

2. The Number of Films Released and Film Titles

Number of Films Released

Between 1955 and 2004, the number of films released at theaters was up and down but was roughly 550 to 650 films per year. In 2005, the number hit a record of 731 films and since then, has continued increasing. In 2013, for the first time, the number of films released was over 1000, with more than 500 each of Japanese and foreign films. Since then, the number has always been over 1000 every year. The year 2019 saw as many as 1278 films released. In 2020, even during the COVID-19 pandemic, 506 Japanese films and 511 foreign films, a total of 1,017 films were released in Japan. In 2021, the number of the films released decreased to slightly less than 1,000 films, however, 490 Japanese films and 469 foreign films, a total of 959 films were released (according to the Motion Picture Producers Association of Japan's statistics). Compared with the numbers in 2020, 16 less Japanese films and 42 less foreign films were released in 2021.

fig.07 Changes in Number of Films Released (2012-2021)

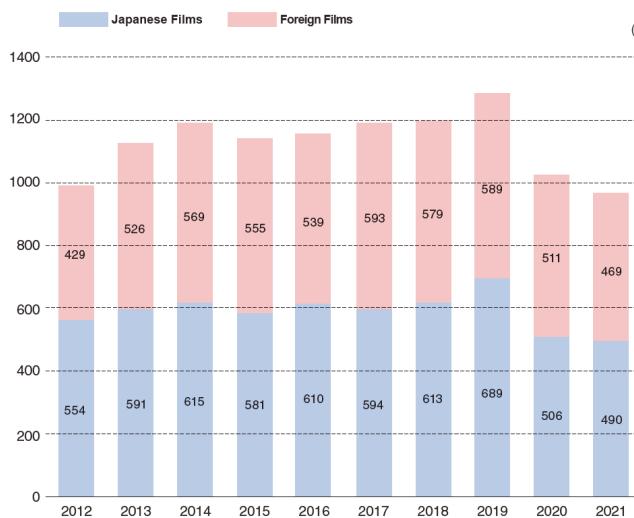
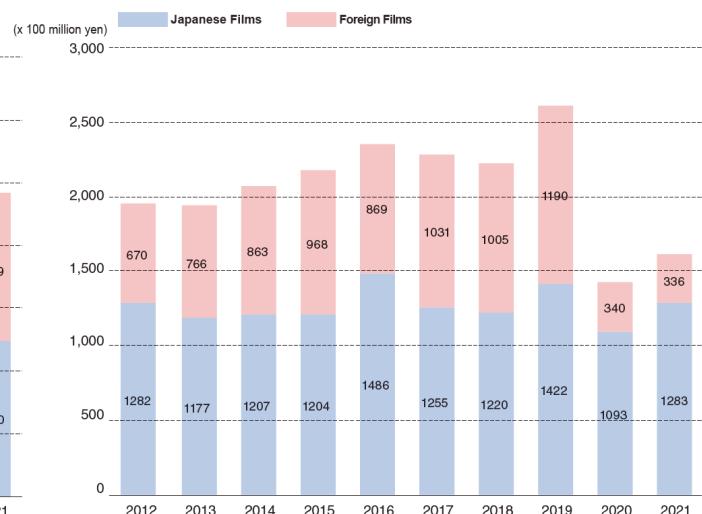


fig.08 Changes in Box Office Income (2012-2021)



	# of Released Films			Share	
	Japanese	Foreign	Total	Japanese	Foreign
2012	554	429	983	56.4%	43.6%
2013	591	526	1,117	52.9%	47.1%
2014	615	569	1,184	51.9%	48.1%
2015	581	555	1,136	51.1%	48.9%
2016	610	539	1,149	53.1%	46.9%
2017	594	593	1,187	50.0%	50.0%
2018	613	579	1,192	51.4%	48.6%
2019	689	589	1,278	53.9%	46.1%
2020	506	511	1,017	49.8%	50.2%
2021	490	469	959	51.1%	48.9%

—From Japanese Film Industry Statistics (Motion Picture Producers Association of Japan)

