

Box office win for new Astro Shaw/ Skop movie

Sheriff hits RM16.3m/
US\$3.4m in four days



Aaron Aziz as drug dealer Tony Ifrit in *Sheriff*

Astro Shaw/Skop Production's latest Malay film, *Sheriff*, topped box office of RM16.3 million/US\$3.4 million in its first four days, more than covering the estimated production budget, setting a new opening weekend record, and proving local audiences' acceptance of a previously untested story format.

Sheriff – the sixth film from the Astro Shaw-Skop Productions partnership – opened in theatres in Malaysia and Singapore on 18 April.

A special preview on 17 April celebrated the official launch of Astro's new production unit, Astro Studios, which handled *Sheriff*'s post production.

Sheriff is about police officer Nazri (played by Syafiq Kyle), who, desperate to solve a case involving a drug syndicate, collaborates with Sheriff (Zul Arifin), a member of the Integrity Department.

The film also stars Aaron Aziz, Azira Shafinaz and Elizabeth Tan. Syafiq Yusof created, directed and wrote *Sheriff*.

The two companies previously produced *Polis Evo 3*, *Abang Long Fadil 2 and 3*, *KL Special Force* and *Misteri Dilaila*.

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Mega cast for new Joko Anwar series

Rapid-fire rollouts for Netflix Indonesia, Japan & Korea



Joko Anwar

Netflix has unveiled a cast of 65 characters for Indonesian filmmaker Joko Anwar's *Nightmares and Daydreams*, which premieres on 14 June.

The series, which the streamer says paves the way for a new entertainment genre in Indonesia, is the first collaboration between Anwar and Netflix.

The seven-episode sci-fi supernatural series has an anthology element in presenting a different story and a new set of actors in each installment, with the big showdown in the final episode.

The giant cast is headlined by Ario Bayu, Marissa Anita, Asmara Abigail, Fachry Albar, Lukman Sardi, Nirina Zubir, Yoga Pratama and Sita Nursanti.

Anwar is the series' executive producer and director, alongside co-directors Ray Pakpahan, Tommy Dewo and Randolph Zaini.

Anwar says the series was "inspired by my curiosity and fascination with alien stories".

Nightmares and Daydreams, originally announced in September 2022, was among the 18 Chinese, Thai and Bahasa Indonesia titles Netflix unveiled in February this year as part of

the 2024 slate kick off.

In what opened as a bumper week for Netflix, the streamer also said underground martial arts anime series, *Garouden: The Way of the Lone Wolf*, would premier on 23 May.

Based on Baku Yumemakura's serial novel *Garouden*, the series focuses on Juzo Fujimaki (voiced by Ryota Takeuchi), a rival of the book's protagonist, Bunshichi Tanba.

On the run from his troubled past, Juzo is forced into competing in a deadly underground fighting tournament and must navigate a path filled with formidable foes and his personal demons — all while dealing with a three million yen bounty on his head and a detective on his trail.

Garouden: The Way of the Lone Wolf is directed by Atsushi Ikaruya (*ID: Invaded*) and animated by Naz (*Good Night World*).

Shifting to Korea, Netflix also confirmed thriller *Wall to Wall*, from up-and-coming director Kim Tae-joon (*Unlocked*). The feature stars Kang Ha-neul, Yeom Hye-ran and Seo Hyun-woo in the story of a man who finally saves up enough to buy an apartment, only to have it turn into his

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CAN REALITY STARS PULL ALL THE STRINGS TO HELP THE UNDERDOG WIN?

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Netflix adds 2.16m APAC subs

Q1 subs, revenue up; arpu down



3 Body Problem

Netflix added 2.16 million subscribers in Asia Pacific during the first quarter of this year, ending March at 47.5 million paying subscribers in the region.

The streamer said in its earning call in the early hours of Friday morning Asia time that APAC revenue for the quarter was US\$1,023 million, up from US\$934 million in the first quarter last year.

Average revenue per APAC user was US\$7.35, down for the fifth consecutive quarter.

APAC remains Netflix's smallest region by total revenue, paid members and average revenue per user.

Globally, Q1 revenue was up 15% year over year. Global operating income was up 54% year on year to , US\$2.6 billion (vs. US\$1.7 billion in Q1 2023).

The platform name-checked Korean dramas *A Killer Paradox* season one (13.6 million views), *Queen of Tears* (14.2 million views), and *Physical 100* season two (9.2 million views) as breakout shows from APAC during the quarter, along with the U.S. remake of China's *3 Body Problem* (39.7 million views).

