

‘John Wick: Chapter 4’ comes out blazing with \$73.5M

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Online Desk: “John Wick: Chapter 4,” the fourth installment in the Keanu Reeves assassin series, debuted with a franchise-best \$73.5 million at the box office, according to studio estimates Sunday.

The Lionsgate film, starring Reeves as the reluctant-but-not-that-reluctant killer John Wick, exceeded both expectations and previous opening weekends in the R-rated franchise. Since first launching in 2014 with “John Wick” (\$14 million on its opening weekend), the Chad Stahelski-directed series has steadily grown as a ticket-seller with each sequel. The 2017 follow-up opened with \$30.4 million, and the 2019 third chapter, “Parabellum,” debuted with \$56.8 million.

But “Chapter 4,” running two hours and 49 minutes and costing at least \$100 million to produce, is the biggest film yet in the once-lean action series. Critics also said it was a franchise high point, scoring 95% fresh on Rotten Tomatoes.

Though “John Wick” has been bigger at the box office with each new release — an enviable and rare trajectory among Hollywood franchises — “Chapter 4” brings some finality to Reeves’ character. The actor hasn’t entirely dismissed continuing the series, telling interviewers “never say never.” Regardless, the franchise is set to keep humming. A spin-off titled “Ballerina” starring Ana de Armas and co-starring Reeves has already been shot.