	Box Office Income (x100 million yen)			Share	
	Japanese	Foreign	Total	Japanese	Foreign
2012	1,281.81	670.09	1,951.90	65.7%	34.3%
2013	1,176.85	765.52	1,942.37	60.6%	39.4%
2014	1,207.15	863.19	2,070.34	58.3%	41.7%
2015	1,203.67	967.52	2,171.19	55.4%	44.6%
2016	1,486.08	869.00	2,355.08	63.1%	36.9%
2017	1,254.83	1,030.89	2,285.72	54.9%	45.1%
2018	1,220.29	1,004.82	2,225.11	54.8%	45.2%
2019	1,421.92	1,189.88	2,611.80	54.4%	45.6%
2020	1,092.76	340.09	1,432.85	76.3%	23.7%
2021	1,283.39	335.54	1,618.93	79.3%	20.7%

—From Japanese Film Industry Statistics (Motion Picture Producers Association of Japan)

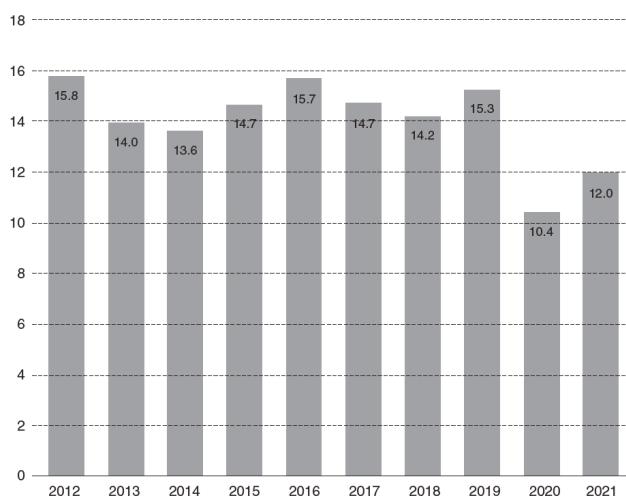
Box Office Incomes

In 2021, the total box office income in Japan was: 128,339,000,000 yen for Japanese films (117.4% of that in the year before), 33,554,000,000 yen for foreign films (98.7% of that in the year before), and in total, 161,893,000,000 yen, 113.7% of that in the year before. Compared with the numbers in 2019, the box-office income of Japanese films recovered to 90%, and more than the 122,029,000,000 yen of 2018. However, the box office income of foreign films remained 20% of that in 2019, and did not exceed that in 2020. Only 5 foreign films made more than one billion yen including FAST AND FURIOUS 9 (released in August 2021), NO TIME TO DIE (released in October 2021), GODZILLA VS. KONG (released in July 2021), MONSTER HUNTER (released in March 2021), and ETERNALS (released in November 2021). 21 films were widely released at more than 300 theaters nationwide, however, many of them made less than one billion yen.

Since 2020, the relationship between theatrical and online release has been changing. Due to the long closing of theaters, film distributors had to take such exceptional measures as online releases only, simultaneous online and theatrical releases, and shortening the gap between online and theatrical release dates. Even after theaters reopened in 2021, film distributors preferred to continue these practices that theaters did not like, and in some cases, theaters decided not to take such films.

Moving forward, movie-goers will gradually come back, however, the forms of film exhibitions will not return to those before the COVID-19 pandemic. We need to pay attention to what forms theatrical releases will take after the pandemic.

fig.09 Changes in Film Attendance Per Film (2012-2021)



	# of Released Films	Attendance (x1000)	Attendance per Film	Year on Year
2012	983	155,159	157,842	
2013	1,117	155,888	139,560	-18,283
2014	1,184	161,116	136,078	-3,482
2015	1,136	166,630	146,681	10,604
2016	1,149	180,189	156,822	10,141
2017	1,187	174,483	146,995	-9,828
2018	1,192	169,210	141,955	-5,040
2019	1,278	194,910	152,512	10,557
2020	1,017	106,137	104,363	-48,149
2021	959	114,818	119,727	15,364

-From Japanese Film Industry Statistics (Motion Picture Producers Association of Japan)

The Scales of Film Releases

Japan Community Cinema Center (JCCC) creates the list of released films based on online information. In 2021, 504 Japanese films and 494 foreign films, a total of 998 films including ODS (Other Digital Stuff) were released (1,112 films including the films shown at special series at 1-2 theaters in Tokyo). These figures are slightly different from those of the Motion Picture Producers Association of Japan that lists 490 Japanese films and 469 foreign films, a total of 959 films. Despite some differences, we will see what films were released based on the JCCC data.

