

# [LIVE CINEMA IN THE UK] [2016 REPORT]



## [INTRODUCTION]

#### The UK is witnessing a growing trend toward the creation of a cinema that escapes beyond the boundaries of the cinema screen.

The Live Cinema in the UK Report 2016 has been written in response to a huge growth in the number of film screening events in the UK augmented by synchronous live performance, site-specific locations, technological intervention, social media engagement, and all manner of simultaneous interactive moments including singing, dancing, eating, drinking and smelling.

Supported with public funding from Arts Council England, the world-first research project which has led to this report was instigated in response to there being no national industry research on the live cinema sector.

As an emergent academic field, this project has also partnered with King's College London and the University of Brighton as home to two of the world's only researchers in the field of experiential and live cinema events: Dr Sarah Atkinson and Helen Kennedy. The publication of this report coincides with their specially edited edition of Participations: Journal of Audience & Reception Studies which it is recommended to read alongside this report for further academic analysis of the sector (hereafter referred to as Atkinson & Kennedy, 2016).

The first year of research culminates at the Live Cinema Conference, King's College London, 27th May 2016, where challenges identified through the research period will be addressed through sharing issues, building terminological consensus, masterclasses and workshops.

# [METHOD]

This report has utilised a variety of qualitative and guantitative methods during the research period of July 2015 - May 2016.

Targeted surveys - 4 online surveys on the Survey Monkey and Google Forms platforms created in collaboration with King's College London and the University of Brighton. Surveys grouped by industry area: exhibitors, producers, artists, content holders and audiences.

In person consultations with artists, exhibitors, producers and content holders - see 'CREDITS' (p.19) for organisations **Desk research** - utilising organisational data provided by the BFI Film Audience Network. Analysis of audience data collated in the BFI Statistical Yearbook 2015, the IHS Cinema Intelligence Service "Event cinema: a sector in full swing" (2015), and the Cinema For All Exhibitor Survey 2015



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Anecdotal input from Live Cinema UK and partners' experiences in producing live cinema events, see CREDITS (p. 19)

Selected academic writings of academic partners Sarah Atkinson and Helen W. Kennedy - including:

"Introduction: Inside-the-scenes – The rise of experiential cinema", Participations, 13(1), 2016.

"'Where We're Going, We Don't Need an Effective Online Audience Engagement Strategy': The Case of the Secret Cinema Viral Backlash", Frames Cinema Journal, 2015. Beyond the Screen: Emerging Cinema and Engaging Audiences, New York: Bloomsbury, 2014.

Vox pop interviews at live cinema events - conducted by researchers from the University of Brighton and King's College London in October and November 2015. Social media discourse analysis - original research conducted by Way to Blue in October/November 2015.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

As the first industry research in the area of 'live cinema', this report sits alongside our other key outputs:

- The themed issue of Participations: Journal of Audience & Reception Studies edited by Dr. Sarah Atkinson and Helen W Kennedy (hereafter referred to as Atkinson & Kennedy 2016). This should be read for further academic analysis of an illustrative range of international case studies of this emergent cultural form
- The first Live Cinema Conference held at King's College, London May 27<sup>th</sup> 2016
- The formation of the new Live Cinema Network to implement the recommendations of this report and further study and develop this thriving sector (see pages 18-19)

The outcomes of this first year of research in the area include:

- Creating a common definition of live cinema
- Establishing a national infrastructure for the study and development of live cinema through the Live Cinema Network
- Collation of locations, audience and box office statistics on live cinema events
- Qualitative or quantitative analysis of the live cinema audience experience and profile
- Establish best practice for licensing, fundraising and development of live cinema events

The scope of this initial report in light of no previous industry research specific on live cinema is to:

- Segment the live cinema sector in terms of cultural, economical and organisational development
- Provide initial analysis of primary data sets; establishing the 'known unknowns' for the sector
- Provide recommendations for further research, including the introduction of box office data capture and further testing of audience and exhibitor profiles from initial surveys and consultations.

### **KEY FINDINGS**

#### **DEFINING LIVE CINEMA**

There is general consensus in the film industry that live cinema is a distinct format from event cinema (the broadcast of theatre, opera and other events to cinemas nationwide), though the term is not commonly used by audiences. Live cinema events can be typified as three categories: enhanced, augmented and participatory. Films screened as live cinema events come from a vast array of genres, with silent film as the largest proportion (18%). Cult and genre titles make up over a quarter of live cinema productions (27%), and world cinema titles are a particular area for future development potential.

#### LIVE CINEMA ARTISTS

Live soundtrack events constitute 54% of all live cinema events in the UK, providing much work for musicians choosing to specialise in the area, alongside a vast range of other artistic and technical roles in the sector.

#### PRODUCERS

Producers of live cinema events come from a diverse range of artistic backgrounds. There is a 100% retention rate for live cinema producers: all consulted will continue to create new work in the sector.

#### **EXHIBITORS**

48% of UK independent film exhibitors host live cinema events, constituted by cinemas, festivals and pop up exhibitors nationally, with the North of England, London and Scotland being particularly active regions. There is no national method of box office data collection at present for live cinema events which should be immediately addressed. There is cohesion between ticket prices charged nationally for live cinema events, and audiences are generally satisfied with the price they pay.

#### LICENSING

Licensing film content is a common barrier for artists, producers and exhibitors. Best practice for acquiring licenses is presented here, and encouragingly 100% of content holders consulted would like to license for films for live cinema events.

#### AUDIENCES

The majority of live cinema audiences are frequent cultural event attendees with 61% regularly attending the theatre and 54% attending popular music. Live cinema events encourage audiences to attend other cultural events: 46% want to attend more immersive theatre events, 48% more popular music events, 32% more classical music and 28% more dance events. Discussion of live cinema events online provides opportunities for live cinema organisations to position themselves as unique brands, and deeper engagement with individual events has room for development.

# [DEFINING LIVE CINEMA]

73% of public survey respondents, when asked to describe what live cinema is, identified it as being a film screening with additional performance or interaction (Fig. 1.1). 27% identified it as being alternative event cinema/content screenings. Considering respondents were all regular film goers, 78% of whom had been to what they call a 'live cinema' event before (including those defining it as alternative content), we can expect the percentage of general population making no distinction between the terms 'live cinema' and 'event cinema' to be much higher. Indeed, the 2014 IHS report "Event Cinema: a sector in full swing" highlights the term 'event cinema' as not being used in public discourse. See pages 16-17 for more detail on how live and event cinema are discussed in online discourse.

> FILM SCREENING + LIVE ELEMENTS IN VENUE

SAME AS EVENT CINEMA

Figure 1.1: Definitions of live cinema as defined by audience (Source: Live Cinema UK public survey)

Out of all industry consultations, only one organisation referred to live cinema as defining alternative content. 62% responded with live cinema being distinct from event cinema, 25% thought the term interchangeable with event cinema, and 13% being unsure or that it could apply to both areas. (Fig. 1.2)



Figure 1.2: Definitions of live cinema as defined by industry (Source: Live Cinema UK industry surveys)

WELL

This shows a promising cohesion in the film industry for referring to live cinema as a distinct genre, and not interchangeable with event cinema. Where there is a conflict of definition as seen with some of the above quotes from exhibitors, there is always an openness to the term referring to live cinema as a distinct, but related, genre from event cinema. We suggest the following as a definition:

#### "A film screening utilising additional performance or interactivity inspired by the content of the film"

This is in clear distinction to event cinema where the medium of film attributes the 'live' factor to the screening, not an artistic expansion of the film being screened.

