

'Star Wars' still a force; has \$36 million weekend

By Scott Lindlaw
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOS ANGELES — The power of the force propelled "Star Wars" to the top of the box office, leaving all other competition in the dark side of the galaxy.

The second opening of the refurbished film was the top-selling January weekend release ever, figures released Sunday showed.

"Star Wars" collected an estimated \$36.2 million over the weekend, dwarfing the nation's No. 2 film, "Jerry Maguire," which took in \$5.6 million.

The movie, with enhanced special effects and a few new scenes, had the ninth-highest three-day opening ever, according to estimates from Exhibitor Relations Co. Inc.

The epic about a motley band of heroes fighting an evil space empire "a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away" has screened only in video form for a generation.

Americans still captivated by "the ultimate story of good and evil" flocked to theaters to see it again on the big screen, and many brought their children, said Tom Sherak, chairman of 20th Century Fox Domestic Film Group.

"It's part of our culture," he said. "It's one of those rare instances where a movie becomes our best friend. We remember the best friend."

Adam Gordon, 26, and brother Eric, 23, both of Los Angeles, said they had seen the film a total of 83 times. On Sunday, they stood in line to see it again in Sherman Oaks.

An afternoon showing at the theater enchanted Lizzy Destin, 13, of Beverly Hills. She had never seen the movie, even on video.

"It was excellent," she said. "I loved Harrison Ford. I hope he gets Princess Leia."

"The graphics are better and so is the sound," said 11-year-old Brendan Gibson of Van Nuys, an old video hand. "Some of the places and people in there seem real."

His review: "It's good for kids. It doesn't have any bad language in it and there's really no violence."

In its 1977 release, "Star Wars" grossed \$323 million in North America — then a record and still fourth on the all-time list. The re-release is sure to push "Star Wars" higher on that list, Sherak said.

The second and third chapters of the trilogy, "The Empire Strikes Back" (1980) and "Return of the Jedi" (1983) also will be re-released in coming weeks.

The only truly new release in the top 10, "Gridlock'd," starring Tim Roth and the late Tupac Shakur, opened at No. 9 by collecting \$2.8 million.

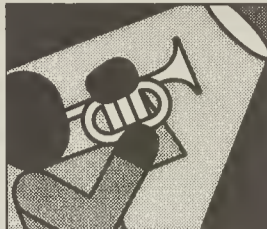
Two other debuts with big-name stars opened outside the top 10.

"Meet Wally Sparks," a comedy with Rodney Dangerfield as a sleazy TV talk-show host, took in \$2.2 million.

"The Shadow Conspiracy," a political thriller starring Charlie Sheen as a White House aide who learns of a plot against the president, drew \$1.4 million in ticket sales.

The top 10 films at the box office from Friday through Sunday:

1. "Star Wars," \$36.2 million.
2. "Jerry Maguire," \$5.6 million.
3. "Scream," \$4.8 million.
4. "Metro," \$4.4 million.
5. "Beverly Hills Ninja," \$4.3 million.
6. "Evita," \$4.3 million.
7. "In Love and War," \$3.9 million.
8. "The Relic," \$2.9 million.
9. "Gridlock'd," \$2.8 million.
10. "Mother," \$2.6 million.
10. "Michael," \$2.6 million.



CONCERTS

The Public Library Presents "An Evening With James Earl Jones," 7 p.m. February 20, Spirit Square Center for Arts and Education, 345 N. College St. Tickets are \$10 and may be purchased at the Main Library, 310 N. Tryon St., or by calling 336-2945 with Mastercard or VISA.

The Beta Nu Lambda chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha presents "Lift Every Voice," a musical program featuring ensembles from graduate African American Greek sororities

and fraternities, 4 p.m. Feb. 9 in Biddle Auditorium on the campus of Johnson C. Smith University, \$10 adults, \$5 students. Monies will go to benefit JCSU United Negro College Fund drive.

A benefit concert for the new Genesis Park Community Center featuring the Williams Brothers with special guests Paul Hicks and the Community Choir, Eugene Hash, ChristSent and Co-Mission is 8 p.m. Feb. 7, Owens Auditorium, 2700 E. Independence Blvd. Tickets are available at all TicketMaster locations, Owens box office, Community Outreach Church, Simmons Restaurant, Logos Bookstores and Dorothy's Music Network.

If you have information about black entertainment events, meetings, lectures or any other events of interest, send it to What's Up! The Charlotte Post, 1531 Camden Road, Charlotte, N.C. 28203. Deadline is 5 p.m. Fridays.

Oprah's angles go to museum

Continued from 6B
handcrafted."

The museum itself will be housed in St. Paul's Church, a former Roman Catholic Church that is being remodeled.

"It has taken a long time. It's a project being done largely by volunteers," Mrs. Berg said.

"We hope to be done by fall." The Angel Museum board has been working through former Beloit resident Ray Stanton, now of Chicago, to acquire Winfrey's collection.

"Oprah is very excited about having a home for her collection," Stanton said.

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