— The Scales of Film Releases

In 2021, 48 Japanese films and 21 foreign films were released at more than 300 theaters nationwide, much larger than the numbers in 2020.

Among Japanese films, the following films were released at more than 340 theaters: regular popular animation series films such as DETECTIVE CONAN: THE SCARLET BULLET (released in April) and CRAYON SHIN-CHAN: SHROUDED IN MYSTERY! THE FLOWERS OF TENKAZU ACADEMY (released in July); much expected animations such as BELLE (released in July) and EVANGELION: 3.0+1.0 THRICE UPON A TIME (released in March); and films targeted at film fans and youth such as RUROUNI KENSHIN: THE FINAL (released in April) and RUROUNI KENSHIN: THE BEGINNING (released in June), TOKYO REVENGERS (released in July), MASQUERADE NIGHT (released in September), THE FABLE: THE KILLER WHO DOESN'T KILL (released in June), and IN THE WAKE (released in October).

As for foreign films, 21 films were released at more than 300 theaters nationwide, however, only 5 films made more than one million box office income: FAST AND FURIOUS 9, NO TIME TO DIE, GODZILLA VS. KONG, MONSTER HUNTER, and ETERNALS.

In 2020, the major foreign films were mostly unreleased in Japan, and multi-screen theaters began to show the kind of films that used to be shown at mini-theaters. This trend continued into 2021. In addition, until 2020, most of both Japanese and foreign films released at more than 150 theaters were screened at "only at multi-screen theaters," however, more and more films widely released were also screened at mini-theaters in 2021.

The new trend in 2020-2021 during the COVID-19 pandemic is an increase of titles screened both at multi-screen theaters and mini-theaters. 104 such Japanese titles (18%) and 125 such foreign titles (24%) were released in 2019; in 2021, 160 such Japanese titles (32%) and 204 such foreign films (41%) were released, showing large increases. If we combine Japanese and foreign titles, 229 such titles (21%) were shown in 2019 and 364 such titles (36%) in 2021. Because the releases of blockbusters or big-budget American films were stopped, the diversification of programming at multi-screen theaters increased. On the other hand, mini-theaters began to show much talked about films or large-scale films that could be expected to attract film-goers even after their release at multi-screen theaters.

Nonetheless, the ratio of films screened only at mini-theaters has changed much and many films are still shown exclusively at mini-theaters. 293 Japanese and 350 foreign films were released at less than 49 theaters nationwide. Among these films, 207 Japanese titles (71%) and 227 foreign titles (65%) were shown only at mini-theaters. The kind of films shown only at mini-theaters includes: films highly praised at international film festivals, important documentaries, and ambitious films by young filmmakers. As we will see later, the revival screenings of the digital restoration version of the classics and director's retrospectives are mostly held at mini-theaters.

