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## Sonic Surges Past Mufasa at Box Office!

Disney's formidable "Mufasa" has seemingly succumbed to an unforeseen challenge, likened by some to being devoured by a hedgehog. The release of "Sonic the Hedgehog 3," helmed by director Jeff Fowler, has resulted in a triumphant debut at North American box offices, **Amassing** an impressive \$62 million during its inaugural weekend, as reported by Comscore, a renowned authority in box office analytics. While early projections had suggested a potential \$70 million, audience demand exhibited a decrease as the weekend progressed.

Costing Paramount Pictures approximately \$122 million to produce—excluding marketing expenditures—this PG-rated sequel has **Resonated** well with audiences, earning an A grade in CinemaScore exit polls. Critics have largely responded favorably, fostering optimistic projections for sustained word-of-mouth success among family viewers throughout the Christmas holiday season.

Conversely, "Mufasa: The Lion King," a visually stunning prequel to the beloved "Lion King" saga, secured around \$35 million, markedly falling short of Disney's anticipations by nearly 30 percent. This film, which incurred production costs exceeding \$200 million separate from marketing, achieved a **Commendable** A-minus in CinemaScore ratings, yet reviews have been less than stellar.

Adding to Disney's humiliation, "Mufasa" enjoyed a broader release than its competitor, appearing in 4,100 theaters compared to "Sonic 3's" 3,761, and featuring 400 IMAX showings where ticket prices command a premium. "Sonic 3," notably, did not benefit from IMAX screenings.

Directed by Barry Jenkins, known for "Moonlight," and featuring original compositions by Lin-Manuel Miranda, "Mufasa" is **Anticipated** by Disney to regain traction over the Christmas holiday period—a peak time for theatrical attendance. The company has highlighted robust exit poll feedback, with families awarding the film an impressive five-star rating in PostTrak surveys.

David A. Gross, a film consultant, opined, "With children entering their school break on Monday, the picture's prospects for success appear remarkably positive. The narrative has yet to unfold."

Disney has drawn parallels to "Wonka," which debuted last December with \$39 million and ultimately garnered \$219 million—this, despite a production budget approximately 40 percent lower than that of "Mufasa." Furthermore, Disney noted that "Mufasa" has accrued an additional \$87 million in overseas box office revenue.

The inherent marketing challenge associated with prequels—specifically, the **Diminishing** allure of discovering a narrative's origin when its conclusion is already known—cannot be ignored. Nevertheless, "Mufasa" transcends conventional expectations.

Anthony D'Alessandro of Deadline articulated, "This is not merely a prequel; it is a 'Lion King' prequel—a franchise of unparalleled significance."



## Vocabulary List:

1. **Amassing** /ə'mæs.ɪŋ/ (verb): Gathering together or accumulating a large amount.
2. **Resonated** /'rez.ə.neɪtɪd/ (verb): To produce or be filled with a deep full reverberating sound; or to evoke a shared feeling or emotion.
3. **Anticipated** /æn'tɪs.ɪ.peɪ.tɪd/ (verb): Regarded as probable; expected or predicted.
4. **Acclaimed** /ə'kleɪmd/ (adjective): Publicly acknowledged with approval or praise.
5. **Commendable** /kə'men.də.bəl/ (adjective): Deserving praise or commendation.
6. **Diminishing** /dɪ'mɪn.ɪŋ/ (adjective): Becoming smaller or less in amount degree or size.

## Comprehension Questions

### Multiple Choice

1. What was the North American box office debut revenue for "Sonic the Hedgehog 3"?  
Option: \$62 million  
Option: \$70 million  
Option: \$50 million  
Option: \$80 million
2. How much did it cost Paramount Pictures to produce "Sonic the Hedgehog 3"?  
Option: \$122 million  
Option: \$100 million  
Option: \$150 million  
Option: \$90 million
3. What grade did "Sonic the Hedgehog 3" receive in CinemaScore exit polls?  
Option: A  
Option: B  
Option: C  
Option: D
4. How many theaters did "Mufasa" appear in compared to "Sonic 3"?  
Option: 4,100 vs. 3,761  
Option: 3,500 vs. 4,000



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Option: 4,500 vs. 3,200

Option: 3,000 vs. 3,500

5. Did "Sonic 3" benefit from IMAX screenings?

Option: Yes

Option: No

6. Who directed "Mufasa"?

Option: Barry Jenkins

Option: Jeff Fowler

Option: David A. Gross

Option: Anthony D'Alessandro

### True-False

7. Did "Sonic the Hedgehog 3" exceed its early projected debut revenue of \$70 million?

8. Did "Mufasa: The Lion King" secure \$35 million in box office revenue?

9. Did "Sonic 3" feature IMAX showings?

10. Are critics largely responding favorably to "Sonic the Hedgehog 3"?

11. Did David A. Gross express optimism about the success prospects of "Mufasa"?

12. Is "Mufasa" a franchise of unparalleled significance according to Anthony D'Alessandro?

### Answer

**Multiple Choice:** 1. \$62 million 2. \$122 million 3. A 4. 4,100 vs. 3,761 5. No 6. Barry Jenkins

**True-False:** 7. False 8. True 9. False 10. True 11. True 12. True

### CATEGORY

1. Entertainment - LEVEL6

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