# [WHAT IS LIVE CINEMA?]

"Cinema with additional activities/extras regarding the location, people, performances etc." Public respondent, male, aged 25-34

"Cinema in conjunction with any live element be it theatre or music" Public respondent, female, aged 18-24

"Work that combines moving images and live action" Sam Green, documentary filmmaker "I've not been to a live cinema event but imagine that it's a different way of showing film, not restricted to showing film on a big screen in a cinema auditorium. I imagine that there might be audience participation in a way that extends beyond just sitting and watching a film." Public respondent, female, aged 45-54

"Anything that provides an extra layer to embellish the experience of watching a film in a cinema" Stems, live soundtrack collaborative.

> "For us, it is where the film is screened accompanied by a live musical performance of the score" Grant Keir, Producer, From Scotland With Love

"A film with an accompanying or complimentary performance, be it music, dance, etc" Melanie Iredale, Deputy Director, Sheffield Doc/Fest

> "live cinema = film + additional performance element. This could include film with live music, both in the traditional silent film sense, or new compositions, re-scoring. Also includes theatrical/ immersive elements; actors, live narration, performance art. However: film is the lead element that inspires the performance/music etc. Independent cinema programmer

"It seems to refer to an event that is live and transmitted at the same time to cinemas or the kind of interactive events put on by Sneaky Experience and Secret Cinema or an event that involves a live element like piano accompaniment - they are all quite different events, but I guess the common link is 'live'." Chris Fell, Director, Leeds International Film Festival

# LLIVÉ CINEMA GENRES

#### LIVE CINEMAS: TYPOGRAPHY

What actually constitutes a live cinema event? In order to analyse events taking place nationally, we have utilised Atkinson & Kennedy's (2016) typography of live cinema whereby film events are categorised as live cinema if they are one of the following:

#### Enhanced

The physical experience is enhanced but this is not relative to the story of the film. Include site specific and outdoor screenings.

#### Augmented

The event adds a further dimension to the filmic text through the site: sensory enhancement or non-interactive performance. Includes live soundtracks and performance before, during or after the screening.

#### Participatory

Includes some element of audience direct engagement in elements of the original film. Includes singalongs, eatalongs, other interactive screenings.

#### TYPES OF LIVE CINEMA PRODUCTIONS

In a bid for unique, new draws to the big screen in the face of VOD and soaring ticket prices, the additional value for money offered by live cinema events acts as valuable promotion as well as allowing cinema programmers to be truly creative in their roles, forging new partnerships with artists for live soundtracks and theatrical interventions, and of course their audiences who become part of the event. including cult cinema fans for guote-alongs and singalongs.

Analysis of the programmes of live cinema exhibitors identified from exhibitor listings provided by the BFI Film Audience Network from 2014-2015 as represented in in Fig 1.3 reveals the following categories of live cinema:

#### Enhanced:

Site specific events - outdoor screening, screening on location related to film (5%). This figure is expected to grow vastly in 2016 with a huge increase in national programmes of outdoor screenings, for example Luna Cinema Augmented:

Live soundtrack – to silent or contemporary films. By far the biggest category with 54% of exhibitors hosting at least one live soundtrack event.

Theatrical interventions – produced by organisations such as Secret Cinema, Sneaky Experience, employment of actors to interpret film elements to a live audience (9%) Live performance before/after screening – most often bands related to film content (11%)

Dance based events (1%)

Interactive events utilising digital technology (1% Participatory:

Singalong or guotealong – audience participate by guoting lines on screen in time with film (5%)

Dress up events or themed party (4% & 2%)

Eat-along/drink along (4%)

Other – unique events comprising less than 1% of events nationally, including live commentary from comedians, live drawing, and even a dog show (5%)

#### **GENRES OF LIVE CINEMA** FILM SOURCES

As well as types of live cinema productions, it is important to recognise the various genres of film from which these events take their inspiration.

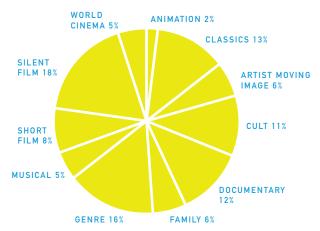


Figure 1.4: Genres of film sources for live cinema events (Source: see notes for Fig 1.3)

Genres with small percentages such as world cinema present an opportunity for film exhibition as live cinema productions could increase attendance for more 'challenging' film titles.

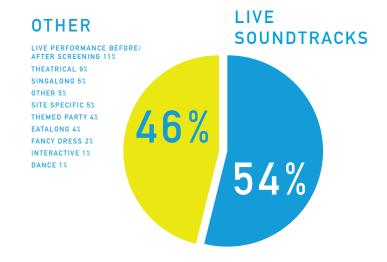


Figure 1.3: Categories of live cinema event (Source: Live Cinema UK analysis of events from the BFI Film Audience Network organisational list)

## [LIVE CINEMA ARTISTS]

#### LIVE SCORES

Employment for musicians creating live soundtracks is particularly prevalent in the live cinema industry. British Sea Power's From the Sea to the Land Beyond, commissioned by Sheffield Doc/Fest in 2012, is still booked as a live show to this date with appearances at traditional cinema settings, music festivals (Beacons, Latitude) and film festivals (Glasgow Film Festival). Asian Dub Foundation's three live score shows including the 2015 tour of THX 1138 are similarly prevalent (see Case Study, p. 7).

Alongside new scores to existing or specially commissioned scores, there has been a high number of orchestral scores as originally written being performed by the UK's top orchestras. The Royal Albert Hall hosts regular live soundtrack events at a premium price, with 2015 titles including The Godfather, Interstellar, and Titanic, and 2016 titles including Jurassic Park, Aliens and Independence Day with the original scores performed live by orchestras including the Philharmonia Orchestra and the 21st Century Symphony Orchestra. Nationally, orchestral scores are also becoming common with Harrogate International Festival hosting Psycho Live! in 2015, and a forthcoming performance of E.T: The Extra-Terrestrial with the Royal Scottish National Orchestra at Edinburgh International Film Festival 2016.

This indicates two 'streams' of live score work: the original music performed live, and new music created to replace the existing score. Oscar-winning composer Walter Murch descibes this distinction as the Godfather/THX 1138 streams:

"There's two streams called The Godfather stream and the THX/Battle of Algiers stream. The Godfather stream – you have to have the real cooperation of the studio, because they have to supply the sound mix without the music, so dialogue and sound effects. And every film can do that. In this case, we are using, the original music and then working with that and that needs a very definite – and it's a completely different kind of music – when you saw Godfather in New York, you were hearing Nino Rota's music, and if you didn't pay attention, you'd think well I'm just watching The Godfather, or they're playing it live, where as here [THX 1138], the music is totally different than the music of the film in 90% of the cases. And to do that – you need a definite kind of film to do that to."