fig.10 The Scales of Films Released at Theaters in 2021

Japanese Films									
# of Theaters Where Films Were Released	2021				2020				
	Multi-screen Theaters only	Multi-screen + Mini Theaters	Mini Theaters		Multi-screen Theaters only	Multi-screen + Mini Theaters	Mini Theaters		
more than 300	48	10%	43	5	0				
150-299	46	9%	18	28	0				
100-149	39	8%	20	19	0				
70-99	46	9%	13	33	0				
50-69	32	6%	13	18	1				
30-49	61	12%	15	32	14				
10-29	90	18%	7	19	64				
less than 9	142	28%	7	6	129				
subtotal	504	100%	136	27%	160	32%	208	41%	504
less than 49 theaters	293								268
those released only at mini theaters of the above	207	71%							186
others (single screening at a series, etc.)	40								42
Japanese Films Released Total	544								482
Foreign Films									
# of Theaters Where Films Were Released	2021				2020				
	Multi-screen Theaters only	Multi-screen + Mini Theaters	Mini Theaters		Multi-screen Theaters only	Multi-screen + Mini Theaters	Mini Theaters		
more than 300	21	4%	21	0	0				
150-299	31	6%	12	19	0				
70-149	42	9%	6	35	1				
50-69	50	10%	3	42	5				
30-49	140	28%	7	69	64				
10-29	154	31%	3	31	120				
less than 9	56	11%	5	8	43				
subtotal	494	57	12%	204	41%	233	47%		415
less than 49 theaters	350								266
those released only at mini-theaters of the above	227	65%							162
others (1-2 theaters in Tokyo, etc.)	74								125
Foreign Films Released Total	568								540
Japanese+Foreign Films Total	1112								1022

—Kinds of Films Released

504 Japanese films were released in 2021, not as many as that in 2019, but over 60 more than the 440 films in 2020. The number includes 321 new theatrical films, 95 animations, 68 documentaries, 20 ODS on theatrical performances and live music concerts, and 40 films of special projects introducing shorts and films by young directors. In 2020, due to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the releases of regular popular animation series films for children and families were postponed. In 2021, the films from the series such as DETECTIVE CONAN, CRAYON SHIN-CHAN, and POCKET MONSTER THE MOVIE were released as scheduled, and much talked about animations such as EVANGELION: 3.0+1.0 THRICE UPON A TIME (executive directed by Hideaki Anno) and BELLE (directed by Mamoru Hosoda) were also released. As a result, the top 3 films of box office income were Japanese animations. The releases of digital 4K restoration of classic animations also attracted much attention, including THE GIRL WHO LEAPT THROUGH TIME (2006), THE CASTLE OF CAGLIOSTRO (1979), PATLABOR 2: THE MOVIE (1993), and GHOST IN THE SHELL (1995).

Among theatrical films, many big box-office hits were released including TOKYO REVENGERS, RUOUNI

KENSHIN: THE FINAL, and WE MADE A BEAUTIFUL BOUQUET. However, the biggest topic of 2021 was DRIVE MY CAR (directed by Ryusuke Hamaguchi). It attracted attention by winning 4 awards, including the Best Screenplay Award at Cannes International Film Festival. Following its domestic release in August, the film kept drawing news and winning awards at various international film festivals. In 2022, the film was nominated in 4 categories of the Academy Awards and won the Best International Feature Award, followed by the Best Picture Award of the Japanese Academy Awards, keeping its theatrical run well into spring. Hamaguchi's WHEEL OF FORTUNE AND FANTASY was also released on December 17, 2021, attracting sizable audiences at mini-theaters. A number of documentary films were released in theaters in 2021. 21 titles (12 titles in 2019) were released at more than 30 theaters nationwide. More and more multi-screen theaters began to show documentaries and the theatrical releases of documentary films have become a norm.

494 foreign films were released in 2021. 415 foreign films were released in 2020, about 81% of that in 2019, however, the number of released foreign films has recovered considerably. 279 were new theatrical films, 20 were new animations, 69 were documentaries, 16 were ODS, 31 were revival releases of the digital restoration version of classic films, and 79 titles of the special screenings of 15 classic film projects. In addition, 74 titles were presented at special screenings at 1 to 3 theaters in Tokyo, making a total of 568 titles.

69 documentaries were screened, more than twice as many as the 33 in the year before. Outstanding titles are music-related ones including bio documentaries of famous artists like BILLIE, AMAZING GRACE, and CHASING TRANE: THE JOHN COLTRANE DOCUMENTARY. They were screened at more than 50 theaters, attracting a number of music and film fans. Former "Talking Heads" singer David Byrne was featured during his Broadway show directed by Spike Lee, AMERICAN UTOPIA. The film generated more than 100 million yen box-office income during the first 2 months after its release, and it became an unusually big hit as a music documentary. SUMMER OF SOUL (...OR, WHEN THE REVOLUTION COULD NOT BE TELEVISED) also received large attention documenting the Harlem Cultural Festival in 1969, and winning the Best Documentary Feature Award of the Academy Awards.

