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How accurate is fx a christmas carol

Do we really need another version of "A Christmas Carol"? That's the question facing any new adaptation of Charles Dickens, but with "Taboo," another FX project written by Knight (whose other credits include "Peaky Blinders" and the Apple TV+ series "See"). After seeing that project come to fruition, Knight approached Tom Hardy's production company Hardy Son & Baker with the idea to adapt Dickens in a similarly gritty style. He wanted to augment elements of the British novelist's works in a way Dickens couldn't at the time. The plan was to adapt several Dickens novels over a long period of time, ideally using the same repertoire of cast and crew."I'm a big admirer of Dickens, of the way he works," Knight says. "Many people say that if he was alive today he would be writing in miniseries, because he wrote in episodes and he created indelible characters. I was keen to take advantage of the fact that television is now what it is, that there are now huge amounts of screen time so you can do the library of classics justice. I felt a good way to begin would be a short novel, which is 'A Christmas Carol.'""A Christmas Carol has been adapted continuously for stage and screen since its publication. The story of Ebenezer Scrooge being visited by three ghosts who help him reconcile his miserly past is now a Christmas classic, one recalled to underscore the importance of kindness and redemption. But this version, created as a three-part miniseries for the BBC and showcased as a complete film for FX, is unlike those that have come before. It's dark, both thematically and visually, and it's resoundingly adult. There are no adorable Muppets here, and Scrooge's life is viewed with a lens that suggests the character, played by Guy Pearce, can connect his current poor behavior to considerable mistreatment as a child. In many ways, it's about the abuse of power. "Every change is rooted in the book," Knight says. "What I've done is a thorough examination of the text. In Dickens there are paragraphs that don't move the plot along and you sort of skip over them, and they often contain incredible amounts of material. I really approached this with reverence and tried to only use things that had sources within the text." Stephen Graham as Jacob Marley in "A Christmas Carol" on FX. "One of the main attractions to me was that my first reaction when I got sent the script was, 'Do we need another version of "A Christmas Carol"?' " adds director Nick Murphy. "It was the very risk of it that I liked. The script, ultimately, was an entirely fresh take ... I was really drawn to the fact that it wasn't just about Scrooge as a baddie, but actually that you came to understand what made him a baddie."For Pearce, who embodies Scrooge with real swagger, the opportunity to work with Knight was enough. Hardy called Pearce about the project himself and as soon as the actor read the script he understood Knight's take on the iconic character."I was doubtful for a minute, but of course, once I got into it and read it I thought, 'Oh, this is too good, I can't let this go,'" Pearce says. "It was really great, even though it has been done and it's been explored a lot. But I felt they were doing something new. The whole thing was just kind of exciting." Hardy Son & Baker, which produced the miniseries with Ridley Scott's Scott Free, tapped many of the same department heads as "Taboo," bringing back costume designer Joanna Eatwell and production designer Sonja Klaus. Klaus took her initial inspiration from "Taboo" itself and much of the color palette is dark, with shades that emphasize Scrooge's isolation. The visual relationship between that series and "A Christmas Carol" is intentional, almost as if the two are set in the same universe. "In terms of the creative team that we had where Steven said, 'It's kind of like "Taboo." I also think for myself, Tom and Kate Crowe, who works for Ridley, that's our taste as well."One important shift is Scrooge's age. Where the character has been old and crotchety in past adaptations, this is Hot Scrooge's age. Where the character has been old and crotchety in past adaptations, this is Hot Scrooge's age. Where the character has been old and crotchety in past adaptations, this is Hot Scrooge's age. character would still have time left to evolve. This Scrooge wears a stylish silver robe over his work clothes instead of a nightshirt and cap, giving him a gentlemanly sense of authority and arrogance. A scene from "A Christmas Carol" on FX. "Alastair Sim perfected the old man Scrooge and there's no point in trying to rehash that," Murphy says. "You've got to do something interesting. And, truly, I think being different is a legitimate aim in itself ... To make a younger Scrooge is self-justified. However, it also gave the opportunity to further expose the chief conclusion Steven brings, which is that it's not about retribution or forgiveness, but about what you do next.""This makes the question more profound: Why is he, of all people, like this?" Knight adds. "People