



UK AUDIENCES EAGER TO RETURN TO THE BIG SCREEN, SURVEY CONFIRMS

London – 8 April 2021: Survey results released today confirm that the UK public is more eager than ever to return to cinemas when they start to reopen next month, with 59% citing the cinema as their most missed out-of-home entertainment activity.

A nationwide survey, carried out by research agency MetrixLab and commissioned by the Film Distributors' Association, reveals a steep rise in urgency to return to cinemas as soon as possible, with 40% of audiences planning to return within the first few weeks after reopening and a further 36% within the first couple of months.

The research also confirmed that lockdown over the last year has reignited audiences' passion for seeing films on the big screen, with those who have digitally rented or purchased films highlighted as the most likely to return to the cinema as soon as they reopen.

These encouraging findings confirm that cinema is something that can't be recreated at home, with two-thirds of respondents favouring the spectacular big screen experience, immersive sound, special effects, and access to a wide range of new films that only cinema can offer. That big screen must-see appeal has remained stable throughout the pandemic, when many film fans' movie-watching has been limited to home entertainment.

UK cinemas were highly commended for their nationwide response to the pandemic last year, by putting wide-reaching safety measures in place to protect the health and safety of staff and audiences. 93% of cinemagoers who returned last year enjoyed an overwhelmingly positive experience, and 99% were satisfied with the health and safety measures at their local cinema.

With no recorded cases of COVID traced back to a UK site, cinema delivers an unrivalled big screen experience, with audience members seated at a safe social distance in air-conditioned, well ventilated theatres with extensive safeguarding measures in place. The survey shows a high level of confidence with the rigorous standards of safety, putting cinema at the top of the entertainment sector in this regard.

Following 12 months of lockdowns and restrictions, the survey further endorsed how well-loved cinemagoing is. Past research has consistently proved that cinemas provide vital support for the health and well-being of our communities. Getting out of the house and watching a film on the big screen allows us to escape and immerse ourselves in another world, if only for a few hours.



Audiences will have a wide range of films to choose from, with highly anticipated titles including: **Nomadland** directed by Chloé Zhao and starring Frances McDormand; **Peter Rabbit 2** featuring the voices of James Corden and Margot Robbie; **A Quiet Place 2** directed by John Krasinski and starring Emily Blunt; **The Father** directed by Florian Zeller and starring Sir Anthony Hopkins and Olivia Colman; **Cruella** directed by Craig Gillespie and starring Emma Stone and Dame Emma Thompson; **Fast & Furious 9** directed by Justin Lin and featuring Vin Diesel and Michelle Rodriguez; **In the Heights** directed by Jon M. Chu with music penned by and starring Lin-Manuel Miranda; **Top Gun: Maverick** directed by Joseph Kosinski starring Tom Cruise and Jennifer Connelly; **Dune** directed by Denis Villeneuve starring Timothée Chalamet and Zendaya; and **No Time To Die** directed by Cary Joji Fukunaga and starring Daniel Craig and Rami Malek.

Iain Jacob, Cinema First Chair commented:

“After a long period of lockdown, it’s great to see that such a large proportion of the public can’t wait to come back to the cinema. Our research has confirmed what we had hoped: after being at home on lockdown since December we are all keen to escape to the cinema to experience the magic that only comes from watching a film on the big screen. Cinemas across the UK are thrilled to be opening their doors again and safely welcoming back film fans and resuming the thriving culture of cinemagoing.”

Editors Notes:

About Cinema First:

Cinema First is the cross-industry body charged with the promotion of cinemagoing in the UK. Its core constituents are the Film Distributors’ Association - representing UK film distributors, and the UK Cinema Association - representing UK cinema operators.

About the UK Cinema Association:

The UK Cinema Association (UKCA) represents the interest of well over 90 per cent of UK cinema operators by number and market share. Its membership ranges from single screen/owner-managed sites to the largest circuit and multiplex operators.

About the Film Distributors’ Association:

The Film Distributors’ Association (FDA) is the trade body that represents UK film distributors. Its membership ranges from Hollywood studios to independent distributors and is responsible for 99 per cent of all films released theatrically in the UK.

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