In 2021, a number of classic titles were digitally restored and presented at their revival screenings. They include films representing the high times of mini-theater history such as DANCER IN THE DARK (2000), BUFFALO 66 (1998), CRASH (1996), and HECATE (1982), that attracted lots of attention such as DIRTY DANCING (1987), HAMBURGER HILL (1987), SUSPIRIA PART 2 DEEP RED (1975), MANDINGO (1975), and other classic films such as DIARY OF A COUNTRY PRIEST (1951), A GENTLE WOMAN (1969), THE WAR OF THE BUTTONS (1962) and POOR COW (1967).

One of the unique aspects of film exhibition in 2021 was that there were many special screenings circulated and distributed to a number of theaters, including both Japanese and foreign films. Among Japanese films, there are director's retrospectives such as "Yoshimitsu Morita 70 Festival," "20 Years After Passing of Shinji Somai: His Film World Seen From Asia and Auteur Theory," "Masashi Yamamoto Crazy Film Festival," "Restored Treasures of the Japanese Animation History: Films of Tadanori Okamoto and Kihachiro Kawamoto," director's retrospectives upon the revival screenings of digital 4K restorations of classic films such as "The Best of Mitsuo Yanagimachi upon the Revival Release of 'A 19-YEAR-OLD'S MAP,'" and "Revival Screening of CHOKOLIETTA + Shiori Kazama Retrospective." Moreover, upon the release of NOW IS THE PAST: MY FATHER, JAVA & PHANTOM FILMS, a retrospective of director Chonosuke Ise and related film series were held; upon the release of SUZU-SAN: HOUSEWIFE'S WORK AND LIFE DURING THE 30'S OF THE SHOWA PERIOD, a documentary series portraying

the life of the 30s of the Showa Period was presented; upon the re-release of GOD SPEED YOU! BLACK EMPEROR, the retrospective “Biker Films 2021: GOD SPEED YOU!!!” was hosted, as well as the Yukihiko Tsusumi film retrospective upon the release of his 50th film, RETURN TO ORIGIN. These special projects were all screened at more than one theater.

As for foreign films, 15 projects and 79 titles were presented. Special projects such as “Jean-Paul Belmondo Masterpieces,” “Director Eric Rohmer Retrospective: 6 Morality Tales,” “Carl Theodor Dreyer Selections,” “Michel Legrand and Directors of French New Wave,” all attracting good responses while other special projects such as “Jim Jarmusch Retrospective 2021” and “Wim Wenders Retrospective: ROAD MOVIES/UNTIL THE END OF THE WORLD” have been exhibited for a long time. Small projects such as “SPAAK! SPAAK! SPAAK! Cathrine Spaak Retrospective” and “Kelly Reichardt’ Films: Wandering America” attracted attention. The entire 10 entries of Krzysztof Kieslowski’s DECALOGUE were presented in digital restoration versions.

The “Film Festival of 10 AM”, mostly presented at multi-screen theater showing masterpieces and much talked about films, returned to theaters after 2 years due to popular demand, screening 27 titles at 63 theaters.

fig.11 Types of Films Released in 2021

Japanese Films	2021	2020	2019
First-Run Films (Fictions)	321	304	380
First-Run Films (Animations)	95	63	94
Documentaries	68	60	71
ODS	20	13	32
Special Projects (Shorts, young directors, etc.)	40	42	73
Japanese Films Total	544	482	650

Foreign Films	2021	2020	2019
First-Run Films (Fictions)	279	272	330
First-Run Films (Animations)	20	16	16
Documentaries	69	33	55
ODS	16	31	47
Classic Film Digital Restorations	31	14	35
15 Special Projects (Classic Digital Revivals)	79	49	31
Above subtotal	494	415	514
1-3 Theaters Only	74	125	128
Foreign Films Total	568	540	642
Japanese+Foreign Films Total	1112	1022	1292