don't look like their sins, as a general rule, and I didn't want him to look himself inside. The Scrooge I wanted to explore is someone who can actually function, physically, same as anyone else. He's an ordinary person, but his intellect and his experiences make him something different." All versions of "A Christmas Carol" typically end the same way, with joy and hope and Tiny Tim adorably calling out, "God bless us, every one!" But for Knight, the story doesn't necessarily indicate redemption. Does Scrooge's visit from the three ghosts, played by Andy Serkis, Charlotte Riley and Jason Flemyng, mean he can be forgiven for his past? Knight suggests that it's up to the individual to be better going forward. "In this story the past creates the present, but it doesn't predict the future, because he can choose not to carry on doing what is expected," Knight says. "He decides himself to change. The argument is that is no matter what you've done or had done to you, you can make a decision and change yourself. That's a matter of opinion, can you or can't you, but the Christmas-ness of it all is that you can become a better person."For Pearce, there's a bigger theme at play, as well. It's a dark story for a dark time, but it reminds us to look for the light more often than just once a year. "Scrooge is really just aware of how we've failed as human beings," Pearce says. "It isn't just that he hates people and doesn't like Christmas for the sake of it. I think he has really high expectations and thinks that us as human beings really need to make more of an effort to actually love each other. Rather than on this one day of the year, just because Santa comes and gives us presents, we all pretend to be happy and say, 'Merry Christmas.' I think probably the reason we keep revisiting it is because it's a reminder that we can have Christmas stories that are Biblical in origin, Charles Dickens' 1843 classic telling of A Christmas Carol remains one of the longestrunning, most-adapted, and most-relevant holiday tales to date. More than 170 years after the infamous miser-turned-do-gooder Ebenezer Scrooge entered our culture for the first time, there are still quite a few folks out there who could do with taking this timeless lesson to heart. I'd suggest they take the time to do what I did and watch 20 or so adaptations of A Christmas Carol until the moral sinks in, but the good-willed among you who don't need a lesson from the spirits can check out our ranked list to see which version is most worthy of your time. From the spirits can check out our ranked list to see which version is most worthy of your time. From the spirits can check out our ranked list to see which version is most worthy of your time. Christmas Carol has been presented in a number of different media over the decades. Each generation has the unprecedented ability to access each and every one of those adaptations at a whim. With that in mind, here are 20 that should be on your watchlist. A quick note on Bharat Nalluri's The Man Who Invented Christmas. This 2017 addition to the canon of A Christmas Carol takes a different tack in that it follows Dickens himself, played by Dan Stevens, on his journey toward writing and publishing the timeless tale. Scrooge (Christopher Plummer) and the familiar Ghosts of Christmas still make an appearance, but from a skewed perspective that takes quite a few liberties with Dickens' life. In other words, it's a fictionalized tale about a remarkable writer of fiction, and one that seems to borrow from the canon than it adds to it. You can read Matt Goldberg's full review here. For our latest addition, FX's A Christmas Carol, from writer Steven Knight (Peaky Blinders) and director Nick Murphy (The Awakening), you can read my review here before seeing where it falls amongst the other adaptations. Scrooge, or, Marley's Ghost This first adaptation isn't really included in the rankings since it's such an obscure one, but since it's the oldest known film version version in existence, I had to at least bring it to your attention. Directed by Walter R. Booth and produced by R.W. Paul in 1901, the British short film featured an unidentified actor playing Scrooge. Though only four minutes and 55 seconds of the six-minute-and-20-seconds-long film are available to curious audiences, at least the 35mm reel is preserved by the British Film Institute. As you can see in the video above (just stop for a second and think about how cool it is that we have the ability to do that), Scrooge encounters only the ghost of Marley who shows him visions of Christmases past, present and future. There are some impressive visuals on display for a work that's almost 115 years old, though the presence of a theatrical setup is strong throughout. This is as good a place to start as any, save for reading the original Christmas tale itself. 