

Minority Report(s)

During last year's Festival, a colleague, a true film professional but nevertheless a *cinéophile* (André Bazin be praised, the two are still compatible!) invited me to have lunch on a terrace in Cannes to give me, as kindly as possible, all his adverse criticism of *FOCUS*. To be more precise, he wanted to tell me that most of the box-office rankings we collect in this publication are stunningly monotonous since they only illustrate the international successes (which are by definition already very well-known) of the same ten blockbusters, in most cases American and, more rarely, European. I could only agree with him: when we do no more than count the big successes, then the "minority" films that make Cannes so diverse – i.e. films produced by the European film industry and film industries in other parts of the world – disappear from view. In a world obsessed by big numbers, their statistical inexistence can quickly be interpreted to mean they do not exist full stop. So it is right and important that these "minority" films also have a statistical existence both as individual works and as works that support "niche markets".

All the studies carried out by the European Audiovisual Observatory in the last few years on various categories of "niche films" (arthouse films, films made in the new EU member states, films produced in the Mediterranean countries, films made in third countries other than the United States, films by women, European animated films, documentaries, children's films, etc) illustrate with dramatic clarity the minority position of these various categories on the European market. For policymakers, institutional leaders, professionals and film lovers who treasure diversity, identifying these minority positions can have a depressing effect. However, statistical indicators are essential for producing a diagnosis and asking the questions that can lead to attempts to find solutions, whether political or professional. Is it normal that films by women in 2010-2012 only made up 17.5% of European film production and 8.7% of admissions of European films in the European Union, even though women represent half the population? Is it normal that in the European Union the market share of European films out-

side their domestic market fluctuates from year to year between 6.3 and 9.6%? Is it normal that, ten years after EU enlargement, EU admissions of films originating from new Member States constitute on average 1.25% of all EU admissions even though those countries represent 19% of the total EU population? Is it normal that, each year, the market share of films other than American or European productions is just 2 to 3% of EU admissions and that this small share of the cake mainly goes to films from English-speaking countries (Australia, Canada, etc.), thus leaving only a few crumbs of market share to African, Arab, Asian and South American works or to works from European non-EU countries such as Russia or Turkey? Is it normal that films that receive awards in Cannes or win a European Film Award rarely exceed 2.5 million admissions, i.e. that less than five European citizens per thousand actually see them in a cinema?

In order better to reflect the actual box office success of these categories of films, we provide rankings of the five best successes of these various categories mentioned, as extracted from the LUMIERE database (<http://lumiere.obs.coe.int>) operated by the Observatory, as well as two rankings of the films that enjoyed the most success in the theatres of the Europa Cinemas network (page 8). The role of this network, which is supported by the European Union's MEDIA programme and brings together 882 cinemas, representing 2 111 screens in 32 European countries, is to promote European diversity by means of a proactive supply policy and measures to activate and educate viewers. The existence of this cinema network benefits not only European films but also independent American works or productions from other parts of the world. The ranking of the films with the best admissions in this network illustrates the existence of a public who are interested in what I shall, briefly, refer to here as "minority films".

It is not the European Audiovisual Observatory's responsibility to offer solutions to market imbalances. In a field that involves major symbolic and aesthetic challenges, historically established economic power relationships and growing demands