Walter Murch interview, Brighton, 27th October 2015 by Atkinson and Kennedy. See also The Conversation (online) "Secret, immersive cinema is likely to change the future of film", 1st December 2015.

**54%** of live cinema events are live soundtracks

# THE 'GODFATHER' STREAM

• Score performed as originally written

• Requires orchestra to perform, resulting in large venue exhibition, e.g. Brighton Dome, Royal Albert Hall

• Studio supply film mix without music

• Often created with specialist producer with studio contacts in Hollywood, e.g. CineConcerts (The Godfather), Avex Classics International, (Aliens Live), PGM Productions/IMG Artists (Psycho Live).



# THE 'THX' STREAM

New score composed by artist other than original
Usually requires studio and original creator permission (see LICENSING, page 11 for details)

• Often created in part with publicly funded partnerships and festival premieres. Examples include La Haine, Battle of Algiers and THX 1138 by Asian Dub Foundation, Run Lola Run by The Bays, Dead Man's Shoes rescore by UNKLE.

Figure 2.1: "The Godfather/THX" streams of live scores. Based on interview with Walter Murch, Brighton, 27 October 2015

# THE PREVALENCE OF SILENT FILM

Silent film accompaniments and re-scores are common nationwide, contributing to the high percentage of live cinema events categorised as live soundtracks. Artists specialising in silent film soundtracks such as Neil Brand and Stephen Horne perform circa 100 shows annually across the UK and the world (see Fig 2.2). The prevalence of live music to silent film can be attributed in part to the low cost of employing a single musician for performance as opposed to a full band or orchestra, and the ease of licensing a re-score to a film with no licensed soundtrack, a key stumbling block for the re-scoring of films with existing soundtracks which require additional rights acquisitions (see LICENSING p. 13).

Additionally, the UK is host to several specialised silent film festivals, demonstrating a commitment to the preservation of an art form that could be considered the 'original live cinema'. These include Slapstick Festival (Bristol), Hippodrome Festival of Silent Film (Bo'ness, Scotland) and the new Yorkshire Silent Film Festival taking place across Yorkshire in July 2016.

In our survey consultations with silent film exhibitors and artists, and online discussions observed on Twitter, there is some conflict over the terminology 'live cinema' being

#### [CASE STUDY] ASIAN DUB FOUNDATION

Organisation type: artist, popular music

**Location**: National/international touring, based in London/ Brighton

**Live cinema productions**: La Haine live score, Battle of Algiers live score, THX 1138 live score.

Asian Dub Foundation's live scores are a unique example of live cinema due to two of their three productions being for films not in the English language. World cinema accounts for just 5% of live cinema productions in the UK, and ADF's shows contribute a vast amount to this figure.

With their first live score to La Haine performed at the Barbican in 2001, the production is still touring 15 years later with productions at Secret Cinema in 2012, and a plethora of national and international dates in 2015 coinciding with the films 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Their soundtrack to the Battle of Algiers was first performed at Brighton Dome in 2004, and likewise still tours internationally.

The band's projects also bridge an effective mix of commercial development and public funding. Produced by Music Beyond Mainstream and No Nation with funding from Arts Council England contributing to the composition and tour of THX 1138 tour in 2015, the production ran as a UK tour across high end, large capacity halls including utilised to describe silent film live accompaniments. There is concern that a 'one size fits all' terminology cannot be applied to events as diverse as, for example, a populist film event such singalong version of Frozen, as well as describing a live accompaniment to silent film. These concerns should be addressed in future research and industry conversations to recognise both silent film and populist live cinema events as providing valuable cultural opportunities for audiences (see p. 15 for audience cultural value analysis); discuss how the silent film sector can be supported and developed by more populist events, and explore further the significant artist employment opportunities that are provided by both silent film and more populist events.







100

Figure 2.2: Days of employment for live cinema artists (Source: survey consultations with artists and exhibitors conducted by Live Cinema UK)

the UK premiere at the Barbican, followed by a nine date UK tour including Bridgewater Hall in Manchester and Brighton Dome, enabling large audience income and premium ticket price.

The band's score to THX 1138 had to receive permissions from of George Lucas and Walter Murch, the Oscarwinning original composer for the film, prior to touring. In an interview conducted for this research at the final date of the THX 1138 at Brighton Dome, Walter Murch said:

"Having been involved with the film and then seeing this, is like being the author of a 19<sup>th</sup> Century novel that then sees that novel being turned into an opera"

This insight is important in terms of receiving permissions from the original creator of the work to re-score: original content creators do not necessarily see re-scores of their work as being detrimental to their original vision.

#### Key insights:

• World cinema can be used as source material with demand for live cinema productions continuing years after first performance

• Touring models of live cinema shows can fill high end, large capacity venues and move away from the oneoff performance model utilised by some festivals, for example, with a new commissioned score and no forward tour planning for the production.

# [LIVE CINEMA ARTISTS continued]

#### **DIVERSITY OF ARTIST ROLES**

Whether they are an actor improvising with an audience based on a character from a film, creating a new soundtrack to be performed live, or devising pioneering new digital interventions for interactivity at film screenings, artists and production staff are the life blood of the live cinema experience. This is a new and vibrant area for performers and artists, providing a niche area of employment for occupations that are notoriously difficult to break into, some of which are demonstrated in Fig 2.3.

The complex nature of live cinema events which often involve musical, theatrical and production expertise simultaneously generates a growing level of employment for specialists in the area, as demonstrated in Fig. 2.2 (p. 8), where musicians can perform at over 100 live cinema shows per year, and theatrical productions such as Sneaky Experience providing three days of employment per artist per production day. For example, a one day production will generate employment through being accompanied by two days of rehearsals and improvisation workshops.

#### TECHNICAL SKILLS FOR LIVE CINEMA EXHIBITION

Combining film screenings with enhanced elements, whether that is outdoor screenings, live scores or other performative elements, requires technical skills from a variety of industries. A technology provider for film projection, for example, does not necessarily have the skills and technology required to provide audio for a live band, plus the additional monitors and playback tech required for live soundtrack events. The expense of hiring two technology providers for live cinema events is also prohibitive to exhibitors. This skills deficit in the area of technology provision for live cinema should be addressed at a national level and lead providers of tech support for the industry should be identified for developing a cost effective model for technical live cinema exhibition.

#### ARTISTS' MOVING IMAGE AS LIVE CINEMA

Through this research process we have found a small but prolific sub-genre of audiovisual artists working within the field of artists' moving image who specifically refer to their work as 'live cinema': usually audiovisual work that is mixed live in front of an audience, or incorporates performance art interaction with the moving image. Further research with the artists' moving image and audiovisual artist community should be conducted to uncover artist sentiment towards the term live cinema being used to describe a much wider field of work outside of artists' moving image.