21. Scrooge for everyone out there, but five-time Oscar-nominated actor Albert Finney is most decidedly not for me. There's something about his performance that is strange and off-putting. Perhaps it's his penchant for lurching about with a twisted grimace and a hunched back, or the fact that his character can't quite seem to come to grips with the lessons the spirits are trying to teach him. Then there's the fact that his character can't quite seem to come to grips with the lessons the spirits are trying to teach him. Then there's the fact that his is a musical rendition of the tale, and while that may be great for some folks, it's not my bowl of gruel. That being said, this version does have a few things that others do not. When Scrooge returns home on Christmas Eve, there's a ghostly full-size horse-drawn carriage that passes through his lobby; this is a description pulled right from Dickens' text that was meant to illustrate just how cavernous Scrooge's home really was. Another interesting note is that we actually see Scrooge temporarily wear his very own ponderous chain just before his redemptive moment, with Marley stopping by to bid him a not-so-fond farewell and a Merry Christmas. However, Finney's performance is eerily similar to Adam Sandler's Little Nicky, so it's on the list of A Christmas Carol adaptations I'd rather not watch again. 20. Rich Little's Christmas Carol Like the version above and those that follow, this take on A Christmas Carol is at least worth a watch if you haven't seen it before. Despite the fact that Dickens' story is a timeless tale, I was a bit surprised to find how dated Rich Little's HBO special was. It's very 1978, owing mostly to Little's shtick that relies heavily on celebrity impersonations and topical humor. The musical numbers and laugh track also add a heavy hand to the comedy routines. If you know the names Paul Lynde, W.C. Fields, Peter Falk, and Truman Capote well enough to appreciate Little's impersonations and inside jokes, then you should check this one out. Otherwise, it's probably not worth your time. Though Little's one-man show in which he takes on 15 or so roles by himself is impressive, I'd reserve this one for the nostalgic and the Dickens dedicated. 19. The Stingiest Man in Town The Rankin/Bass purists among you probably know that the animation company behind such famous holiday specials as Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, The Little Drummer Boy, and Frosty the Snowman also churned out their own take on A Christmas Carol titled The Stingiest Man in Town. If this comes as news to you, you might also be surprised to learn that the special wasn't produced using the claymation-like Animagic, but rather traditional animation. The Japanese animation studio, Topcraft, that brought this special to life also housed many of the animators that would later start Studio Ghibli. This animated remake of a popular live-action musical special by the same name, which starred Basil Rathbone as Scrooge, featured Tom Bosley as a narrating "humbug" and Walter Matthau as the penny-pinching lender. The tone of this one is much more cartoonish, what with the talking rats, cats, and dogs, and silly songs. And while the musical numbers are nowhere near as memorable as Rudolph, there's quite a bit of Dickens' actual dialogue used here. Though it plays up some of the story's more horrific and supernatural elements, the spirits themselves are borderline ridiculous. You can pass on this one unless you're filling out your Rankin/Bass bingo card. 18. Mister Magoo, then this Christmas Special should be a slam dunk for your watchlist. If you have no idea what I'm talking about, then this is just as easily a "Pass." It's yet another animated adaptation that skews towards a younger crowd with silly songs and less-than-scary spirits, but these days only adults of a certain age would probably appreciate its charm. There's an interesting theme that pops up in a number of these animated adaptations that use well-known cartoon characters to play Scrooge. Rather than just be Scrooge, many of the specials have a frame story that has the character playing Scrooge in a play of some sort. This allows for some added gags outside of the structure of Dickens' story, but there are better versions than Magoo's. The saving grace here is that Mister Magoo's redemption as Scrooge in a play of some sort. This allows for some added gags outside of the structure of Dickens' story, but there are better versions than Magoo's. house. 17. Bugs Bunny's Christmas Carol Now here's an animated adaptation of a different sort. Rather than set up some sort of elaborate frame story, the Merrie Melodies gang just jumps right into the tale. I appreciate that, just like I appreciate that, just like I appreciate that, just like I appreciate that adaptation of a different sort. Rather than set up some sort of elaborate frame story, the Merrie Melodies gang just jumps right into the tale. I appreciate that, just like I appreciate that apprecia in terms of time. However, this is a very loose and silly adaptation that's better left for the little ones to enjoy. Sure, seeing Yosemite Sam blow his stack as a hassled and harassed Ebenezer Scrooge and listening to Porky Pig stammer as the nervous Bob Cratchit are great moments, but if you're looking for a full adaptation, you should try elsewhere. Then again, if you just want to see Bugs Bunny play pranks on Yosemite Sam and bring a bunch of his friends in to play cameos, then this is a fun little short to watch during the holidays. 