

Pinocchio (2022 live-action film)

Pinocchio is a 2022 American musical fantasy film directed by Robert Zemeckis from a screenplay by Zemeckis and Chris Weitz. Produced by Walt Disney Pictures, Depth of Field and ImageMovers, this film is a live-action remake of Walt Disney's 1940 animated film *Pinocchio*, which is itself based on the 1883 Italian book *The Adventures of Pinocchio* by Carlo Collodi. It stars Tom Hanks, Cynthia Erivo, and Luke Evans with Benjamin Evan Ainsworth, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Keegan-Michael Key, and Lorraine Bracco in voice roles. The reimagined story follows a wooden puppet named Pinocchio (Evan Ainsworth), who is brought to life by a blue fairy (Erivo) after being crafted by an old Italian woodcarver named Geppetto (Hanks). While the role of Pinocchio's conscience Jiminy Cricket (Gordon-Levitt) attempts to guide Pinocchio in matters of right and wrong, Pinocchio encounters a host of unsavory characters in his efforts to become a real boy.

Development of the live-action *Pinocchio* began in 1985, with Jim Henson and Steve Barron approached with the idea, but Disney turned down the project. Disney eventually announced the remake film in April 2015 with Peter Hedges being reported to be writing the film's script, before being replaced with Weitz in May 2017, who also went on to produce. Sam Mendes and Paul King were originally considered for directing, and Zemeckis was confirmed as director in January 2020. By November 2018, it was reported that Hanks was in early talks to play Geppetto; he passed on the project after King's departure but rejoined in August 2020. The main cast was announced in January and March 2021. Principal photography began in March 2021 before finishing the following month. Alan Silvestri, who has collaborated in all of Zemeckis's films, composed the score, who also wrote the new songs with Glen Ballard.

Pinocchio was released on September 8, 2022, by Disney+, as an original fim and as part of Disney+ Day. It received generally negative reviews from critics, who found it unnecessary and lacking the charm of the 1940 film, and criticized the writing and deviations, as well as the lack of improvement over previous adaptations, although the visuals, musical score, and some of the actors' performances received

Pinocchio



Official release poster

Directed by	<u>Robert Zemeckis</u>
Screenplay by	<u>Robert Zemeckis</u> <u>Chris Weitz</u>
Based on	<u>Disney's <i>Pinocchio</i></u> <u><i>The Adventures of Pinocchio</i></u> by <u>Carlo Collodi</u>
Produced by	<u>Andrew Milano</u> <u>Chris Weitz</u> <u>Robert Zemeckis</u> <u>Derek Hogue</u>
Starring	<u>Tom Hanks</u> <u>Benjamin Evan Ainsworth</u> <u>Joseph Gordon-Levitt</u> <u>Keegan-Michael Key</u> <u>Lorraine Bracco</u> <u>Cynthia Erivo</u>

praise. It received six Golden Raspberry Award nominations, including Worst Picture and Worst Actor for Hanks, and won for Worst Prequel, Remake, Rip-off or Sequel.

Plot

In a small Italian village in 1855, a vagrant cricket named Jiminy Cricket enters the home of a widowed elderly woodcarver named Geppetto, who lives with his pet kitten Figaro and goldfish Cleo. Geppetto has completed work on a puppet based on his young deceased son, which he names Pinocchio. Before falling asleep, Geppetto makes a wish on a star. Later that night, the star magically brings Pinocchio to life and he is soon visited by the Blue Fairy who tells him that if he acts brave, truthful and selfless, he can be a real boy. The Blue Fairy appoints Jiminy the responsibility of being Pinocchio's conscience to teach him right from wrong. When Geppetto awakens and finds Pinocchio alive, he is at first shocked, but becomes overjoyed.

