

‘Minions’ set box office on fire with \$108.5 million debut

By Lindsey Bahr | AP

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Families went bananas for Minions this weekend at the movie theater. “Minions: The Rise of Gru” brought in an estimated \$108.5 million in ticket sales from 4,391 screens in North America, Universal Pictures said Sunday. By the end of the Monday’s July Fourth holiday, it will likely have earned over \$127.9 million.

The film is on track to become one of the biggest openings ever for a July Fourth holiday weekend, a record previously held by “Transformers: Dark of the Moon” which made \$115.9 million in its first four days in 2011. Including international showings, where “Minions: The Rise of Gru” is playing in 61 markets, its worldwide gross is sitting at \$202.2 million through Sunday.

“It’s a tremendous debut,” said Jim Orr, Universal’s president of domestic distribution. “It’s playing very broadly across North America. Every single market doing extraordinarily well.”

This is just the latest in a string of successes for Universal’s family releases, including “Sing 2,” which has grossed over \$406 million since opening in December, and “The Bad Guys,” which has made over \$243 million. “Minions: The Rise of Gru” serves as further proof that family audiences are willing to go back to the movie theater.

“Families feel very comfortable bringing all their kids to the theater,” Orr said. “These results speak for themselves.”

“Minions 2” attracted all ages to the theater, even the very young. According to PostTrak surveys, 12% were under the age of 10.

“For many months there was this idea that family audiences were not going to come back to the theater. We can put that to rest,” said Paul Dergarabedian, the senior media analyst for Comscore.

The spinoff of the popular “Despicable Me” series was delayed two years because of the pandemic. The sequel to the 2015 film “Minions” was originally slated for a July 2020 release. While many other animated family films opted for streaming or hybrid releases, “Minions,” much like “Top Gun: Maverick,” stayed the course and waited for an ideal time to launch in theaters only. And as with “Top Gun” the wait, it seems, was worth it.

“This became an event. It was a holiday weekend, the release date was perfect, the marketing was spot on,” Dergarabedian said. “And everyone knew this was going to be in theaters only.”

The voice cast features Steve Carell, reprising his role as Gru, Alan Arkin, Michelle Yeoh and Julie Andrews as Gru's mother. Critics were mixed to positive (it currently has a 72% on Rotten Tomatoes) but audiences were more enthusiastic, giving the Gru origin story an A CinemaScore.

Universal and Illumination have had enormous success with the five "Despicable Me" movies and spinoffs, which date back to 2010 and have earned over \$3.7 billion at the global box office.

In second place was "Top Gun: Maverick," which continues to deliver six weeks in, adding another \$25.5 million to its total, which has already surpassed \$1 billion. The Paramount Pictures film is still playing in 3,843 locations.

Warner Bros.' "Elvis" took third place, down only 39% in its second weekend in theaters. The Baz Luhrmann film grossed an estimated \$19 million through Sunday, bringing its domestic total to \$67.3 million.

Fourth and fifth place went to Universal titles as well with "Jurassic World: Dominion" picking up another \$15.7 million and the horror movie "The Black Phone" adding \$12.3 million through Sunday.

Disney's "Lightyear," meanwhile, tumbled further in its third weekend with an estimated \$6.5 million. By Monday, that total should raise to \$8.1 million bringing its cumulative earnings to \$106.9 million.

Bleecker Street released "[Mr. Malcolm's List](#)" this weekend on 1,384 screens in the U.S. and Canada. The Regency-era comedy of manners stars [Freida Pinto](#) and [Zawe Ashton](#) as friends looking to get back at a picky bachelor. The studio estimates that the film will have \$851,853 by end of Sunday and over \$1 million by end of Monday.

Audiences are also still catching up with A24's "Everything Everywhere All At Once," which added an estimated \$552,000 from 607 screens, in spite of the fact that it's also available to rent on demand. The studio's newer title, "Marcel the Shell With Shoes On," expanded to 22 screens this weekend and is expected to earn about \$308,000 by the end of Monday.

According to Comscore, the weekend as a whole will go down as one of the biggest of the pandemic era. And the momentum is expected to continue with the release of Marvel's "Thor: Love and Thunder" next week.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore. Final domestic figures will be released Tuesday.

1. "Minions: The Rise of Gru," \$108.5 million.
2. "Top Gun: Maverick," \$25.5 million.
3. "Elvis," \$19 million.
4. "Jurassic World: Dominion," \$15.7 million.
5. "The Black Phone," \$12.3 million.
6. "Lightyear," \$6.6 million.
7. "Mr. Malcolm's List, \$851,853.
8. "Everything Everywhere All at Once," \$551,974.
9. "Doctor Strange in the Multiverse of Madness," \$390,000.
10. "JugJugg Jeeyo," \$318,000.

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