

# ‘Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom’ rules Christmas weekend box office

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**Online Desk:** In a splashy victory at the North American box office, “Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom” emerged as the top-grossing film over the Christmas weekend. The DC and Warner Bros. superhero sequel, headlined by Jason Momoa, reeled in an estimated USD 28.1 million during its first three days in 3,706 locations. Projections for Monday put the film at a robust USD 40 million in domestic ticket sales.

Despite a slew of new releases, such as the family-friendly animated film “Migration”, the R-rated romantic comedy “Anyone but You”, and the wrestling tragedy “The Iron Claw”; and the ghostly tearjerker “All of Us Strangers”, the pre-holiday frame turned out to be somewhat subdued at the box office. It appears that potential moviegoers may have had other priorities during this festive season.

The confluence of Christmas Eve falling on a prime weekend day likely contributed to the quieter weekend. However, Christmas Day is expected to bring more moviegoers back to theatres, with new releases including the big-budget musical adaptation of “The Color Purple,” Michael Mann’s racing film “Ferrari,” and George Clooney’s adaptation of the rowing drama “The Boys in the Boat.”

While “Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom” claimed the top spot, it faces stiff competition from iconic holiday earners like “Star Wars: The Force Awakens,” “Avatar,” and “Spider-Man: No Way Home.” Social media chatter also noted that this weekend was initially earmarked for the release of Patty Jenkins’ “Star Wars” movie, “Rogue Squadron.”

The estimated USD 200 million production cost of “Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom” is substantial, not accounting for marketing and promotion expenses. Including international estimates of USD 80 million through Monday, the film is set for a USD 120 million global debut. Its predecessor, released in 2018, opened to USD 67.8 million and ultimately grossed nearly USD 1.2 billion worldwide.

The success of “Aquaman and the Lost Kingdom” marks the conclusion of a challenging year for DC superhero films, characterised by box office disappointments such as “Shazam! Fury of the Gods,” “The Flash,” and “Blue Beetle.” The film serves as the final “holdover” from the previous administration, paving the way for James Gunn’s vision for the future of DC superhero movies.

Warner Bros, the studio behind “Aquaman”, also secured the second spot with “Wonka”, now in its second weekend, earning an estimated USD 17.7 million over the weekend and USD 26.1 million by Monday, bringing its total domestic earnings to USD 83.6 million.

“Warners has something for everybody,” remarked Jeff Goldstein, the studio’s head of domestic distribution, highlighting the studio’s diverse offerings during the holiday season.

Other notable entries in the weekend box office include Illumination and Universal’s “Migration,” securing third place with an estimated \$12.3 million and projected to reach \$17.1 million by the end of Monday. A24’s “The Iron Claw” opened with an estimated \$5.1 million and earned an A- CinemaScore from audiences.

As the year comes to a close, the box office landscape reflects a diverse array of films catering to various tastes. The top 10, spanning different genres and languages, stands as a testament to the resilience and adaptability of the film industry.