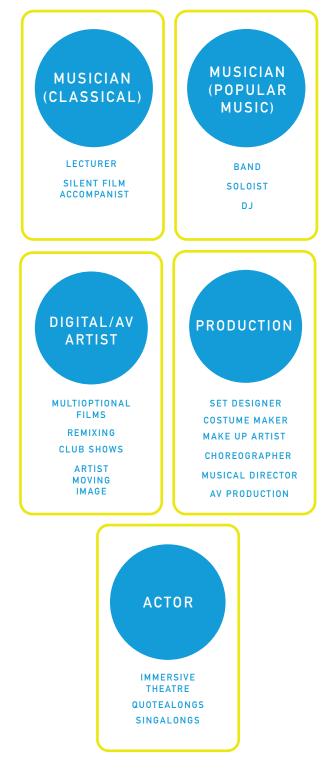


Figure 2.3: Job roles for artists and production staff provided by live cinema events

HEAR MORE FROM LIVE CINEMA ARTISTS

What inspires artists to create live cinema work? View interviews with DJ Yoda, Public Service Broadcasting and British Sea Power on the Live Cinema UK YouTube channel:

bit.ly/livecinemayoutube

# (PRODUCERS)

#### MAKING LIVE CINEMA HAPPEN

Producers of live cinema events come from a range of backgrounds in the creative industries:

**Music or theatrical management** - Artist managers and labels collaborating with their artists to produce new work involving film screenings

**Freelance specialists** - Individuals acting as producers on behalf of artists or exhibitors to create new live cinema events, often having acquired skills from music, theatrical or film exhibition previously

**Exhibitors** - Film exhibitors commissioning work for their venues

**Filmmakers and film producers** - Those integrating live cinema into new film works at point of production

Our consultations with a variety of UK live cinema producers reveal that there is increasing demand for live cinemaspecific producers, with specialists producing more events per year (between 3 and 8) than they do in 'traditional' producer roles. Live cinema producers consulted have a 100% retention rate: they will continue to develop live cinema events, despite the challenges they face, notably funding and licensing issues.

#### [CASE STUDY] SNEAKY EXPERIENCE



Organisation type: Producer/exhibitor, immersive theatrical and site specific events Location: North Number of productions per year: Circa 15 unique productions Total annual attendance: 16.000+

Sneaky Experience, based in Yorkshire, create sitespecific immersive experiences, usually as a weekend long event. Venues include Kirkstall Abbey in Leeds, the regular site for their summer and Halloween experiences, Leeds Town Hall as part of Leeds Young Film Festival and Leeds Film's Christmas screenings, plus venues as varied as glamping sites for their movie campouts, museums, and promenade performances in city centres.

#### FREELANCE PRODUCERS WORK ON BETWEEN 3 AND 8 LIVE CINEMA PRODUCTIONS PER YEAR



MOTIVATIONS FOR WORKING IN LIVE CINEMA:

- **1. ARTISTIC CHALLENGE**
- 2. NEW AUDIENCE REACH
- 3. COMBINING EXPERTISE BUILT IN ANOTHER ARTFORM (MUSIC, THEATRE)

#### MAIN BARRIERS TO NEW WORK:

- 1. LACK OF FUNDING/TOO EXPENSIVE
- 2. LICENSING CONTENT



#### 3. ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY OR ARTISTS

#### 100% OF PRODUCERS CONSULTED WILL CONTINUE TO DEVELOP NEW LIVE CINEMA WORK

Figure 2.4: Motivations and barriers for live cinema producers. (Source: survey consultations with producers conducted by Live Cinema UK)

Sneaky Experience have developed an effective business model for their weekend long events at Kirkstall Abbey in particular. During the day, performance and immersive activity is catered towards a young family audience, and the performance is adapted for the evening for a more adult experience. For example, for their 2015 Alice in Wonderland experience, the Disney version of the film was screened during the day with children's storytelling and games catering to a young audience, and by night the event changed to an adult experience, screening the Tim Burton version of the film, with a Queen of Hearts burlesque show and a full bar. Similar family/adult splits have been created for the Harry Potter films, Charlie and the Chocolate Factory and at the annual Halloween screenings.

This model enables Sneaky Experience to offset the costs of sets, costume, licensing and venue hire by maximising the number of performances that can be done in a single day by targeting very specifically to family, then adult audiences.

#### Key insights:

• "Doubling up" audiences with family targeted and adult targeted productions at the same site can be an effective model of recouping spend on site-specific locations, sets and performer fees.

• Partnerships with key local organisations including heritage sites, films festivals and museums enables live cinema producers to access unique sites and broaden audience.

#### NUMBER OF EXHIBITORS

With no existing database of live cinema exhibitors or reporting mechanism, our original research has for the first time identified the estimated number of exhibitors hosting live cinema events across the country.

Based on the organisational list provided by the BFI Film Audience Network:

- 274 out of 576 (48%) independent film exhibitors included live cinema in their programmes from 2014-2015
- This astounding figure of 48% increases to 63% with the inclusion of venues hosting live Q&A events. Further consultation is recommended on whether Q&As can be categorised as live cinema.
- With the addition of event cinema screenings, the total number of independent cinemas exhibiting more than 'straight' film screenings is 74% (see Fig. 4.1).

On the presumption that the vast majority of cinema chains and multiplexes do not host live cinema productions due to centralised, less flexible programming, with the notable exceptions of smaller chains such as Picturehouse, whose Cambridge, Bradford and Hackney venues for example regularly exhibit live cinema as part of regular festival and cult film activity, multiplexes are not counted in this figure. Further research and consultation with cinema chains is recommended to identify any further exceptions to this rule, and to assess to openness of the commercial cinema sector to incorporating live cinema events into their activity.

Similarly, film societies are not included in this data on preliminary research finding that film society programmes generally do not include live cinema activity. However, there are exceptions to this with semi-immersive screenings by groups such as Minicine (Leeds), Hull Independent Cinema, Handmade Cinema (Sheffield) and Deptford Cinema. Further research should consult with Cinema for All on the collation of live cinema events from their 690 members with 127,412 admissions (Cinema For All Community Exhibitor Survey 2014/15) which could undoubtedly be a huge addition to the live cinema exhibition sector in terms of number of exhibitors and audience reach.

#### **BOX OFFICE**

Secret Cinema presents Back to the Future was listed as the highest grossing event cinema title for 2014 (Fig 4.2) by the Film Distributors' Association. Additionally, in the IHS report "Event cinema: a sector in full swing" (2015), when event cinema titles are broken down by genre (ballet, theatre, concert etc,) Secret Cinema has its own genre: 'Secret Cinema'. If this 'genre' was instead titled live cinema, we would see an even higher box office gross, were it to incorporate all cinema live events across the country, including the income from the 274 live cinema exhibitors identified in this report.

1. Back to the Future – Secret Cinema	£3,538,984
2. War Horse – NT Live	£2,928,315
3. Billy Elliott the Musical – Universal	£2,161,647
4. Skylight – NT Live	£1,500,006
5. Monty Python Live (Mostly) – Picturehouse	£1,378,935
6. A Streetcar Named Desire – NT Live	£1,281,449
7. One Direction: Where We Are – Arts Allience	£1,034,894
8. King Lear – NT Live	£1,003,216
9. André Rieu's 2014 Masstricht Concert – Cinema Live	£956,738
10. Coriolanus – NT Live	£952,323

Figure 4.2: Top 10 UK box office grossing event cinema titles 2014 , with Secret Cinema at number 1 (Source: FDA Yearbook 2015/Rentrak)

With live cinema productions being led by venues rather than a distributor offer, as with event cinema, box office income is not collated through Comscore/Rentrak, as there is no data provided by venues. With the majority of films that are the inspiration for live cinema activity being archive titles and freely bookable through Filmbank Media and similar secondrun license services for Blu-ray presentations, the final box office returns are not counted by Rentrak, or at least not quantified by independent box offices in a way that can be collated with other live cinema events nationally. This is a key area for development for future research.