16. A Christmas Carol: The Musical We've already feature film, TV special, and cartoon adaptations in our list, but this is our first live-action TV special that's also a musical. And it's not great. Sure, the production quality was solid for television, and eight-time Oscar-winning songwriter Alan Menken certainly brings home the musical portion of the proceedings, but the very "TV actor" cast of Kelsey Grammer, Jason Alexander, Jane Krakowski, Jesse L. Martin, and Jennifer Love Hewitt keep this adaptation from soaring any higher. Director Arthur Allan Seidelman's version of A Christmas Carol broadens the stage beyond the usual settings, in part to include dynamic musical numbers featuring lots of cast and choral members, but it also feels just a bit too clean for Victorian London. The interesting aspects of this version include Grammer's Scrooge meeting the Christmas Spirits earlier in the show in their human forms, a bit of foreshadowing not seen in other adaptations. Unfortunately Grammer's redemptive moment doesn't quite bring this one home, even though his Scrooge does make amends with, seemingly, the whole town. If you're a fan of musicals, you can do worse than checking this one out. 15. Ms. Scrooge Ms. Scrooge Ms. Scrooge is our first real departure from A Christmas Carol as a traditional adaptation to more of a contemporary re-imagining. Oscar-winner John Korty directs the Oscar-nominated Cicely Tyson as, wait for it, Ms. Ebenita Scrooge. Now you could easily dismiss this late 90s TV film as a weird one-off in A Christmas Carol history, but it actually has some brilliant moments, such as a sermon delivered by Scrooge's nephew Reverend Luke (Michael Beach) that hammers home the difference between sinners and saints during their time on Earth. That being said, the story of Tyson's Scrooge from her traumatic childhood through her isolated adulthood and late-in-coming redemption might not be to everyone's liking. While the gender and race swap for this version is admirable, there's also an odd attempt to shoehorn racial tensions and gender inequality in the workplace into the story. Those issues are raised but never brought to a satisfactory conclusion, so they fall short, just like Tyson's delivery of Scrooge's redemptive moment at the movie's end. Still, a worthy watch if you're looking for an alternative take on the classic story. 14. Christmas Carol: The Movie The next animated film on our list is another attempt to embellish Dickens' original tale and depart from the established storyline. In director Jimmy T. Murakami's version, supporting characters get a chance to shine on their own rather than bask in light reflected from Scrooge's henchman, Old Joe (Robert Llewellyn). Scrooge himself (Simon Callow) is much younger, which gives him a chance to rekindle his love with Belle once he's found redemption. (Oh, and I should mention that Nicolas Cage voices Marley, albeit briefly, which should pique your interest.) In addition to Belle and Old Joe getting extended roles, this version introduces a family of dormice that act as expressive go-betweens for younger audiences, but they're not the only new additions. There's also the well-intentioned Dr. Lambert and the good-natured money-lender Mr. Leach. Oh, and then Winslet sings for some reason. But all of these oddities aside, this version does feature a rather nasty take on Scrooge, as seen when he douses an already ailing Tiny Tim with a bucket of water, causing the youngster to catch a cold that leads to his death. That, and a moment where Scrooge is in danger of relapsing into his old ways, make this a version worth watching, as long as you keep in mind that it's an embellished adaptation rather than a straight translation. 13. Robert Zemeckis' A Christmas Carol The furthest from the 1901 silent film both in time and technology is Robert Zemeckis' 2009 computer-animated version that starred Jim Carrey as Scrooge and each of the Christmas Spirits. The huge budget for this production was more than made up for by a few weeks atop the box office charts, but the film didn't quite turn into a worldwide blockbuster the way Disney had probably intended. Personally, I blamed the Uncanny Valley effect for this film not being bigger than it was. The character design and effects work are well-crafted and perfectly suited for Dickens' exploration of the supernatural, but much like Zemeckis' previous use of this animation technology in the 2004 film The Polar Express, there's just something unsettling about the characters' faces. However, these visuals work spectacularly well when applied to Scrooge's redemption scene benefits from Carrey's particular brand of over-the-top acting, the fact that Carrey also plays the part of all three Spirits limits their range somewhat. This is a worthwhile and fairly traditional adaptation despite the modern technology, but if the Uncanny Valley effect bothers you, look elsewhere. 