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Odeon Bans â€˜Alice in Wonderlandâ€™ over Dispute with Disney

Tim Burtonâ€™s latest film is snubbed in Odeon theaters in 3 countries

Tim Burtonâ€™s â€œAlice in Wonderlandâ€• will not run in Odeon theaters in the UK, Ireland and Italy
MoviesMedia.IGN

It is one of the most anticipated and highly mediated productions of 2010, but fans of Tim Burton will not be able to catch "Alice in Wonderland" 3D in Odeon theaters in the UK, Ireland and Italy. The decision not to play the film, giving precedence to other productions comes after a dispute with Disney over a decision that can only be detrimental to the theater chain, as the Mirror can confirm.

The row started over Disney's plans of cutting short the running time of the film in theaters, planning to release it on DVD after three months instead of the usual interval of 17 weeks. Odeon, which has over 100 movie theaters in the UK alone, sees this as an encouragement of sorts for all other movie studios to shorten the period in which a film is in theaters, which, in turn, would translate in poorer sales.

"The UK's biggest cinema chain Odeon is boycotting Disney's new Alice in Wonderland film in a bitter row over DVD releases. The movie - directed by Tim Burton and starring Johnny Depp - will not be shown in Odeon Cinemas in Britain, Ireland and Italy. The move comes after Disney said it planned to release the film on DVD 12 weeks after its cinema debut instead of 17 weeks. Disney says the DVD timespan reduction is a one-off, but Odeon bosses fear it will 'set a benchmark, leading to a 12-week window as standard.'" the Mirror says of the decision to ban the film altogether.

The fact that Odeon had invested a lot of money in new theaters in recent months also weighed heavily in the balance when it came to announcing the ban. "Odeon/UCI has invested considerable sums of money, especially in the UK, over the past 12 months to install digital projection systems in its cinemas to enable customers to enjoy 3D. […] The negative impact on cinema attendance will threaten the existence of cinemas, especially smaller ones," a spokesperson says of Disney's decision to shorten the timespan.

"Alice in Wonderland," directed by Tim Burton and starring old collaborators Johnny Depp and Helena Bonham Carter, alongside other stars like Anne Hathaway and Mia Wasikowska, drops in theaters around the world in the 3-5 March interval.

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