Views are calculated in the shows first 91 days on the platform or, in cases where the programme launched less than 91 days, from the premiere to 14 April 2024.

From next year, Netflix will not be reporting quarterly membership numbers or average revenue per member.

INSOMNIA

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ContentAsia Formats Outlook: 2023

Asia closed 2023 with 173 formats on air or commissioned from January to December – a 13% drop from 204 in 2022 and about half the 337 recorded in 2018, according to ContentAsia's rolling Formats Outlook.

The top format by volume was India

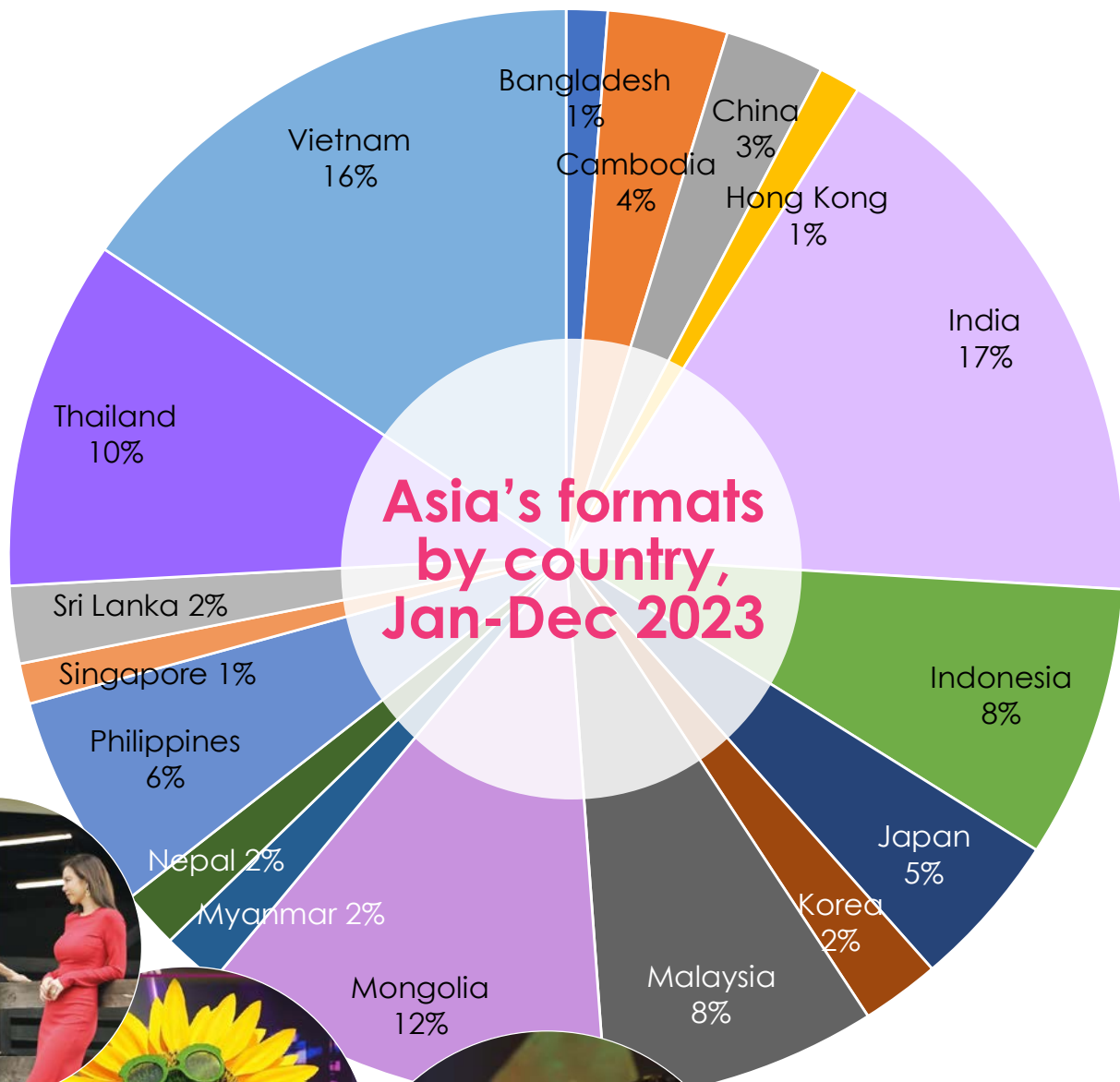
with 30 titles, followed by Vietnam with 27.