12. FX's 'A Christmas Carol' Image via Robert Viglasky/FX I appreciate the exploration of just how dark a 19th century Scrooge (Guy Pearce) could have gone; I actually applaud this version for bringing some rawness and grit to a story that's become somewhat sanitized in popular adaptations to date. For the bulk of the telling, A Christmas Carol should scare the coal out of both good and sinful people the world over, because it's an exposé of all of us at our worst moments, a critique of humankind and how we behave on every day of the year except for those where holiday traditions demand we actually be civil for once. But while Knight pays homage to both classic moments in the 176-year-old tale and adaptations gone by, as well as adding his own clever twists and turns to the narrative, neither Scrooge nor the audience is given a chance to breathe free and celebrate joyously. That's a missed opportunity that robs the story of its redemptive power. Knight wants his Scrooge to be both a mustache-twirling villain who uses facts and figures to make each and every cold, calculated decision regardless of the human or emotional costs involved, but he also wants us to empathize with Scrooge well before there's any hint of repentance. That idea in and of itself isn't new; we've seen Scrooge's troubled boyhood days left alone over the holiday break at a boarding school, or suffering in silence at the death of his sister or the heartbreaking dissolution of his romantic relationships. That used to be enough to humanize Scrooge. Now, Knight has to take that idea to extremes Abuse of all kinds afflicts the young Scrooge in just about every way imaginable. The adult Scrooge uses this reality as an excuse to harden his heart and treat everyone around him with contempt and disdain, and it's only when he can voice these past pains against him that he's able to move forward. That would be fine if Scrooge was offered the time and opportunity to bounce back in the other direction. Some of the best moments from other adaptations of A Christmas Carol come while watching Scrooge act like a lighthearted boy once more, despite his advanced age and notorious reputation as a cruel miser and skinflint. Pearce's Scrooge is robbed of this. His character is taken so far into the darkness that basic empathy and care for another human being is as close as he can get to joy, happiness, and reveling in the Christmas goose or dancing around his bedroom with a song in his heart and a spring in his step, and that's a shame, because Pearce has the talent to let loose but the gravitational pull of this version's dark subject material just wouldn't let him go. FX's A Christmas Carol certainly brings something new to the tried-and-true story and it's worth a watch for that alone. It plumbs the depths of darkness to the point that even the usually buoyant Cratchit Family is dragged down with Scrooge. But without a redemptive rise to counterbalance all that darkness, A Christmas Carol misses out on the meaning of the Story and the greater meaning of the Christmas Carol to show the kids, then look no further than this special. Not only does it have a fairly short runtime of about 25 minutes, it also features some of Disney's most recognizable toons. And if you're looking for a modern connection to this 1983 special, look no further than current chief creative officer of Pixar Animation Studios, Walt Disney Animation Studios, and Disney Toon Studios, John Lasseter, who's crew listing on this short notes his "creative talent." Originally named after Ebenezer Scrooge McDuck plays the villainous role in this version; could you have it any other way? And while the various Disney creations that pop up throughout the story are as delightful as you'd expect, my very favorite one is the toon that ends up being the Spirit of Christmas Yet to Come. I won't spoil the reveal here, but it should bring a smile to Disney fans young and old. 10. A Flintstone's Christmas Carol when thinking about A Christmas Carol adaptations, this 1994 special is actually quite good. It's a must-watch for fans of Bedrock's first family, and a great way for the whole family to enjoy Dickens' Christmas tale. Much like Mister Magoo's version, this special sees the town of Bedrock putting on A Christmas tale. Much like Mister Magoo's version, this special sees the town of Bedrock putting on A Christmas tale. writers expertly play on the franchise characters' traits - such as Slate stating he'd make a better Scrooge than Fred, which Barney agrees with - and weave in modern humor - like last-minute Christmas shoppers running over a mall Santa - in order to add a meta layer or two. Further deepening this tale, Fred's star status starts to go to his head as the play goes on, and it's up to his family, friends, and fellow cast members to bring his ego back down to Earth. It not only entertains adults and children alike, it manages to pull of Dickens' Christmas Carol (1999) He's played Professor X, Captain Jean-Luc Picard, and even King Richard, but taking on the role of Ebenezer Scrooge in this television