE 250 BEST ALBUMS OF
THE 21ST CENTURY...SO
FAR

WORLDWIDE BOX OFFICE
FOR WEEK ENDING
JANUARY 19, 2025

WORLDWIDE BOX OFFICE
FOR WEEK ENDING
JANUARY 12, 2025

WORLDWIDE BOX OFFICE
FOR WEEK ENDING
JANUARY 5, 2025

- 2024 (37)
- 2023 (8)
- 2022 (6)
- 2021 (8)
- 2020 (7)
- 2019 (93)
- 2018 (34)
- 2017 (6)
- 2016 (2)
- 2015 (11)
- 2014 (2)
- 2013 (5)
- 2012 (17)
- 2011 (15)
- 2010 (10)
- 2009 (43)
- 2008 (86)
- 2007 (781)
- 2006 (2405)
- 2005 (5)

office. So the movie needed to make say \$110m or so for them to make the same amount of money. And maybe if they'd waited, the PVD take would have been substantially less. Sure, but everytime they rush a hit film onto PVD, they're undercutting theatrical, releasing a pristine bootleg into the world and arguably making a film less special. *Wicked* is substantially more fun in theaters than sitting at home alone. It's a huge film. And it's got part two coming out later this year. The cash grab "worked" but at what expense. And how disappointing for the exhibitors Universal depends on 365 days a year, for upcoming films like *Wolf Man*, *Dog Man*, *Bridget Jones: Mad About The Boy*, the live action *How To Train Your Dragon*, *Jurassic World: Rebirth*, *Downton Abbey 3* and *Wicked: For Good* in November. The shorter the window for *hit* films, the shorter the days they can expect exhibitors to support *them* and the shorter the time before theatrical dies entirely.

We've got more data from 2024, the year when wide releases in North America were down 25% from what Hollywood turned out in the peak years pre-COVID. Naturally, one would expect box office to be down 25% but we did better than that. Ticket sales? That's another story, with some 740m being sold and that's a slight underperformance. (It's down 26% from the roughly 1 billion sold from 2016-2019. One billion, *minimum*.)

Now pretending we know admissions is a joke. For North America, the MPA takes the box office gross and divides it by the average ticket price to get a *very* rough estimate of ticket sales. You've got matinees and kid price tickets and people who use monthly passes but they just pretend they can track admissions. Still, since they've always done this it's a fair measure to compare against itself. It's not good to see box office stronger but ticket sales slowing. That means more people are paying more money for fancy tickets like IMAX and such. You want movie-going to be a regular event for people, not a special big night two or three times a year. But again, no chain wants to release a breakdown of actual admissions and I've no clue how those passes (like my AMC A-List!) factor into this. So I'll take this one metric with a big grain of salt and yet still wish it were showing admissions back where they were seven years ago. Maybe 2025!

I did see a lot of trailers on my Dylan outing and from *28 Years Later* to Rami Malek as *The Amateur* to Anthony Mackie as *Captain America: Brave New World* to *Love Hurts* with Ke Huy Quan making like Jackie Chan in an action comedy, it looks like some big movies will be popping up regularly. I've got my eye on *Dog Man*, which I think will handily outperform expectations.

And how was *A Complete Unknown*? As a Dylan fan (not fanatic, but huge fan) I should have found it ridiculous but didn't. The acting (and singing!) were generally very strong. Edward Norton is very good in what might have been a jokey or tiresome role. It sort of fell apart for me towards the end when Dylan became more "Dylan" but all in all a fine movie, with some very strong musical moments. It became a little too broad brushstroke by the end to get across the ideas they wanted, but still. It might easily have been laughable and really, it wasn't. A

lovely image at the end says it all about Dylan and Pete Seeger. Dylan is riding away alone on his motorcycle (too fast, I might add!). He's leaving the 1965 Newport Folk Festival he just upended by going electric. Dylan pauses for a moment near the stage area and sees Pete Seeger, ever the folkie and man of peace, helping to collect the folding chairs and stow them on a truck. Of *course* Pete Seeger is helping clean things up!

NOTE: I still don't have good final box office info on two of the biggest hits of 2024: India's apparent all-time India and worldwide smash *Pushpa 2: The Rule* and Hong Kong's all-time local smash *The Last Dance*.

NOTES

mb = a film's budget in millions of US dollars; ww = worldwide

1. Mufasa: The Lion King—\$200mb

2. Sonic The Hedgehog 3—\$120mb

3. Nosferatu—\$50mb for Robert Eggers, acclaimed director of *The Witch*, *The Lighthouse* and *The Northman*. That had his biggest budget and was not a commercial success. I saw him as more of an arthouse guy. But backers stuck with him, gave him a big budget and a starry cast for a remake of *Nosferatu*, which I guess is classier than remaking *Dracula* but still a hard sell I thought. And on Christmas Day? That's counter-programming I was not behind. Happily, I was wrong and Eggers looks more like the next Peter Jackson/Guillermo Del Toro than a guy given big budgets too fast or for the wrong projects. Good for him!

4. Game Changer—\$45mb for Indian-Telugu political action film w new politico uncovering corruption and kicking ass.

5. Moana 2—Is the budget lower since it was intended for tv, at first? Or higher because they had to rethink everything? Disney says it cost \$150mb, just like the original. You can bet Dwayne Johnson gets more than his share of coconuts, but that won't matter with a hit like this.

6. Octopus With Broken Arms aka Wu Sha 3 (Manslaughter 3)—Chinese drama about businessman's daughter kidnapped from his home.

