

Oh, Hollywood, what do you want? Can you please make up your mind?

Obviously, as I did last year, I'm going to talk about Ricky Gervais. First and foremost, regardless of what gets said after this point, I want to make it clear that I thought he was funny. I think he did a great job and I hope he comes back next year.

That being said, let's get into what the press thought. Here are some of the words that were associated with him the following day:

"...boring..."

"...pulled back..."

"...lacked punch..."

"...balls snipped..."

Which brings me to my opening question: Hollywood, what the fuck do you want?

First he was too mean, now he's not mean enough. This is the same shit I wrote about a couple of weeks ago. You don't go to a McEnroe match and NOT want to see him yell at someone. Hollywood BITCHED up a fucking storm about his "meanness" last year and then rakes him over the coals because he "failed to draw blood" this year.

Man, seriously people...make up your minds.

Of course, the ratings didn't fall, they actually went up. Apparently more than a few of you tuned in to see Ricky shove it to 'Ole Hollywood.

I'll get back to ratings in a moment, first I just want to comment quickly on the Globes...

Really, there weren't many surprises. Having watched most of award nominees this year, I had a pretty good footing on what was going to win and not win. The Artist is still the best movie of the year and although The Descendants was good, I don't think it'll have a chance when actually up against The Artist for best picture.

Meryl was obviously not a surprise although the Michelle Williams vs. Meryl Streep might be fun to watch.

Not sure Clooney has it in him to take home Oscar gold, but then again, Daniel Day Lewis took the year off...so it could go to any one.

Very happy Woody Allen got some street cred back, hopefully it will be enough to carry into the Oscars.

Look for Spielberg to win another Oscar this year...accept it'll be in the animation department. Pixar phoned it in with Cars 2.

Okay, enough of that noise...let's talk numbers.

As I've tried to drill in your heads over and over, this is not a creative world. It's a business. Now, just to save you the time of writing your hate mail, let me be clear that I am talking about Hollywood. Yes, the indy world is also a business, but it has a little bit more wiggle room on the creative side of things. There's obviously a lot more freedom when you're the producer of your flick and there's no studio telling you what to do.

BUT...

If you want to work in the studio system, you have to realize that it's all a numbers game. You don't get to cast the best actor for the role, you get to pick the actor that has the highest foreign gross numbers for the role.

When people discuss a project, they discuss it in terms of money. Where can we shoot this? How much will it cost? Who will bring in the highest box office dollar? And, as a producer, the most important question is asked: "How much will I make off this deal?"

Money. That's why we all want to be in the pictures, right? The Benjamin's? More studio money that gets put into your project, the less creative control you have.

But what does studio money mean? A lot of you hear the big numbers. The numbers that Hollywood tells you: "That's a 200 million dollar movie!" Or "We made that movie for 12 million and did 30 at the box office."

But are those numbers real?

Simply put: They are and they're not.

To show you what I mean, I'm going to use an actual accounting statement from a well-known horror movie. Because the producer who slipped me this is a friend of mine, I'm going to withhold the title of the flick, but I will tell you that it was financed by Universal and the director is a master of horror. (No, NOT Wes Craven.)

Let the accounting begin!

(QUICK NOTE: These numbers were as of 2009)

First let's take a look at the cost to actually make the movie...

TOTAL COST OF PRODUCTION: \$17,761,232

Okay...so this is the number you all here. This is what gets thrown around when talking about the budget. "That was an 18 million dollar movie."

Now, let's see what it made in the theatres. Keep in mind that this is cumulative from date of release up to 2009, so it's going to include its entire theatrical run, not just opening weekend.

DOMESTIC THEATRICAL GROSS: \$9,361,062

FOREIGN THEATRICAL GROSS: \$8,934,648

TOTAL GROSS: \$18,295,710

Okay, so let's look at the numbers. Clearly, at first glance, this movie broke even. I'm sure some in the business would go as far as to say it turned a profit. You know... to save a little face.

And these are the numbers that you'll hear about and these are the numbers that will be reported and that's all you'll ever know.

But there's a lot more that goes into a movie than just the cost of production. A LOT more. So now that we've looked at this movie from a pure Production Budget/Theatrical Gross point of view, let's look at the WHOLE PICTURE.

First and foremost there's advertising and boys and girls, advertising ain't cheap. Let's take a look at the advertising costs for this particular movie.

ADVERTISING: \$34,141,544

Yeah, that's not a typo. That's how much money this shit costs. So as you can see, the studio spent double what the movie cost to make just to tell you about it. To get your 12 bucks, they spent 34 MILLION dollars. Not only that, but as you can see by the Gross numbers...the advertising didn't pull you in.

So now, let's take a look at the movie now...

TOTAL COST OF PRODUCTION: \$17,761,232

ADVERTISING: \$34,141,544

TOTAL COST: \$51,902,776

TOTAL GROSS: (\$33,607,066)

So your 18 million dollars that you made in the theatres now has you 33 million dollars in the hole. But there's more. Don't forget distribution. Cost money to send your movie out to theatres.

DISTRIBUTION FEES: \$10,544,513

TAXES: \$567,405

PRINTS AND PHYSICAL PROPERTIES: \$5,338,860

CHECKING: \$107,488

TRANSPORTATION, DUTIES AND CENSORSHIP: \$1,168,318

ROYALTIES & GUILD PAYMENTS: \$978,718

TRADE ASSOCIATIONS/PIRACY:	\$190,656
MISC:	\$501,147
TOTAL DISTRIBUTION:	\$19,397,105

(Just a quick note, technically ADVERTISING counts as a “distribution fee,” but I wanted to single it out to comment on how large the number is.)

Okay, so if you’re following along with your calculators, after it’s theatrical run, it’s now \$53,004,171 in the hole.

BUT!

Don’t worry. There’s life for a movie after its theatrical run. You can sell it to TV, Airlines, Hotels and don’t forget the DVD market. You’re SURE to make your money back in the long run, right?

Let’s take a look at this flicks life after the fact...

TELEVISION:	\$6,065,162
PAY TELEVISION:	\$15,864,102
HOME VIDEO:	\$6,065,162
OTHER:	\$480,741
TOTAL NON-THEATRICAL GROSS:	\$28,475,020

Alrighty! So we made money back. Sweet!

Oh wait...we were 53 MILLION DOLLARS IN THE HOLE!

Well thank God for life after the movie theatre. Now we’re only \$24,529,151 in the hole!

There’s nothing else, right? Wrong!

ADMINISTRATIVE FEE:	\$1,776,123
INTEREST:	\$5,889,726

Brining us to a grand total OF...

Drum roll please....

\$32,195,000 in the hole.

So, as you can see...this movie, to this day, is still in the red. How awesome is that? At the end of the day this movie was a major flop and cost the studio 32 million dollars to make with no profit what so ever.

But...all you're hear about is that it broke even at the box office. Which is good enough for the trades. Oh, and in case you're wondering, there was a sequel of sorts and yes, it went to the theatres.

Till next week...