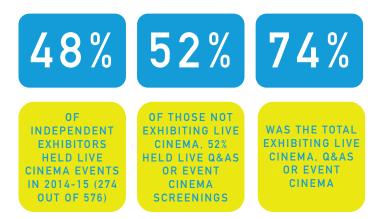


Figure 4.1: Percentage of independent film exhibitors showing live cinema, Q&As or event cinema (Source: BFI Film Audience Network organisational list)

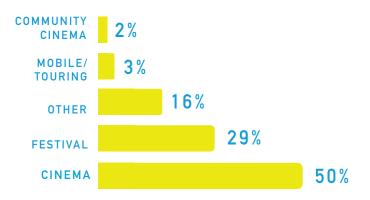
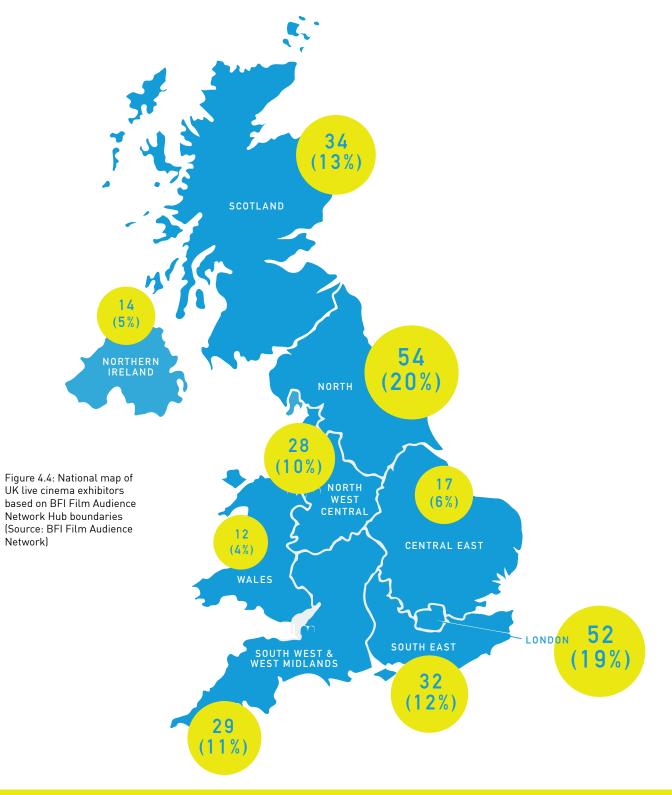


Figure 4.3: Percentage of live cinema exhibitors by venue type. OTHER includes outdoor exhibitors, universities and venues where film screenings is not a primary function of the venue (Source: BFI Film Audience Network)

#### **REGIONAL SPREAD**

Figure 4. shows the location of the 247 live cinema exhibitors identified for this report. The North has the largest number with 54 exhibitors: this can be in part attributed to the large geographical area covered by Film Hub North, but is also due to the number of film festivals in the region being major exhibitors and commissioners of live cinema events, including Sheffield Doc/Fest, Leeds International Film Festival, Sensoria Festival, and AV Festival, alongside prolific producers of live experiences such as Sneaky Experience and Screenage Kicks being based in the region. This trend can be seen nationally too, with Scotland being the third most prolific region, in part due to the major producing festivals of Edinburgh International Film Festival and Glasgow. Film Festival.

It should be noted that this does not represent the number of individual events in each area: for example, Luna Cinema are London based, but will host screenings in 50 UK locations in summer 2016. Future data should look to map locations and number of individual events, which will be aided with the introduction of box office data collection.



#### WHY EXHIBIT LIVE CINEMA

All exhibitors consulted cited a combination of three factors in their motivations for hosting live cinema events: 1. Expanded cultural offer - being able to offer audiences something different to a 'standard' film screening

- 2. Financial extra income generation
- 3. Promotional unique events gaining added audience draw to their organisation and wider programming

#### PRICING

Despite income generation being one of the main reasons exhibitors wish to exhibit live cinema, the cost of live cinema productions is simultaneously the main concern for exhibitors, with additional hire of equipment and artists. This means a premium ticket price must usually be charged for live cinema events, even when public funding for the project is available: most public funds for live cinema work require match funding from box office income. It would be encouraging for exhibitors to know that the majority of audience members believe pricing to be adequate for the films they attend (Fig. 4.5). Pricing for live cinema is fairly consistent across venues of similar sizes, ranging from £15 for live cinema events outside London with a capacity of under 500, to £35 for live cinema events in London with a capacity of over 500 (Fig. 4.6).

#### [CASE STUDY] GLASGOW FILM FESTIVAL 2015

**Organisation type:** Film festival **Location**: Scotland

Number of productions per year: 9 as part of 2015 festival Attendance at live cinema events during festival: 1,985 Artists employed: 32

Glasgow Film Festival, operated by Glasgow Film Theatre, present a variety of live and site specific cinema experiences annually. Interestingly, none of the major events take place at the 'home' venue of Glasgow Film Theatre itself, but in temporary venues all over the city. It is perhaps the best example of a festival that utilises all forms of live cinema: live soundtracks, theatrical intervention, artists moving image, digital experiences and cult events including themed parties and fancy dress are regular features at the festival.

At the 2015 Festival, live cinema events included: **A Night at the Regal** - Live music and film event headlined by British Sea Power performing From the Sea to the Land Beyond at the 02, Glasgow

Strictly Ballroom at Kelvin-Groove! - Dance event held at Kelvingrove Gallery which sold out in advance of the festival

Square Legs, Round Bowls - Artists moving image and music event at Stereo, Glasgow

The Fall of the House of Usher Live - Live score at Pollokshaw's Burgh Hall

Murder on the Orient Express – Experiential and fancy dress



Figure 4.5: Audience perceptions of ticket prices at live cinema events (Source: Live Cinema UK public survey)



Figure 4.6: Average ticket prices based on venue size and London/regional locations (Source: Live Cinema UK desk research)

#### event at Trades Hall

Sunken Ripples – Digital interactive project at the IMAX cinema, in partnership with the University of Glasgow Public and Performative Interaction Group.

**Dazed and Confused + Roller Disco** – 1970s themed roller disco preceding screening

Buster Keaton Night with Neil Brand and Paul Merton – Live silent film compilation performance and narration at the Old Fruitmarket

Sean Greenhorn, Programme Coordinator for Glasgow Film Festival and lead on live cinema programming explains the motivations behind live cinema productions as being from "A desire to expand the programming of our cinema and create memorable events for our audiences that set us aside from our competition. They also become talking points and do drive more audiences to our year round programme."