Films That Made More Than 1 Billion Yen Box Office Income

In 2021, 37 films made more than 1 billion yen box office income (25 films in 2020 and 65 films in 2019), occupying 3.9% of the total of 959 films released in Japan. The total box office income from these 37 films was: Japanese films with 89.89 billion yen (85.63 billion yen in 2020 and 104.78 billion yen in 2019), foreign films with 10.74 billion yen (16.14 billion yen in 2020 and 9.61 yen in 2019), and in total, 100.6 billion yen, 62.2% of the total box office income of Japan. This is a large decrease from 76.9% in 2019. In particular, the foreign film box office income in 2021 was about one tenth of that in 2019, and we can see the effects of the postponements and cancellation of major film releases due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

fig.12 Films That Made More Than 1 Billion Yen Box Office Income in 2021 [Japanese Films]

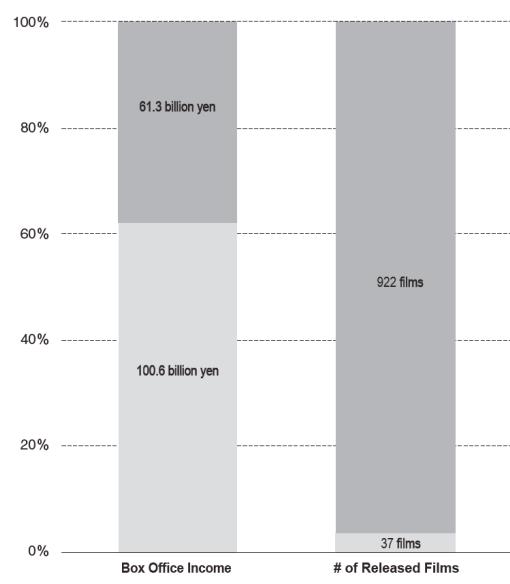
#	Month Released	Titles	Box Office (x100 million yen)	Distributors
1	March	Evangelion: 3.0+1.0 Thrice Upon A Time	102.8	Toho/ToeiColor
2	April	Detective Conan: The Scarlet Bullet	76.5	Toho
3	July	Belle	66	Toho
4	November	ARASHI Anniversary Tour 5x20 FILM "Record of Memories"	45.5	Shochiku
5	July	Tokyo Revengers	45	WB
6	April	Rurouni Kenshin: The Final	43.5	WB
7	Dec. 2020	New Interpretation The Record of the Three Kingdoms	40.3	Toho
8	January	We Made a Beautiful Bouquet	38.1	Tokyo Theatre/Little More
8	September	Masquerade Night	38.1	Toho
10	August	My Hero Academia THE MOVIE The World Heroes Mission	33.9	Toho
11	Nov. 2020	STAND BY ME Draemon 2	27.8	Toho
12	Dec. 2020	Poupelle of Chimney Town	27	Toho/Yoshimoto Kogyo
13	June	Rurouni Kenshin: The Beginning	25	WB
14	June	Mobile Suit Gundam: Hathaway's Flash	22.3	Shochiku
15	Dec. 2020	Takizawa Kabuki ZERO The Movie	21.4	Shochiku
16	Dec. 2020	The Promised Neverland	20.3	Toho
17	Dec. 2020	Pocket Monster Coco	20.2	Toho
18	January	Gintama The Very Final	19	WB
19	July	Crayon Shinchan: Shrouded in Mystery The Flowers of Tenkazu Academy	17.7	Toho
20	October	And, the Baton Was Passed	17.2	WB
21	June	Character	16	Toho
22	October	Sword Art Online Progressive-Hoshi Naki Yoru	14.3	Aniplex
23	May	The Fable: The Killer Who Doesn't Kill	14.2	Shochiku
24	November	What Did You Eat Yesterday?	13.9	Toho
25	November	Sumikko Gurashi: The Little Wizard in the Blue Moonlight	12.6	Asmick-Ace
26	February	Detective Conan: The Scarlet Alibi	12.4	Toho
26	October	What Happened to Our Next Egg!?	12.4	Toei
28	March	Caution, Hazardous Wife	11.9	Toho
29	October	Burn, O Sword	11.8	Toho/Asmick-Ace
30	May	A Morning of Farewell	11.2	Toei
31	August	Kaguya-sama: Love Is war	10.6	Toho
32	July	Honey Lemon Soda	10	Shochiku
Total			898.9	

fig.13 Films That Made More Than 1 Billion Yen Box Office Income in 2021 [Foreign Films]

