

Indiana Jones Defies The Critics

If box-office sales are any indication, the much-anticipated latest installment in the massively popular Indiana Jones movie series suggests that fervour for the series hasn't waned in the almost 20-year span since the release of the last chapter. In the first two days of its North America-wide release, the film managed to gross a not-too-shabby \$56-million. But the premier at Cannes wasn't exactly explosive. The sequel managed to survive its most critical eyes after its premier at the prestigious Cannes Film Festival in France. "Indiana Jones and the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull" garnered appreciative applause from the jam packed 2,300-seat cinema full of critics. The film stars 65-year-old Harrison Ford in the title role and is set in the 1950s. In this chapter, the archaeologist finds himself battling Soviet agents in an attempt to recover a pre-Columbian skull from the Peruvian jungle. Starring alongside Ford as his sidekick is Shia LaBoeuf and Cate Blanchett as a Russian agent. Praise for the film included phrases like "well-made" and "like a ride on your favorite merry go round." The film's action sequences were praised at the festival premier for being exciting, and the film was said by some to be a sure-fire hit. But all was not rosy in the land of reviews. One reviewer, Conchita Casanovas of Spain's RNE radio claimed to have been "bored to death," saying that the film's midsection dragged quite a bit. The now long in the tooth Harrison Ford garnered some less than flattering comments as well, by some who thought he was too old to be playing the adventuring archeologist. In one particularly poignant observation, London's Daily Telegraph critic David Gritten said that Ford's "bullwhip doesn't crack as smartly" anymore. Judging by the reception at Cannes, the fourth Indiana Jones adventure will not be remembered as the best in the series. Sure, some viewers loved it, but it is to be expected that almost any film will have some fans no matter what. Many critics, however, said the film was not worth the 19-year wait since the last Indy film. Prior to the premier, the filmmakers kept the fanfare to a minimum, forgoing the rounds of press screenings that are often held for the major movie studios. Instead, they decided to make a big splash at Cannes. Stephen Spielberg said that the idea behind this strategy was to "view it where the entire world comes together every year." He wanted to re-acquaint the world with Indiana Jones in a big way, all at once. The silver lining to the somewhat negative reaction the film received, it did not garner the kind of insulting catcalls or mocking giggles that the first press screening for "The Da Vinci Code" received at the festival two years ago. Only Cate Blanchett's slightly forced Russian accent and the somewhat corny ending received some audience chuckles. But much like "The Da Vinci Code," which grossed more than \$750 million worldwide, the Indiana Jones series has such a cult following that it is likely to be insulated from the critics' opinions, giving way to Indiana Jones fans. And the filmmakers are hoping that is the case, because as much as a woman scorned is a bad thing, a movie fan scorned is much, much worse. The original trilogy, consisting of "Raiders of the Lost Ark," "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom" and "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" have lined the pockets of George Lucas and Spielberg quite nicely, having grossed more than \$1.1 billion U.S. Following the Cannes festival, many of the glitterati headed to Monaco for the Grand Prix. This pilgrimage is something of an annual tradition, as the film festival and the posh racing event take place around the same time each year. Monaco has long attracted the world's hottest celebrities, and this is never truer than at the end of May when the world's most glamorous race, the Monaco Grand Prix, takes place. For some reason, celebrities including film directors, actors and actresses love the high-adrenaline thrills of the races, particularly when those races take place in elegant European locales - and the fact that the [hotels in Monaco](#) rank among the best in the world no doubt helps!

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