This sort of innovation has led Glasgow Film Theatre to win independent Cinema of the Year at the 2015 Screen Awards.

#### Key points

• Utilisation of a whole city to site live cinema work, taking inspiration from locations as well as source films.

- Exciting works at other venues during the festival draw new audiences to year-round cinema programme.
- Showcasing all areas of live cinema as central events in the festival programme.

[ĽICĚNSIŇG]

#### LIVE CINEMA AND CONTENT HOLDERS

All rights holders consulted cited that the majority of enquiries for the creation of live cinema work eventually proceed to a live cinema event: Park Circus receive upwards 250 live cinema license request per year, and BFI Distribution upwards of 120, with most proceeding to production. The two main reasons for projects not progressing are copyright issues and the cost for artists. 50% of content holders also identified a lack of partners and advice for artists as being a barrier.

All rights holders consulted for this report indicated they would like to make more content available for live cinema work, which provides a real opportunity for the industry to engage with distributors at a senior level to identify how live cinema events and producers can work together more effectively to create new events, with effective licensing, financial and copyright agreements in place.

There is also a huge opportunity for content holders to consider live cinema events as part of their new release strategy. The majority of live cinema events are based around titles already available on Blu-Ray/DVD, yet when

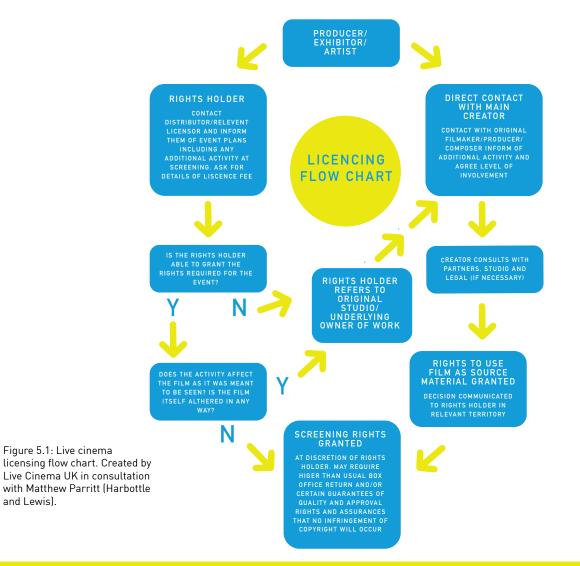
and Lewis)

a live cinema event is created around a new release, it can assure a number one box office position due to a premium ticket price being charged for extra immersive activity, as with Secret Cinema's production of The Grand Budapest Hotel in 2014 (Source: Comscore /Rentrak).

#### PROTECTING ORIGINAL ARTISTS' RIGHTS

One of the key barriers for both artists, producers and exhibitors creating live cinema works is licensing the original film content for augmentation. In our consultations with film distributors, the protection of the original film as a copyrighted art work by the director and in the case of re-rescoring, the composer. It is important for the rights holders of films that permissions from original creators of the work (if the film is being altered in any way) as well as artistic quality of the team presenting the new event is considered when they are approached to license a film for live cinema events

The below flow chart is a recommendation of process for best protecting original creative property whilst seeking approval for live cinema productions. It is a guide only and should not be taken as guarantee of license approval.



# [AUDIENCES]

The following profile of the audience for live cinema has been compiled from 97 online survey responses and in person interviews at live cinema events. The results presented here are recommended as a precedent for wider testing across a national sample, but initial findings tell us much about the demographics and cultural profile of the live cinema audience.

Results are taken from a national spread to combat London bias with in person interviews conducted at regional events including Suffragette: Live in Huddersfield (October 2015) and The Big Love Tea Dance (Leeds, November 2015).

#### LIVE CINEMA DEMOGRAPHICS

Figures 6.1-3 give us the first overview of the live cinema audience.

#### AGE

The biggest proportion of the live cinema audiences is aged 25-34 (38%). Young (18-24, 7%) and older (55+, 9%) audiences comprised the smallest percentage of those surveyed. The largest proportion of cinema-goers nationally is the 15-24 age bracket at 31% of all attendees (BFI Statistical Yearbook 2015), indicating that live cinema events are not currently appealing to this younger age group at the same rate as 'standard' cinema screenings. Barriers to access should be explored including premium ticket prices, as well as marketing practices by exhibitors and appeal of source films. The average national cinema attendance of the 55+ age group is 11.5% (ibid), which puts the live cinema audience (9%) almost in line with national cinema going averages. However, due to the higher attendance of older audiences for independent film (ibid.), particularly at independent venues, there is real opportunity to market more specialised titles to the older age group through live cinema events.

#### GENDER

Predominately female responses to both the online survey and in person interviews at events totalling 68% are far above the industry average breakdown of 47% for national cinema attendance. Further testing with a wider sample is of course needed, but the difference can be in part attributed to film titles and marketing being aimed at the female population during the survey period: for example, The Big Love Tea Dance, Suffragette: Live, Alice in Wonderland, the Wizard of Oz, and Frozen Singalong events during what Atkinson and Kennedy (2016) term the 'Summer of Live' in Summer 2015. Notably only one event, Secret Cinema's Empire Strikes Back, was targeted to a traditionally male cinematic audience.

#### ETHNICITY

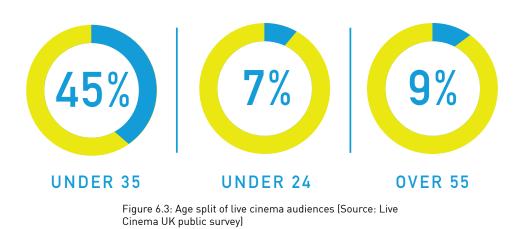
With only 6% of respondents being non-white British, there is definite scope for further growth within BME communities. This figure will need future testing with a wider audience sample but is generally in line with demographics of attendees at independent cinemas. However, with over 10% of cinema audiences being from BME groups, this comprises a greater audience percentage than their proportion of the total population. This overrepresentation in cinema attendance indicates opportunity for live cinema events to grow their BME audience in line with general cinema attendance.

# 68% 32%

Figure 6.1: Gender split from public surveys (Source: Live Cinema UK public survey)

# 94% | WHITE BRITISH

Figure 6.2: Ethnicity percentage of live cinema audiences (Source: Live Cinema UK public survey)



#### HOW AUDIENCES HEAR ABOUT LIVE CINEMA EVENTS

Online marketing methods are vital to the live cinema audience, with 75% of audiences hearing about live cinema events through online methods (Fig. 6.4). Word of mouth remains a vital method of peer-to-peer influence on events attendance, though the line between hearing about an event in person (word of mouth) or through social media ('word of mouse') is becoming increasingly blurred. Further audience analysis through focus groups is recommended to establish the flow of how audiences hear about and respond to live cinema event announcements. For more on online audience discourse, see pages 16 and 17.