	<u>Luke Evans</u>
Cinematography	<u>Don Burgess</u>
Edited by	<u>Jesse Goldsmith</u> <u>Mick Audsley</u>
Music by	<u>Alan Silvestri</u>
Production companies	<u>Walt Disney Pictures</u> <u>Depth of Field</u> <u>ImageMovers</u>
Distributed by	<u>Disney+</u>
Release date	September 8, 2022
Running time	105 minutes
Country	United States
Language	English
Budget	\$150 million ^[1]

After a few days, Geppetto sends Pinocchio to school. The fox con-artist, "Honest" John, and his cat partner, Gideon, soon approach Pinocchio. He convinces Pinocchio that he should live a life of fame to truly be a real boy when he really plans to sell him to the puppet master Stromboli. With the help of a seagull named Sofia, Jiminy convinces Pinocchio to go to school, but Pinocchio is kicked out by the headmaster because he is a puppet. Pinocchio decides to go to Stromboli's after all while Honest John places a glass jar over Jiminy. Geppetto, Figaro, and Cleo go out to look for Pinocchio when he fails to come home for dinner. At Stromboli's theater, Pinocchio befriends one of Stromboli's employees, Fabiana and her puppet Sabina. Pinocchio puts on a good show for the crowd, but Stromboli locks him in a bird cage to prevent him from ever leaving. Stromboli's coach ends up freeing Jiminy from the jar and Pinocchio has him reach the keys for the cage's lock by telling lies to make his nose grow longer.

Soon, Pinocchio is swiped up by a coach full of children driven by a charismatic Coachman, who is taking them to Pleasure Island, where misbehavior is encouraged. Once there, Pinocchio is disturbed by some of the brutality the kids display, but befriends an irresponsible boy named Lampwick and manages to enjoy some of the attractions. Later on, Jiminy finds that all of the children have turned into donkeys and that the Coachman sells them to the salt mines with help from his Ghosts. Pinocchio witnesses Lampwick's transformation at a billiard hall as Pinocchio gains a donkey's ears and tail. Pinocchio and Jiminy escape the island before the Coachman and his goons can get them.

Pinocchio and Jiminy make it back to Geppetto's, but find that Sofia gave him a flyer of Pleasure Island to let him know where Pinocchio was and that he sold all of his clocks to buy a boat to go there. Pinocchio reunites with Fabiana and Sabina who tell him that Stromboli has been arrested by the Carabinieri last night for cruelty against his employees, and they have taken over his puppet show. They offer Pinocchio to join them, but Pinocchio declines, wanting to save his father, which makes his donkey parts disappear. Sofia pulls a rope for Pinocchio to hold out to the Mediterranean Sea, where they soon find Geppetto in his boat. Just as they reunite, they are swallowed by a giant sea monster named Monstro. They take refuge in a giant

boat in Monstro's stomach and Pinocchio gets the idea to make him sneeze by starting a fire within him. The plan works, and Monstro sneezes them out, but he gives chase that ends with the group crashing on dry land and apparently killing Geppetto.

Believing his father has died, Pinocchio mourns over him and a magical tear falls from his eye on Geppetto, reviving him. Geppetto tells Pinocchio that despite being a puppet, he has proven himself to be a true boy at heart. As Pinocchio and Geppetto depart for home, Jiminy narrates that stories have been told of Pinocchio becoming a real boy, but doesn't confirm them (even as Pinocchio's limbs appear to turn human), stressing that, in his heart, Pinocchio is already a real boy.

Cast

- Tom Hanks as Geppetto, an Italian woodcarver and toymaker who creates Pinocchio out of grief for the death of his young son.^{[2][3]}
- Benjamin Evan Ainsworth as Pinocchio, a living wooden puppet carved by Geppetto, and brought to life by the Blue Fairy. He seeks to learn about right and wrong so that he can become a real boy.
- Joseph Gordon-Levitt as Jiminy Cricket, an anthropomorphic cricket who acts as Pinocchio's "conscience" and the partial narrator of the story.^[3]
- Keegan-Michael Key as Honest John, an anthropomorphic red fox con artist who convinces Pinocchio to go to Stromboli's puppet show. He is often accompanied by Gideon, his mute, bumbling, anthropomorphic cat sidekick who serves as the film's comic relief.^[3]
- Lorraine Bracco as Sofia, a seagull that Geppetto knows who befriends Jiminy.^[3]
- Cynthia Erivo as The Blue Fairy, a magical fairy who brings Pinocchio to life and promises to turn him into a real boy if he proves himself brave, truthful and selfless.^[3]
- Luke Evans as The Coachman, the charismatic but imposing owner and operator of Pleasure Island where unruly children are turned into donkeys and sold. He speaks with a harsh Cockney accent and is served by the Ghosts.
- Giuseppe Battiston as Stromboli, a puppet master who intends to force Pinocchio to perform onstage to make money. He speaks with an Italian accent and curses gibberish when he gets angry.^[4]
- Kyanne Lamaya as Fabiana, a puppeteer who works for Stromboli. She used to be a ballerina until a leg injury ended her dancing career, causing her to wear a leg brace as she works to regain her ballet skills.
- Jaquita Ta'le as Sabina, Fabiana's marionette.
- Angus Wright as Signore Rizzi, an Italian gentleman who wants to purchase one of Geppetto's clocks.
- Sheila Atim as Signora Vitelli, an Italian woman whose job is to escort children to school.
- Lewin Lloyd as Lampwick, an irresponsible boy whom Pinocchio befriends on his way to Pleasure Island.
- Jamie Demetriou as the headmaster who kicks Pinocchio out of his school for being a puppet.