Mongolia, which for the last three years held fifth position with an average annual count of 15, rose two spots to claim third position.

Mongolia's growth to 21 titles – includ-

ing the first adaptation of a U.S. scripted series – was the region's formats highlight for 2023.

Mongolia narrowly surpassed Thailand, which traditionally held one of the top three places. For 2023, Thailand ranked fourth with 18 titles.



Pictures from left: *Second Chance Thailand*, NBCUniversal Format/One 31; *The Masked Singer Malaysia* season 4, MBC Korea/Astro; *It Takes 2 Vietnam* season 7, ITV Studios/VTV3

Source: Distributors/rights holders, titles/seasons either on air or commissioned in January-December 2023 by broadcasters/platforms/ companies in 18 countries in Asia. Note: All distributors and formats rights holders were given equal opportunity to participate. Data as of March 2024

“Everyone is struggling to acknowledge their own ignorance”

Getty Images’ CEO, Craig Peters, on AI, transparency, accountability & better storytelling

When Getty Images CEO, Craig Peters, said he didn’t want the content industry to be AI’s “batteries”, the audience gathered on a Wednesday morning in Cannes applauded.

He was, absolutely, talking to the converted – a room full of creative/media execs in Cannes for Mip TV’s Mip Lab/ Innovation Summit earlier this month.

But his message was much wider and a whole lot broader, with a strong call to action.

“How do we engage to make this technology one that lifts up the creative segment of the creative industry,” he asked.

“How do we make sure that AI is added to what we do that allows us to tell better stories to reach our audiences more effectively?”

“AI will allow for better storytelling. If we use it as such. I think there are positives to come out of any technology. And there are negatives that come out of any technology. It’s in our hands to decide whether we get the positive or the negative,” he said.

Peters outlined the four elements of AI – chips/graphic processing units, computing/cloud, talent and training data.

He rephrased the ‘training data’ component as “content”.

More specifically, he said: “it’s our content. It’s our collective content. In the matrix, we are the batteries behind AI.

“The reality is the people in this room are the batteries behind AI. Right now, your content is training these systems. Has anyone got a royalty cheque? Checking. No? It’s a pretty quiet room.”

“Fundamentally,” Peters added, “I don’t want us to be the batteries. It’s not a very uplifting idea.” Applause.

So what are the questions we need to be asking and the conversations we need to be having?

“We need to understand the tools that we choose. We want AI to respect our IP, our collective IP. We need to ask, ‘where did that data come from that it was learned on? How did you source that? Was it ethically sourced? These are



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Craig Peters, CEO, Getty Images

questions I don’t think are being asked too much today. But it’s growing,” Peters said.

Like other speakers, he warned against technology for technology’s sake. “Think about how you use AI,” Peters advised.

“Are you unlocking creativity?... We think AI is very useful. We’re introducing these tools... and we’re excited about what AI can bring. But I think we also have to be critical in how it’s being deployed, and be thoughtful about how we engage,” he said.

He highlighted AI’s current high-hype cycle. “I think everybody’s professing that they’re an expert on AI... anybody who professes that they are an expert on AI is an idiot.

“We are so early in this. I think every industry is struggling to figure out, is this helpful? Is it hurtful? I think they’re struggling to acknowledge their own ignorance. Or maybe they’re very knowledgeable but the level of probability of outcomes is a mess.”

“I think that truthfully, when you get people behind closed doors, this is really what they tell you. Everybody is trying to figure it out. It has been thrust on us and it’s been less than two years. And we’re trying to figure it out.”

He described AI/tech developments

as a “new set of tools” that could enhance creativity and storytelling.

“At the same time, I think it’s going to produce a lot more crap content... The magic technology is great, but if the content is shit, it’s still shit... we’re going to have to stand out, we’re going to have to be more thoughtful.”

Peters said a percentage of revenue Getty Images earned from content used to train the AI went back to the creator. “That’s not just a one time payment, it’s an ongoing payment,” he promised.

His wish list in an AI environment included transparency and accountability.

“We don’t think model developers should stand behind indemnification and lack of liability. We should be accountable for developing responsible models. And as those models go out into the universe and get used, we should have some responsibility for that. Those are the principles we’re advocating for.

“It’s not to try to put this in a box or turn back time. We think it’s about having a conversation early about what we want this to be for our society.”