#	Month Released	Titles	Box Office (x100 million yen)	Distributors
1	August	Fast and Furious 9	36.7	Toho-Towa
2	October	No Time To Die	27.2	Toho-Towa
3	July	Godzilla vs. Kong	19	Toho
4	March	Moster Hunter	12.5	Toho/Towa Pictures
5	November	Eternals	12	WDS
Total			107.4	

fig.14 20 Top Box Office Income Films in 2021

#	Month Released	Titles	Box Office (x100 million yen)	Distributors
1	March	Evangelion: 3.0+1.0: Thrice Upon A Time	102.8	Toho/Toei/Color
2	April	Detective Conan The Scarlet Bullet	76.5	Toho
3	July	Belle	66	Toho
4	November	ARASHI Anniversary Tour 5x20 FILM "Record of Memories"	45.5	Shochiku
5	July	Tokyo Revengers	45	WB
6	April	Rurouni Kenshin: The Final	43.5	WB
7	Dec. 2020	New Interpretation The Record of Three Kingdoms	40.3	Toho
8	January	We Made A Beautiful Bouquet	38.1	Tokyo Theatre/Little More
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10	August	Fast and Furious 9	36.7	Toho-Towa
11	August	My Hero Academia THE MOVIE The World of Heroes Mission	33.9	Toho
12	Nov. 2020	STAND BY ME Doraemon 2	27.8	Toho
13	October	NoTime To Die	27.2	Toho-Towa
14	Dec. 2020	Poupelle of Chimney Town	27	Toho-Yoshimoto Kogyo
15	June	Rurouni Kenshin: The Beginning	25	WB
16	June	Mobile Suit Gundam: Hathaway's Flash	22.3	Shochiku
17	Dec. 2020	Takizawa Kabuki ZERO 2020 The Movie	21.4	Shochiku
18	Dec. 2020	The Promised Neverland	20.3	Toho
19	Dec. 2020	Pocket Monster Coco	20.2	Toho
20	January	Gintama The Very Final	19	WB
Total		776.6		
Box Office Income of 2021		1618.9	2020...1432.9 2019...2611.8	
Box Office Income of the Total Films That Made More Than 1 Billion Yen		1006.3	2020...912.3 2019...2008.8	
Ratio of the above		62.2%		

fig.15 Film That Made More Than**1 Billion Yen Box Office Income in 2021****fig.16 Film That Made More Than 1 Billion Yen****Box Office Income (2012-2021)**

	Box Office Income (x100 thousand yen)				
	Total	More Than 1 Billion Yen	Ratio	Less Than 1 Billion Yen	Ratio
2012	1,952	1,391	71.3%	561	28.7%
2013	1,942	1,379	71.0%	563	29.0%
2014	2,070	1,411	68.2%	659	31.8%
2015	2,171	1,595	73.5%	576	26.5%
2016	2,355	1,763	74.9%	592	25.1%
2017	2,286	1,618	70.8%	667	29.2%
2018	2,225	1,563	70.2%	662	29.8%
2019	2,611	2,009	76.9%	602	23.1%
2020	1,433	912	63.7%	521	36.3%
2021	1,619	1,006	62.2%	613	37.8%

	# of Films Released				
	Total	# of Films	Ratio	# of Films	Ratio
2012	983	59	6.0%	924	94.0%
2013	1117	56	5.0%	1061	95.0%
2014	1184	49	4.1%	1135	95.9%
2015	1136	61	5.4%	1075	94.6%
2016	1149	61	5.3%	1088	94.7%
2017	1187	62	5.2%	1125	94.8%
2018	1192	54	4.5%	1138	95.5%
2019	1278	65	5.1%	1213	94.9%
2020	1017	25	2.5%	992	97.5%
2021	959	37	3.9%	922	96.1%

Japanese Film Industry Statistics (Motion Picture Producers Association of Japan)