

De Niro completes box office coup

Robert De Niro has completed a transatlantic box office double by topping the UK and US film charts with two different films at the same time.

Comedy sequel *Meet the Fockers*, in which he stars with Ben Stiller, Dustin Hoffman and Barbra Streisand, shot to the top of the UK chart at the weekend. It took £7.2m in three days - eight times more than the number two, *Closer*. *Assault on Precinct 13* was in third. At the same time, US audiences were won over by his new thriller *Hide and Seek*. In *Meet the Fockers*, he picks up the role of an uptight father and ex-CIA agent from 2000 hit comedy, *Meet the Parents*.

It is a big leap to his role in *Hide and Seek*, a supernatural horror in which he plays a widower whose daughter's imaginary friend turns nasty. In the UK box office chart, *Meet the Fockers* pushed *Closer* off the top spot while police action movie *Assault On Precinct 13*, starring rapper Ja Rule, made £750,000 in its first weekend. London Underground thriller *Creep* was another new entry at six while quirky comedy *Sideways*, which got five Oscar nominations last week, entered in eighth place. The Oscar nominations do not seem to have had an impact on fans' choices at cinemas. Leading contenders *The Aviator*, *Million Dollar Baby* and *Ray* all suffered substantial drops in takings compared with the previous weekend.