Extended coverage of this session is at www.contentasia.tv

“I do not want to be part of something that makes me cringe”

Angela Zhou talks about acting, writing & being as close to the creative process as she can

Angela Zhou is enjoying this moment. In addition to co-starring in *Death and Other Details*, the Chinese-born New Zealand actress/writer was part of the writers room for the U.S. murder mystery. Asian A.V. Club spoke to her about, among other things, inspiration, her springboard into acting, and listening to her mother.

What made you want to pursue a career in the arts? It's such a big thing to do and I was constantly getting little affirmations that I should be doing this. But then obviously, you're constantly questioning yourself with fear every step of the way. So it really takes a lot.

I did a lot of drama in high school. I entered a Shakespeare Festival, and was lucky enough to be chosen to train and perform at the Shakespeare's Globe Theatre in London. I remember telling my mother about this huge opportunity. And she was like, 'What! What do you mean, you're gonna go to London and study acting? You're not gonna do this for a living, right?' I was like, 'oh, no, this is just to top off all of the acting I've done in high school. This will be the last big thing I do and then I'll get it out of my system and become a human rights lawyer'.

I went there for three weeks, and we were on our way back heading to Heathrow, I was looking out the window remembering, and I was thinking, 'that was great.' And then suddenly, I'm feeling my face and I realise that it's wet. I'm totally crying. I thought, this might be what people mean when they say they have a passion, because I was crying thinking I was never going to do it again.

But it wasn't the end of the road...

I knew [acting] was a passion, and I could never stop. But even then, I was still in denial. I thought, I'll always do community theatre on the side of whatever job I'm doing. Then I got a scholarship to Duke University. During breaks I did as many internships as possible... at Legendary Entertainment I rotated through different divisions. I went through physical production and then through



Angela Zhou

creative development, and I realised, this was where I wanted to be, but I was still jealous of people who were writing or on set. I felt so close, but not close enough. So I just kept interning. After a while, I realised there's no way to intern your way to a creative position. You just have to show up in L.A. and start freelancing. And also, not listen to your mother when she asks, 'when are you going to go to business school?'

You booked a role on the AMC series, *Hell On Wheels*, very quickly after graduation. How did that happen? I'm a New Zealander, and I knew I only had a year to stay and find work in the U.S. I knew I wanted to be on the creative side; as close to storytelling as possible. Even though I had won acting awards in New Zealand, did some writing and directed music videos, I knew that it wasn't enough. I asked a Duke University mentor if there was a better way. He immediately said, 'Oh, you speak Chinese?' And I'm like, 'Yeah, I speak Cantonese and Mandarin.' And he goes, 'Actually, I think right now there's a movement in the business. And I'm seeing a wave of people looking for actors who can speak English and Cantonese, or Mandarin. It sounds crazy, but acting might be your easier way to stay in this country.'

And so I doubled down on that. There was an open casting call for a regular role on *Hell On Wheels* for an Asian female who could speak Cantonese. They also said 'tomboy'... it just so happened that when I was in London, I played Rosalind in *As You Like It* and I had been trained by some of the best movement and voice coaches on how to gender bend. So, I ended up getting the job.

You made sure the Asian characters in *Death and Other Things* were not a tone or two or 10 off... One of the things that drew me to the script in the first place was the number of Asian characters. And it's not even an Asian show. They just happen to be Asian... I basically told them if you ever need me to sit in for a callback for any actor who speaks Cantonese or Mandarin, please call me and I will show up. Because I do not want to be a part of something that makes me cringe.

ASIAN A.V. CLUB

ContentAsia is collaborating with the Asian A.V. Club on a series of interviews with Asian filmmakers and talent. The full interviews of this edited excerpt is available on the Asian A.V. Club newsletter. Click [here to read & subscribe!](#)

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Plus Less is more at Indonesia's Vidio, girls go at Taiwan's Hakka TV and Australian drama *House of Gods*

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What's on where...

