[FR] Cinema on French Television

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On 29 September 2008 the Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel (audiovisual regulatory authority - CSA) published its report on the place occupied by the cinema in the best television viewing figures.

In its report, the CSA compared the audience figures for full-length feature films broadcast on television from 1994 to 2007 and reached the alarming conclusion that the presence of the cinema on French television channels is in decline. It noted that the number of cinematographic works in the category of the 100 best viewing figures had been divided by three in the space of 14 years, falling within the category just 11 times in 2007. The CSA noted that the French cinema represents 40% of these films, as required of the channels by law, whereas the French cinema is more successful in cinema theatres, where it has a 47.8% market share, and that the vast majority of the other films broadcast are of American and non-European origin. Nevertheless, although the decline of the cinema on television was flagrant, the CSA noted that their average audience was stable, as long as they did not suffer from similar programming on competitor channels. The CSA put forward a number of explanations for the declining presence of the cinema on television, including competition from other programme genres, among which fiction has had the most important effect on the programming of cinematographic works. One-off or serial fiction is formatted for broadcasting on television and is sometimes so successful as to completely overturn the previous equilibrium, as in the case of "C.S.I.", which recorded the best fiction audience figures for the year. Fiction is subject to fewer legal constraints than cinema films, which are subject to weekly or annual broadcasting restrictions and have to fit into a media chronology that is now perhaps showing its limits. Among the possible causes for the decline of the cinema on television, the CSA also puts forward the small number of works not previously shown on television that are programmed, which was not the case for audiovisual works, a much less abundant offer on the part of the channels with the disappearance of slots that used to be reserved for the cinema, and the increasing segmentation of the offer of producers who target the various types of audience in cinema theatres with increasing precision, whereas television broadcasting aims to be convergent rather than divergent. Lastly, the CSA advances the hypothesis of the constraint imposed by the single advertising break authorised during the broadcasting of cinematographic works (which does not exist on the public-sector channels), which places a burden on the cost of broadcasting, a point that the current audiovisual reform has promised to broach. The bottom line of the report is that the cinema has been running out of steam on television for the past

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14 years, to the detriment of the French and European cinema and currently to the advantage of American series and major events in sport and politics. Terrestrially-broadcast digital television perhaps constitutes a life-raft for the broadcasting of cinema films on television.

CSA, 29 septembre 2008, « La place du cinéma dans les meilleures audiences de la télévision »

http://www.csa.fr/actualite/dossiers/dossiers_detail.php?id=127200

CSA, 29 September 2008; report on the place occupied by the cinema among the best television viewing figures

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