

Press release: Blockbuster year for the Brits

Spend on UK film and TV production in the UK soared in 2016, reaching £1.6 billion, a 13 per cent increase on 2015, according to figures released by the BFI. Of that, £1.35 billion was invested by 48 major inward investment films basing themselves in the UK.

Showing that we're more than capable of competing on the world stage, this year's top three grossing films at the UK box office were all made on British soil: Rogue One: A Star Wars Story, Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them and Bridget Jones's Baby. Overall there was a good turnout at the UK box office too, with cinema ticket sales at a second time high, raking in £1.227 billion.

But film wasn't the only sector to thrive in 2016. TV too had its moment, with overseas companies flocking to the UK to spend £478 million on making high-end TV shows such as The Crown and Game of Thrones.

Foreign markets were also clamouring for our creative content, with figures from PACT's UK Television Exports Report showing that UK's sales of television exports to international markets have risen by 10 per cent, from £1.2 billion in 2014/15 to £1.3 billion in 2015/16. There's also been a large increase in sales in the Chinese market, which is up 40 per cent on 2014/15, with the UK and China TV co-production treaty signed at the end of last year sure to further boost those numbers.

Culture Secretary Karen Bradley said:

It's no surprise that our creative industries go from strength to strength when we can boast such superb talent and expertise. The UK is an international powerhouse of film, TV and music and this Government will keep backing our creative brilliance. As we prepare to leave the European Union this success story is a great advert for Global Britain – an outward-looking, globally-minded country that is open for business.

Proving that music is the UK's forte, figures released by UK record labels' association the BPI, showed that the continuing surge in audio streaming and accelerating demand for vinyl LPs helped achieve another successful year for British music in 2016. We were listening to even more music last year thanks to an explosive rise in audio streaming, which has increased 500 per cent since 2013.

Geoff Taylor, Chief Executive of BPI and the BRIT Awards said:

Propelled by the remarkable talent of its artists, and the

investment and digital engagement of its record labels, British music has conquered the world. This success has not just fuelled our music exports – in 2015 accounting for 1 in 6 albums sold around the world – it has enhanced the global appeal of British culture and in the process also made music the UK's international calling card.

Our acts dominated the UK charts, with 7 out of the year's top 10 best-selling artists coming from the UK. The popularity of Tottenham's Adele showed no sign of diminishing, with the songstress again winning 2016's best-selling artist album – the 12th year in a row the best-seller has come from UK. Other British acts that fared well include Michael Ball and Alfie Boe, whose duets album Together was the 2016's best-selling new release artist album, while The 1975 topped both the UK and US charts. With the BAFTAs and Grammys set to take centre stage this evening, and the BRIT awards and Oscars just around the corner, it looks like there will be even more to celebrate in 2017.

Adele and the late David Bowie lead the charge at this year's Grammys, and there's a visual feast of TV and film up for nomination at this year's BAFTAs including Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them.

The Brit awards will be the ultimate British celebration of some of our best talent, and with a slew of British talent vying for Oscars, we will be able to reaffirm to the world that our creative industries are a force to be reckoned with, even though we contain less than one per cent of the world's population.

According to the British Film Commission, there are a whole host of UK-made films set to wow us this year as they hit the big screen including Warner Bros.'s Ready Player One, Disney's Beauty and the Beast, Lucasfilm's Star Wars: The Last Jedi and Twentieth Century Fox's Murder on the Orient Express.

And proving that Britain is still open for business and has the global reputation to attract talent from overseas, expect to see the likes of Mary Poppins Returns and detectives Holmes and Watson being filmed in the UK this year.

Amanda Nevill, CEO of the BFI said:

British stories and British talent are firing the global imagination. Films and television series such as I, Daniel Blake, Fantastic Beasts And Where To Find Them, Notes on Blindness and The Crown are generating investment, creating jobs and thrilling audiences – and fingers crossed winning yet more awards – at home and internationally. UK Film and TV employ tens of thousands in the UK, help bring international investment to our shores and take British culture to nations around the world. We can all be justifiably proud of the UK's success in these most dynamic and exciting art-forms.

As for TV produced in the UK, we can expect to see more of HBO's Game of Thrones on our sets, along with Netflix/Left Bank's The Crown, Starz'/Company Pictures The White Princess, Crackle's Snatch, TNT's Will and Sony's Outlander.

It looks to be a stellar line-up for music too, with the likes of Stormzy, Gorillaz, Paul McCartney, Ed Sheeran, Tinie Tempah, Liam Gallagher and Deep Purple all set to put out new music.

Notes to Editors

- The UK-China TV Co-Production Treaty was signed in December 2016. Building upon the Film Co-Production Treaty, this is the second country to have this in place.
- Inward investment for Film is: £1.35 billion and for TV is 250 million.
- In 2014, the UK film industry had a turnover of £7.7 billion. The industry's direct contribution to Gross Domestic Product in 2014 was £4.3 billion. The industry exported £1.2 billion worth of services in 2014, made up of £519 million in royalties and £655 million in film production services. Exports in 2014 were 21 per cent higher than in 2005. The UK film trade surplus in 2014 was £715 million. (BFI).
- Exports for Music in 2014 stood at £644 million.