



UNION INTERNATIONALE DES CINÉMAS
INTERNATIONAL UNION OF CINEMAS

For immediate release

UNIC: Survival of cinemas at stake

Brussels: 5 August 2020 – *The International Union of Cinemas (UNIC), the body representing cinema trade associations and operators across 38 European territories, has issued the following statement:*

As European cinema operators finally emerge from a period of extended closure due to the COVID-19 outbreak and work hard to welcome audiences back, the focus of the entire industry must be on ensuring that recovery can happen and that audiences return to enjoy the unique experience of watching films on the big screen.

While many on the distribution side have indicated that 'we are all in this together', recent events make it clearer than ever that this sentiment must be backed by actions as well as words.

Specifically, new content must be released in cinemas first and observe a significant theatrical window, both elements being essential for the survival and health of every part of the European (and indeed global) cinema industry.

A 'cinema first' strategy for film releases – accompanied by a significant period of theatrical exclusivity – is a proven business model, and crucial for ensuring that audiences can enjoy a diverse range of films. This system was the foundation for a record-breaking 2019, with 1.34 billion admissions and €8.7 billion earned at the box office in Europe alone.

The entire sector faces unprecedented challenges. More than ever, decisions across the industry need to be made with a long-term perspective. If our studio partners oblige cinemas to wait until the sector emerges from the crisis in the U.S. before supplying new content, it will prove too late for many European cinemas and their dedicated workforce.

All who depend on the success of the film industry should commit to ensuring the future health of the whole sector. By doing so, they will ensure that the wider film industry and European cinemas – from one-screen independents to art-houses and multiplexes – will recover and return from this crisis stronger and more resilient than ever.

About UNIC

The Union Internationale des Cinémas/International Union of Cinemas (UNIC) represents the interests of cinema trade associations and cinema operators covering 38 countries in Europe and neighbouring regions.

Further enquiries

lhoulgatte@unic-cinemas.org