Top 20 European films by admissions in Europa Cinemas Network ⁽¹⁾ | 2013

Title	Country of origin ⁽²⁾	Production Year	Director	Admissions ⁽³⁾
1 La Grande Bellezza	IT	2013	Paolo Sorrentino	762 883
2 Hannah Arendt	DE	2012	Margarethe Von Trotta	716 695
3 Quartet	GB	2012	Dustin Hoffman	715 304
4 La vie d'Adèle	FR	2013	Abdellatif Kechiche	690 186
5 Night train to Lisbon	EU	2013	Bille August	609 592
6 Los amantes pasajeros	ES	2013	Pedro Almodovar	516 116
7 Amour	FR	2012	Michael Haneke	492 678
8 La migliore offerta	IT	2012	Giuseppe Tornatore	439 766
9 Searching for Sugar Man	SE	2011	Malik Bendjelloul	399 581
10 Le Passé	FR	2013	Asghar Farhadi	390 519
11 Jagten	DK	2012	Thomas Vinterberg	377 210
12 Anna Karenina	GB	2012	Joe Wright	355 566
13 Philomena	GB	2013	Stephen Frears	339 354
14 Renoir	FR	2012	Gilles Bourdos	338 239
15 La Vénus à la fourrure	FR	2013	Roman Polanski	294 034
16 Au bout du conte	FR	2013	Agnès Jaoui	288 002
17 Les Garçons et Guillaume, à table!	FR	2013	Guillaume Gallienne	285 686
18 Paulette	FR	2012	Jérôme Enrico	280 821
19 Jeune & jolie	FR	2013	François Ozon	277 202
20 L'Ecume des jours	FR	2013	Michel Gondry	270 978

(1) Europa Cinemas members in 2013: 32 MEDIA countries, 534 cities, 882 cinemas, 2111 screens.

Source: Europa Cinemas

(2) Country of origin as allocated by Europa Cinemas. May differ from OBS allocation in the rest of the publication.

(3) Does not include admissions from previous years.

Top 20 European films by admissions in Europa Cinemas Network ⁽¹⁾ | 2008-2013

Title	Country of origin ⁽²⁾	Production Year	Director	Admissions
1 Intouchables	FR	2011	Eric Toledano, Olivier Nakache	3 535 153
2 The King's Speech	GB	2010	Tom Hooper	2 935 671
3 Slumdog Millionaire	GB	2008	Danny Boyle	2 257 682
4 The Artist	FR	2011	Michel Hazanavicius	2 011 943
5 Amour	FR	2012	Michael Haneke	1 392 617
6 Das weiße Band	AT	2009	Michael Haneke	1 364 828
7 Des hommes et des dieux	FR	2010	Xavier Beauvois	1 342 364
8 Carnage	FR	2011	Roman Polanski	1 203 307
9 Soul Kitchen	DE	2009	Fatih Akin	1 166 732
10 Los abrazos rotos	ES	2009	Pedro Almodovar	1 127 602
11 Le concert	FR	2009	Radu Mihaileanu	1 090 829
12 The Iron Lady	GB	2011	Phyllida Lloyd	1 082 440
13 The Reader	GB	2008	Stephen Daldry	980 691
14 Potiche	FR	2010	François Ozon	940 908
15 Habemus Papam	IT	2011	Nanni Moretti	933 495
16 Le Havre	EU	2011	Aki Kaurismäki	919 026
17 The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel	GB	2012	John Madden	917 078
18 You Will Meet a Tall Dark Stranger	GB	2010	Woody Allen	872 250
19 The Ghost Writer	FR	2010	Roman Polanski	845 319
20 The Angels' Share	GB	2012	Ken Loach	830 149

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with regard to technical quality, the mere mention of a desire for more statistical balance of film success is clearly not an adequate solution but just a mathematical dream. The public do not make a choice based on figures or a sociological or cultural concern for fairness but on the range of productions offered (which is not necessarily wide in all countries and regions), on the actors and actresses they know, on the genres and codes to which they are accustomed, on their knowledge of languages and on recommendations made to them by critics, friends and a large array of marketing tools. Given so many powerful factors, statistics cannot achieve very much, but in an international market like Cannes they can also serve as a promotion tool. Highlighting what films in the minority categories meet with success, even if it is not comparable to that enjoyed by blockbusters, can help to promote the continuation and expansion of the international triumph of the most successful works in these categories.

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I hope that, like my professional and *cinéophile* friend, you will enjoy these new sets of data as well as the more classical ones.

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