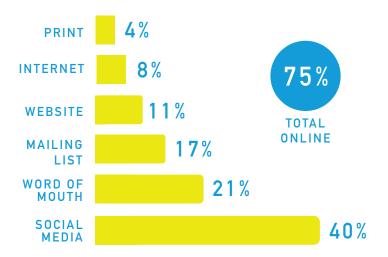


Figure 6.4: "How did you hear about the last live cinema event you went to?" public survey responses (Source: Live Cinema UK public survey)

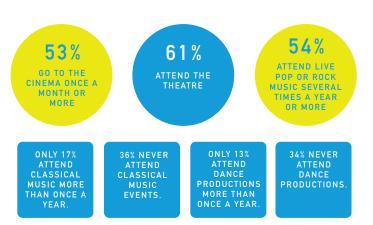


Figure 6.5: "How did you hear about the last live cinema event you went to?" public survey responses (Source: Live Cinema UK public survey)

#### CULTURAL PROFILE ANALYSIS

Live cinema audiences are frequent attendees of cultural events, with all who were surveyed attending theatre, music or film on at least a monthly basis (Fig. 6.6). Interestingly, the vast majority of attendees had never attended a live cinema event before the one they were questioned about, indicating huge growth of audiences at recent live cinema events, which should of course be monitored year on year.

Responses indicate that there is a major crossover audience appeal between live cinema and other art forms. Fig. 6.7 shows the influence live cinema events have on audiences attending wider cultural events in future, with every art form attracting interest gained through live cinema. The broad appeal of film as an 'accessible' art form is clearly a gateway for audiences to develop interests in wider artistic activity, including art forms with less populist appeal such as dance and classical music. 27% were inspired to attend dance events in future, for example, and when compared with Fig. 6.5, where 36% of audience members said they never attend dance productions, this is a positive indication for the wider cultural explorations that live cinema events can encourage.

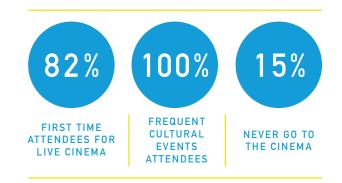


Figure 6.6: Attendance at 1) live cinema 2) other cultural events and 3) cinema, public survey responses (Source: Live Cinema UK public survey)

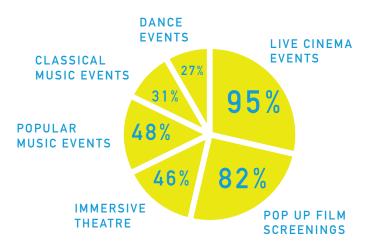


Figure 6.7: "Are you more likely to attend any of the following events after attending a live cinema event?" public survey responses (Source: Live Cinema UK public survey)

# [AUDIENCES: ONLINE]

As participatory events, there is a need to establish how audiences engage with live cinema events online, and in turn, this tells us much about how audiences define live and event cinema.

The following data and conclusions have been conducted in partnership with Way to Blue, studying key events selected in consultation with Live Cinema UK over the period of November 2014-November 2015.

#### DISCUSSIONS OF CINEMA ON TWITTER

Nearly one million mentions (948,185) were made about cinema in the past year on Twitter

•1% of conversation was driven by Live, Outdoor and Event cinema (Fig 8:1)

•Secret Cinema was the most discussed brand (24,935 mentions), followed by National Theatre Live.

•Secret Cinema was referred to as both Event and Outdoor cinema in the past year, however mentions of these are currently insignificant on Twitter (less than 10% of total volume)

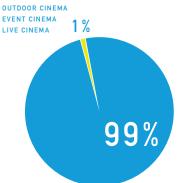


Figure 8.1: Percentage of discourse on Twitter relating to cinema (Source: Way To Blue)

This suggests that audiences are not currently discussing live, outdoor or event cinema as unique brands and when the terms are used to describe an event, it is infrequent.

#### CALENDAR EVENTS

However, high profile calendar events generated the most discussion: timely events discussed at the time of their exhibition. A selection of national brands is exemplified below as a percentage of total Twitter mentions in the report period.

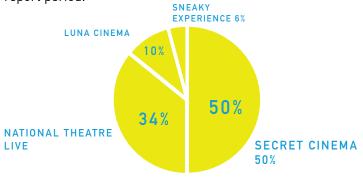


Figure 8.2: Percentage of total mentions for selection of calendar events. (Source: Way To Blue)

#### CASE STUDY: COMPARISON WITH HAMLET AS EVENT CINEMA

Out of all single events whether event or live cinema, Hamlet (NT Live) generated on the most online discussion, generating higher discussion than event cinema screenings of such high profile bands as The Who and Arcade Fire (Fig. 8:3).

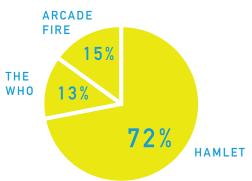


Figure 8.3: Percentage of total mentions for Hamlet when compared to Arcade Fire and The Who event cinema screenings (Source: Way To Blue)

However, using Hamlet as the most discussed event, only 9% of tweets referenced NT Live as a brand, and 2% referenced it as event or live cinema (Fig. 8:4).

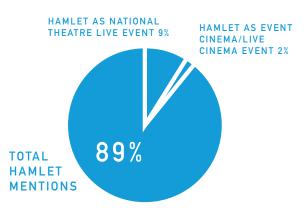


Figure 8.4: Percentage of total mentions for Hamlet recgnising NT Live and live or event cinema (Source: Way To Blue

From the above study, several findings have been drawn by Way To Blue:

• Consumers do not recognise a difference between event, live and outdoor cinema, seeing the brands as a type of cinema, rather than a unique product.

• Conversation is driven by questions of event logistics such as "What time does the event end?", suggesting that information is not easily available for audiences.

• The most popular brand of the genre is Secret Cinema, online audiences users do not currently refer to the brand as a unique style of cinema however, a minority have called Secret Cinema both outdoor and live cinema.

• Although live cinema is becoming more popular, conversation is not growing. This indicates an opportunity to educate consumers and help them understand the unique propositions of live cinema.

#### ONLINE DISCOURSE

When examining the language of online discussion surrounding live and event cinema, logistical guestions such as 'what time does the event start?', as well as price related questions e.g. voucher promotions for event cinema screenings. Discussions around live and event cinema include some misrecognitions of the term with event cinema titles being included in Fig. 8.5's discussion of live cinema, indicating the terms are not mutually exclusive in organic public discourse, as opposed to when promoted for a definition as discussed on page 4.

When comparing discourse surrounding outdoor cinema as when compared to live or event cinema (Fig. 8.5), film titles were relatively unrecorded with a focus on contextual aspects of the events, such as 'summer', 'outdoor' and 'weather'. This would indicate that the audiences for outdoor site specific events are less concerned with the film being shown than those discussing live or event cinema. There was also much less use of brand recognition for outdoor events, which is an opportunity for outdoor providers to exploit in increasing their recognisability as a consumer brand.

#### Live cinema rockyhorroruk eren theroyalballet d theatre screening worldwide experience benedic une sept hamlet nol a C wn<sub>film</sub> tonight cumberbatch's stourbridge

Key Takeaway Conversation around live cinema is heightened by high profile theatrical events



Key Takeaway Conversation around outdoor cinema seems driven by seasons, with interest ened by promotional offers such increasing in the summer

reen's pearl₌ eventci 2tor ear exh rion

**Event cinema** 

Key Takeaway Conversation around event cinema is height-2 for 1 tickets and vouchers

Figure 8.5: Word clouds generated on Twitter relative to live, event and outdoor cinema (Source: Way To Blue)

#### OFFICIAL CHANNEL MENTIONS

Fig. 8.6 represents the number of user generated 'mentions' of select live cinema organisations in the report period (November 2014-15).

