[IE] New Film Guidelines

IRIS 2004-3:1/22

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On taking office, the new film censor, appointed in April 2003, declared that he wished to move away from a restrictive censorship process to a more positive guidance system. The first film he banned was Jonas Akerlund's Spun, which portrays a life of sex and drugs. However, his decision was overturned in a unanimous decision of the appeals board, which passed it without cuts but with an 18 certificate. Since then the film censor has announced plans to overhaul the current age classification system, which acts as a guide to parents. The censor plans to launch a web-site listing every movie passed by his office and indicating the level of sex, violence or bad language in them. Movie posters, which are already required to carry warnings as to content, will also come under the new regime. The censor has commissioned research to find out what viewers want by way of information and advice and will act accordingly. He has since passed, uncut with a 15PG (parental guidance) certificate, the Mel Gibson film, The Passion of the Christ. The certificate is accompanied by a caution from the censor that the film contains scenes of explicit violence that may disturb some viewers. That caution must be carried also on all advertising for the film. The censor also issued a statement elaborating on the reasons for his decision.

Meanwhile, cinema admissions in Ireland for 2003 increased by 1% over 2002 and represented the highest figures ever in the State. Total box office revenue also increased by 4%.

"Film ban overturned by appeal board", The Irish Times of 31 July 2003

“Cinemas set record”, The Irish Times of 22 January 2004

“Censor clears way for Gibson film about Christ”, The Irish Times of 14 February 2004

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