7. Den of Thieves 2: Pantera—\$40mb for Gerard Butler action flick.

8. Wicked—\$150mb for each part, so \$300mb total plus beaucoup marketing. It's a big movie!

9. Big World—\$29m ww debut. Chinese drama starring pop star and actor Jackson Yee as a young man living with cerebral palsy. Yee has gone from boyband TFBoys to having the Mandarin song of the year in 2017 to success in TV and film. How's his English, asks Hollywood?

10. Babygirl—\$20mb for this Nicole Kidman sexy drama about a powerful businesswoman finding her kink with a younger, dominating man..her intern, no less! No milk was harmed in the making of this movie.

11. Honey Money Phony—Chinese rom-com about young woman suddenly burdened with debt who falls for a (very handsome) young con man. Will he go straight for her or teach her his wicked ways so she can get out from under this financial disaster?

12. Finist. The First Warrior—a Russian fantasy film starring actor Kirill Zaytsev as "the strongest, most agile, and handsome hero of Belogorye," according to Wikipedia. Zaytsev certainly fits the bill, though since Belogorye currently has fewer than 3000 people, that may not be such a major claim. Russians are surely starved for homegrown cinema; it's been a while since Russian films made the charts. But I couldn't even find a trailer for it on YouTube.

13. A Complete Unknown—\$60mb+ for this Bob Dylan biopic? That's a lot of money for a film about Dylan going electric at Newport. I mean, I want to see it but then I'm a Dylan fanatic. Off to a very good start and star Timoth   Chalamet is sure to get an Oscar nomination, so it should keep going. But \$180m worldwide seems highly unlikely to me, if not impossible. (Do other countries give a toss about this? Is Chalamet a big enough draw for this story? I doubt it.) I'm glad it was made, but it was made for too much. Like *Gladiator II*, this will be seen as a commercial success, but it's not.

14. Conclave—a reported \$20mb for this Vatican thriller means this is a hit. It's at \$60m and still going strong, with a boost from potential Oscar noms. I do *not* see the point in putting it on PVD and flooding the market with bootlegs while potentially harming box office. This is exactly the sort of film that can play and play in theaters.

15. *Gladiator II*—\$250mb for Ridley Scott sword and sandals epic. It needs \$750m worldwide for me to call it a hit from theatrical alone but \$600m would be just fine. It's got swords. It's got sandals. Does it have legs? No, it does not. This is the sort of film that everyone thinks of as a hit, but actually didn't deliver. The talk of *Gladiator 3* is nonsense. Maybe many years from now they'll use the name to launch a new franchise, but this is the end for now.

16. *Paddington in Peru*—\$50mb? I'm just guessing. (That's sort of midpoint between the original and *Paddington 2*.) Sadly, three times is not the charm artistically for this once-perfect franchise.

17. *Harbin*—A South Korean historical drama set in the early 1900s about rebels fighting against the Japanese occupation of Korea. When one rebel leader shows mercy to Japanese prisoners and his men pay the price, he vows to redeem himself by assassinating the first Prime Minister of Japan. So this one will probably *not* have a good run in Japan.

18. Detective Conan: Crossroad in the Ancient Capitol (2003)—China reissue of Japanese animated franchise entry. Film had \$32m

before reissue in China. I mean, they keep making them so I *assume* they're profitable.

19. The Prosecutor—Chinese drama starring Donnie Yen, who uncovers a deep conspiracy when a poor young man is framed for drug trafficking. Not on Donnie's watch!

20. The Lord of the Rings: War of the Rohirrim—per Screendollar, the budget is \$30mb for this animated prequel to *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* movies. Even at that price, it's a flop. Taken solely from minor footnotes in the novels, it was a gamble but a smart one. An animated film won't be compared to Peter Jackson's masterpiece. (See: the TV series.) And it's not retelling stories we've already heard. (See: superhero movies that go back to the well by redoing an origin story for Superman, Spiderman, et al.) Unfortunately, you still have to be good. The trailer I saw disappointed and audiences are not responding. A pity.

21. Homestead—faith-based post-apocalyptic drama from Angel Studios. A survivalist fantasy. Based on a series of ten, poorly reviewed novels.

22. Better Man—\$110mb!!! I just gasped when I saw the budget. Oh dear. I love the craziness of this movie. But that's a LOT of money for such a nutty idea. And forget the nutty idea. It's a musical biopic about an artist whose music I really like but has virtually no profile outside the UK. For heaven's sake, Queen is one of the biggest acts in the world and their biopic cost literally half of this one. *Better Man* would have been a big gamble at \$30mb.

23. Hot Pot Artist aka Huo Guo Yi Shu Jia —A young Chinese man dreams of becoming a film director, but somehow ends up running a hot pot restaurant for artists, instead.

24. The Last Showgirl—\$2mb for Pamela Anderson's performance as Vegas showgirl whose revue suddenly closes after 30 years. Not so fast, Demi, says Anderson.

25. Fake Dad—Chinese comedy

26. Red One—Dwayne Johnson and Chris Evans action/Xmas comedy. A budget reportedly up to \$250mb. It's a theatrical failure, but that failure would have been just as clear if it had gone straight to streaming. Now at least it is (almost) paying for a worldwide marketing blitz and that can only help. Remember how people rented crap movies at Blockbuster simply because they'd "heard" of it during the theatrical run? Same idea.

27. The Firefighters—Korean drama with hot young newbie joining firefighter squad, only to butt heads with a legendary veteran.

28. The Fire Inside—\$12mb for this indie drama about the true story of female Olympian boxer from Flint, Michigan. It's a stellar week for director Barry Jenkins, who wrote and produced this film and sees his family film *Mufasa: The Lion King* finding its audience.