The number of mentions vary wildly, but can in part be attributed to the number of production days a live cinema event generates. For example, a three-month run of a Secret Cinema production will automatically generate more unique mentions than a one night show such as Little Shop of Horrors (Edinburgh International Film Festival) or War Work (Sheffield Doc/Fest).

Frequency aside, there is vast room for development in increasing online discussion surrounding individual live cinema events.

In light of this and in consultation with Way to Blue, the following actions are recommended:

Conduct focus groups and online forums to further understand consumers knowledge of and feelings towards event cinema

Educate consumers utilising owned social channels, informing them that live cinema is a unique brand proposition

Create shareable online and offline content, highlighting the wealth of experiences audiences can have with live cinema

Widen research to other social platforms

Create hashtags for individual live cinema events to more easily monitor online engagement with specific events and add structure to online discourse

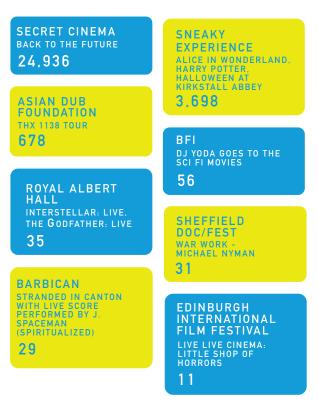


Figure 8.6: Number of mentioned for specific live cinema events November 2014-2015 (Source: Way To Blue)

#### FURTHER RESEARCH

As the first piece of industry research on live cinema in the UK, this report has identified a number of areas requiring further research with support from key organisations in the industry.

#### 1. BOX OFFICE

One of the initial aims of this research was to estimate the box office worth of the live cinema sector. Upon beginning consultations with exhibitors, it became clear very quickly that they had never been asked to collate information on live cinema events through their box office systems or submit information on them for national reporting. As event cinema data is now collated through Comscore (formerly Rentrak), and only Secret Cinema as a live cinema producer is providing data on the sector, leading to it having its own genre listing in industry reporting (see p. 10), Live Cinema UK will be commencing discussions on how individual exhibitors will be able to submit this information for future editions of this report. Collation of this data will enable the production of an accurate number of live cinema events across the country and their exact locations and frequency to be generated. This will require definition of what constitutes a live cinema event in box office terms, for example, Q&A events may be recorded as a 'special event' by an exhibitor's box office system but are not necessarily live cinema, so a human element may still be required in automated reporting to filter live cinema events in particular.

#### 2. FOCUS GROUPS

Bringing together each sector (audiences, exhibitors, artists, producers, content holders) in focus groups would be beneficial to further explore definitions and experiences of live cinema across stakeholder groups.

#### 3. WIDER SAMPLING

Due to the financial limitations on the scope of this first year of reporting, audiences statistics in particular and to an extent, artists, are based on a fairly small sample. To test initial findings this should be expanded upon including non-attendees of live cinema events to test general public awareness. Much further information could be gathered through further research including socio-demographic groupings of live cinema audiences, which again is beyond the scope of this study. Live Cinema UK will explore research organisations to partner with on conducting future audience research.

# 4. CULTURAL VALUE: HIGH ART VS POPULIST FILMS

Live cinema events have been found to encompass specialist art forms such as artists' moving image and classical music recital to silent film, for example, sitting directly alongside populist events such as singalongs and dress-up events. Opinions of artists, exhibitors and audiences on whether these areas can sit comfortably together, and if cross-over audiences can be developed through the shared terminology of 'live cinema' should be explored.

#### 5. INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS

As in the UK, there is little research on the international live cinema industry. Opportunities to collate data from international exhibitors should be explored, as well as collaboration with international producers which would present a huge opportunity for new international live cinema productions to be exhibited in the UK.

# 6. INTEGRATE DATA COLLECTION INTO EXISTING REPORTING MECHANISMS

Relationships between the live cinema industries and national organisations such as the BFI, Cinema for All and multiplex chains should continue to be developed, with further exhibition opportunities explored, as well as combined reporting opportunities to give a comprehensive overview of live cinema participation alongside Comscore box office data.

#### **OPPORTUNITIES**

The thriving industry of live cinema presents a variety of new opportunities for the film and cultural industries to develop. The newly launched Live Cinema Network (see p. 19) will work together with artists, exhibitors, producers and content holders to develop the following opportunities which directly address the challenges raised in this report.

#### **NEW AUDIENCES**

Young and BME individuals make up only a small percentage of live cinema audiences. National development for events targeting these groups should be addressed.

#### CO-COMMISSIONING

A key concern for all artists, exhibitors, producers and distributors of live cinema is the associated costs. This presents an opportunity for groups to work together to address a shared problem. High set up costs for events lead to prohibitive costs for live cinema when presented as a single event, so touring programmes will be explored: for example, a newly composed live score takes months of artist time for one performance, creating a non-viable financial model for most exhibitors, which could be overcome with touring programmes of events.

#### LICENSING

Film distributors indicate they wish to license more content for live cinema work, which is a key barrier for artists and producers. Discussions with distributors regarding the benefits of live cinema events, including the creation of high profile events for new releases, and creating new income generation for archive titles, should be discussed.

#### TRAINING AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Live cinema events provide considerable employment for those choosing to specialise in the industry, with high demand for technical and artistic skills to fulfil the huge number of events produced across the UK. Training and development for these roles requires national infrastructure and best practice to be implemented to continue the rapid growth of the industry and grow employment opportunities.

#### THE LIVE CINEMA NETWORK

The Live Cinema Network launched to coincide with this report's publication at the inaugural Live Cinema Conference at King's College London on 27th May 2016.

The Live Cinema Network is a group of representatives from industry, advocacy groups, exhibitor networks, academics and creatives working within, seeking to access or researching this emergent field.

The aims of the network are:

- to provide visibility for the existing activity in this area
- to facilitate the sharing of expertise and the development of new collaborations
- to identify appropriate training and development opportunities for the sector

• to ensure the sharing and implementation of research findings

The network will be the mechanism through which we

establish symposia, a regular conference and other events to support the development of this innovative area of creative and cultural practice.

The first Live Cinema Conference was held at King's College London on 27th May 2016 and was the official launch of four landmark initiatives: The Live Cinema Network, the Live Cinema in the UK 2016 report, the special themed journal issue of Participations Journal of Audience & Reception Studies: "Inside-the-scenes: The rise of experiential cinema", and the first ever immersive cinema event which unites the forms and aesthetics of 'event' cinema, 'live' cinema, 'sensory' cinema and promenade theatre. The conference programme was structured with workshops and panels created to address the challenges presented in this report.

Find out more about the Live Cinema Network and findings from the Live Cinema Conference: <u>www.livecinemanetwork.org</u>

# [CREDITS]

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