special allowed Patrick Stewart to cross the iconic character off his to-do list. Granted, the TV movie came after a run of Stewart's theatrical performances of A Christmas Carol on Broadway and in London. Despite the gravitas he brings to the role, this isn't the best of the live-action adaptations (though it did earn a primetime Emmy nomination), even if it's far from the worst. There are some elements of Dickens' story that are rekindled in this version that others seem to have forgotten, such as the author's metaphorical mulling over the phrase "dead as a doornail" or the visit to far-flung Christmas revelers at a distant lighthouse and a ship at sea during the Ghost of Christmas Present's lesson. But Stewart's bizarre laughter as Scrooge learns to take himself less seriously almost makes it all worthwhile. 8. A Christmas Carol (1997) If your kids have graduated past the stage of Flintstones and Mickey Mouse but still prefer to view their Dickens' stories in animated fashion, then this 1997 version makes a great next step. It features the fantastic Tim Curry in the voice role of Scrooge, which not only gives him a chance to bring his usual villainous flair to the character but also lets him experience some redemption (for once). And although this is a musical version has a few departures from Dickens' story, like Scrooge's cartoonish bulldog (named Debit) or Scrooge engaging in an epic song battle against a tavern full of well-wishers calling for "Random Acts of Kindness." The songs feel much more organic than other musical versions, perhaps owing to the animated nature of the movie, but two in particular are very effective. One occurs during the lessons of Christmas Past when a younger Scrooge and his fiancee Belle are trying to sort out their relationship and "cross this bridge together"; it's fittingly heart-breaking. Another occurs during Scrooge's redemptive scene in which Curry gets to express his character's Christmas spirit through a song. That's the way you do musicals, and this is the way you do an animated Christmas Carol. 7. The Muppet Christmas Carol Image via Disney We'll pretty much be splitting hairs from here on out, because these adaptations of A Christmas Carol appeal to different reasons. In this particular instance, die-hard Muppets fans would probably like to see this version a little higher on the list, but I'm not as fond of the Jim Henson creations as most are. That aside, my only gripe with this version has nothing to do with the fantastically funny Muppets, but I was surprised to find that he seemed to walk through the role at times. Maybe it was the humorous, fourth-wall-breaking style of the Muppets that threw him off, or maybe he felt like he was playing second fiddle to a cast of funny puppets. The Muppets that threw him off, or maybe he felt like he was playing second fiddle to a cast of funny puppets. The Muppets that threw him off, or maybe he felt like he was playing second fiddle to a cast of funny puppets. Fezziwig than Fozzie-wig? But ultimately it's Caine's sometimes-flat performance as Scrooge - even during his sing-song redemptive moments - that keeps this version from climbing higher on the list. 6. A Christmas Carol (1984) It's at this point in the list where we start to talk about the classic adaptations of A Christmas Carol and the names associated with them. I hate to say it, but if someone mentioned George C. Scott, I'd know his name from this 1984 version of the holiday tale before I'd recall his Oscar-winning title role in director Franklin J. Schaffner's biopic Patton, or his part in Stanley Kubrick's Dr. Strangelove. There's actually quite a bit of starpower in this TV movie, including Oscar-nominated Frank Finlay, Emmy-winner David Warner, and Emmy-nominated actor, the late Roger Reese. With big-name stars on the small screen, this adaptation certainly feels more like a feature-length period drama. The pacing is slowed down to allow viewers to soak into the experience and the actors appear to do the same. Interestingly, the religious iconography is more overt in this version than others, for example, when Jacob Marley's ghost appears from just beneath a painting of "The Last Supper." Scott's redemptive scenes at the movie's end is one of the best out of all the adaptations, a moment that led to his nomination for a Primetime Emmy for the role. If you haven't seen this version, definitely add it to your list. 5. Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily the best non-traditional adaptation of A Christmas Carol, Richard Donner's 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily the best non-traditional adaptation of A Christmas Carol, Richard Donner's 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily the best non-traditional adaptation of A Christmas Carol, Richard Donner's 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily the best non-traditional adaptation of A Christmas Carol, Richard Donner's 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily the best non-traditional adaptation of A Christmas Carol, Richard Donner's 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily the best non-traditional adaptation of A Christmas Carol, Richard Donner's 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily the best non-traditional adaptation of A Christmas Carol, Richard Donner's 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily the best non-traditional adaptation of A Christmas Carol, Richard Donner's 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily the best non-traditional adaptation of A Christmas Carol, Richard Donner's 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily the best non-traditional adaptation of A Christmas Carol, Richard Donner's 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily the Barbard Donner's 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily the Barbard Donner's 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily the Barbard Donner's 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily the Barbard Donner's 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily the Barbard Donner's 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily the Barbard Donner's 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily No. 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily No. 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pictures Easily No. 1988 comedy Scrooged Image via Paramount Pi network executive who's under the gun to bring in huge numbers for the channel's upcoming Christmas special. What follows is an exploration of the story, and more importantly, a character examination of Cross as a modern-day Scrooge. You can tell right off the bat whether the brand of humor seen in Scrooged is your cup of mulled cider or not, as it opens with a promotional piece showing armed assailants shooting up Santa's workshop, only to see Lee Majors save the day. That sort of humor continues as Cross is visited by three Christmas spirits, causing him to hallucinate wildly and put production of his Christmas special in jeopardy. It's worth noting that this is a very loose adaptation of the story, but the emotion between Cross and his bleeding-heart true love Claire (Karen Allen) is a great example of how adaptations can trump translations. And using a classic tale of redemption as the framework for a satire of modern culture's desire to embrace the irredeemable is just too good to pass up. Make sure Scrooged is on your watchlist if you want something other than the traditional adaptation. 4. A Christmas Carol (1971) Our last animated version of A Christmas Carol (1971) O animation that brings the characters to life in a realistic portrayal, though occasionally transitioning to sketchy or dream-like styles. It's a beautiful rendition of Dickens' tale that looks like classic Victorian era illustrations come to life. It also helps that Alastair Sim reprises his role of Scrooge, a role he made famous 20 years earlier. This adaptation, a brisk 25-minute one at that, is both charming and spooky, providing an experience that's the next best thing to reading the tale itself. It does something I have rarely seen in live-action adaptations: While Scrooge bears witness to the lessons of the Christmas Spirits, his mind occasionally flashes back to a moment in his recent past when he could have, and should have, been kinder. It's done with a deft touch and shows attention to detail, much like the character design that draws directly from Dickens' own poetic descriptions. While the ending feels a bit rushed and Scrooge (1935) Now we're solidly into the classics. Again, your mileage may vary here, but for my money and time, these three are the best traditional adaptations of A Christmas Carol that currently exist. The oldest of them is this 1935 version starring Sir Seymour Hicks in the role of Scrooge. It's the rare version that actually includes Dickens' playful preface at the introduction of the tale, but adds its own clever embellishment is what made this adaptation so endearing to me. Though Scrooge is a very rich man in all versions of the tale, this telling goes a step further in elucidating that fact. Yes, there's the portrayal of Scrooge as thinking himself above the common man, especially street urchins and those who owe him money, but director Henry Edwards goes further. While later adaptations stick to this one-sided portrayal of Scrooge, this version takes time to show the royal family and their many, many guests and servants celebrating Christmas with a lavish feast. The opulence, refinement, and even humor of this one scene is juxtaposed against Scrooge's own meager feast (by his own design) in a dingy chop house in which he sups alone. Bookending Scrooge's scenes in this manner is a brilliant way to show him as a man adrift in society. That alone makes this Scrooge one of my favorite adaptations, but the fact that it feels like the most earnest and least "produced" certainly doesn't hurt. The only downside is that Hicks feels a bit too old to really let himself get carried away during the redemptive scene. Regardless, this version is definitely worth your time. 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