

BOXED OFFICE

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Behind the Scenes default

THE DREADFUL home box-office performance of Irish films will be familiar to fans of Goldhawk. Now, research from Crescine, a €4m cinema research project looking at seven small EU states, confirms the harsh reality.

A team of Irish-based film academics, Judith Pernin, Daithí Mac Síthigh, Fiacre Muller, Nic Flanagan, Padraig Trehy and Rónán Ó Muirthile – led by Dún Laoghaire’s IADT – has found that “Irish domestic productions are receiving increasing support and festival recognition internationally... but are still poorly attended at home, comparatively to the popularity of cinema-going overall”.

The mechanics of the ‘Irish’ designation do matter in this research from Crescine, because some films considered ‘Irish’, due to tax breaks availed of and/or location or post-production work, could dramatically skew the figures. For example, [Ed Guiney](#) and Andrew Lowe’s Oscar success, *Poor Things*, for Disney, might be counted, at least partially, as an ‘Irish’ film.

The actual box office numbers for Irish films in Ireland tend to be hard to find and, for example, Désirée Finnegan’s Screen Ireland (SI) stopped updating its box office tables in late 2021. Even the promising Irish results for Pat Collins’s over-hyped adaptation of John McGahern’s *That They May Face the Rising Sun* are not on the public record. It has taken some €700,000 in total from UK and Ireland cinemas but there is no available breakdown between the two markets.

Former SI board member Marian Quinn will be hoping her second feature, *Twig*, released this week, will emulate the Collins film and not slip away like Paul Duane’s *All You Need Is Death*, released in 19 cinemas in April for an underwhelming box office of €7,000. This represents the unfortunate fate of most Irish releases in Irish cinemas – 14 admissions per day over its opening weekend.