April 2024	25	AVIA: Future of Video 2024	Mumbai, India
May 2024	15-17	LA Screenings Independents	Los Angeles U.S.
	22-24	18th Busan Content Market 2024	Busan, Korea
	28	AVIA: Satellite Industry Forum 2024	Singapore
June 2024	6-8	Telefilm Vietnam 2024	Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
	17-18	DW Global Media Forum 2024	Bonn, Germany
	24-27	Sunny Side of the Doc 2024	France
	24-28	29th Shanghai TV Festival 2024	Shanghai, China
July 2024	3-5	15th Content Tokyo 2024	Tokyo, Japan
August 2024	20-24	Beijing International Radio, TV & Film Exhibition 2024	Beijing, China
	27	AVIA: Korea in View 2024	Seoul, Korea
	29	AVIA: Japan in View 2024	Tokyo, Japan
September 2024	3-4	ContentAsia Summit 2024	Taipei, Taiwan
	5	ContentAsia Awards 2024	Taipei, Taiwan
	24-26	APOS 2024	Bali, Indonesia
	26-29	Gwangju Ace Fair 2024	Gwangju, Korea
October 2024	5-8	Asian Contents & Film Market 2024	Busan, Korea
	10	AVIA: Vietnam in View 2024	Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam
	18-20	MipJunior 2024	Cannes, France
	21-24	Mipcom 2024	Cannes, France
	30 Oct-1 Nov	TIFFCOM 2024	Tokyo, Japan
November 2024	12-13	Dubai International Content Market (DICM)	Madinat Jumeirah, Dubai
	20-22	16th Content Tokyo 2024	Chiba, Japan
December 2024	3	AVIA: OTT Summit 2024	Singapore
	3	The ATF Leaders Dialogue 2024	Singapore
	4-6	Asia TV Forum & Market /ATF 2024	Singapore
February 2025	24-27	Mip London 2025	London, U.K.
	24-28	The London TV Screenings 2025	London, U.K.
March 2025	25-27	Series Mania Forum 2025	Lille, Hauts-de-France

Hazbin Hotel sweeps Thai demand

Local drama Dhevaprom closes in – Parrot Analytics

Prime Video's *Hazbin Hotel* continues to top demand in Asia Pacific, with Thailand now joining Japan, Australia and Singapore in the U.S. animated comedy show's triumphant spread across the region.

The top local show of the week in Thailand was BEC World/Channel 3's high-end drama, *Dhevaprom*, according to data science company Parrot Analytics.

Hazbin Hotel's demand during the week of 1-7 April was more than 26x demand for the average show in Thailand, including local blockbusters.

In Japan, *Hazbin Hotel*'s demand was more than 30x higher than average demand for the week of 11 Feb. In Australia (11-17 March), demand was more than 80x the average show. In Singapore, demand topped 23x for the week of 25-31 March.

Streaming demand is increasingly splintered across Thailand's local, regional and domestic platforms. Three of the top 10 spots for the week went to titles on Prime Video, two to Apple TV+, and one each to Tencent Video, GMM25, line TV and Paramount+.

Top 10 overall TV shows: Thailand

Rank	Title	Difference from Market Average
1	<i>Hazbin Hotel</i>	26.14x
2	<i>Duang Jai Thewaphrom (ดวงใจเทพพรหม)</i>	19.49x
3	<i>GAP (ทฤษฎีสี่มุม)</i>	17.94x
4	<i>Game Of Thrones</i>	16.88x
5	<i>Queen Of Tears (눈물의 여왕)</i>	16.39x
6	<i>Masterchef Thailand</i>	15.73x
7	<i>Jujutsu Kaisen (呪術廻戦)</i>	15.64x
8	<i>The Betrayal (เกมรักทรยศ)</i>	14.02x
9	<i>Rick And Morty</i>	13.13x
10	<i>Below Deck</i>	12.95x

Top 10 digital originals: Thailand

Rank	Title	Platform	Difference from Market Average
1	<i>Hazbin Hotel</i>	Amazon Prime Video	26.14x
2	<i>Chuang 2021 (创造营2021)</i>	Tencent Video	12.52x
3	<i>Love By Chance (บังเอิญรัก)</i>	GMM 25	11.1x
4	<i>Reacher</i>	Amazon Prime Video	10.15x
5	<i>Masters Of The Air</i>	Apple TV+	9.69x
6	<i>Until We Meet Again (ด้ายแดง)</i>	line tv	9.6x
7	<i>Monarch: Legacy Of Monsters</i>	Apple TV+	9.28x
8	<i>Invincible</i>	Amazon Prime Video	8.81x
9	<i>The Believers (สารภี)</i>	Netflix	8.79x
10	<i>Halo</i>	Paramount+	8.7x

Date range: 1-7 April 2024

The total audience demand being expressed for a title, within a market. Audience demand reflects the desire, engagement and viewership, weighted by importance; so a stream/download is a higher expression of demand than a 'like'/comment. In this dataset we are comparing the demand that exists for each series in this market, against the average TV show. A difference of 1x represents the market average and 10x means a series is ten times more in demand than the average TV show in this market



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