Non-speaking animal characters include Geppetto's pet kitten Figaro and goldfish Cleo, and Monstro, an enormous, chimeric sea monster who devours anything that crosses his path.

Production

Development



Director/co-writer/co-producer Robert Zemeckis (left) and co-writer/co-producer Chris Weitz (right).

In 1985, Jim Henson and director Steve Barron approached Walt Disney Pictures with the idea of a live-action version of *Pinocchio*, but Disney turned down the project.^[5] Barron still managed to make *The Adventures of Pinocchio* (1996), distributed by New Line Cinema.^[6] On April 8, 2015, it was announced that Walt Disney Pictures was developing a live-action adaptation of the 1940 animated film *Pinocchio*.^[7] Peter Hedges was reported to be writing the film's script.^[7] On May 22, 2017, it was announced that Chris Weitz will replace Hedges as a screenwriter, as well as serve as a producer, while Sam Mendes was in talks to direct the project.^[8] On November 13, 2017, Mendes stepped down as the director.^[9]

On February 20, 2018, it was announced that Paul King was set to direct the film, while Andrew Milano was announced to be co-producing the film alongside Weitz, and production was expected to begin in late 2018.^[10] Though Jack Thorne was announced to be re-writing Weitz's script,^[10] Weitz revealed on August 21, 2018, that the script was still being developed, as well as that production was set to take place in England and Italy during 2019.^[11] In November 2018, Simon Farnaby was reported to have worked on a new draft for the film.^[12] However, on January 13, 2019, it was reported that King left the film due to "family reasons", while Disney was announced to be searching for a new director for the project.^[13]

On October 18, 2019, it was reported that Robert Zemeckis was in talks to direct the film, while the film's latest version of the screenplay was reported to have been written by Weitz, King, and Farnaby, with Weitz and Milano still being attached to the project as producers.^[14] On January 24, 2020, it was reported that Jack Rapke and Jackie Levine will serve as executive producers.^[15]

Casting

On November 29, 2018, it was reported that Tom Hanks was in early talks to play Geppetto in the film,^[16] but passed on the project after King's departure.^[14] In August 2020, Hanks rejoined the project.^[17] Hanks reportedly reached out to director Robert Zemeckis for the role after reading the script; the two have previously worked together in the films *Forrest Gump* (1994), *Cast Away* (2000), and *The Polar Express* (2004).^{[17][18]} In January 2021, Luke Evans joined the cast as the Coachman and Oakes Fegley entered early negotiations to play Lampwick.^[19] Lewin Lloyd was eventually cast in the role.^[20] In March,



Tom Hanks (left), Cynthia Erivo, Giuseppe Battiston and Luke Evans play Geppetto, The Blue Fairy, Stromboli and The Coachman.



Joseph Gordon-Levitt (left), Keegan-Michael Key and Lorraine Bracco voice Jiminy Cricket, "Honest" John Worthington Foulfellow and Sofia the Seagull.

Benjamin Evan Ainsworth was cast in the titular role, with Cynthia Erivo, Joseph Gordon-Levitt, Keegan-Michael Key and Lorraine Bracco also added. Erivo will portray The Blue Fairy, while Gordon-Levitt, Key and Bracco will voice Jiminy Cricket, Honest John and a new character, Sofia the Seagull, respectively.^[3]

Filming

Principal photography began on March 17, 2021, in Cardington Film Studios, England, under the working title *Mahogany*.^{[2][21]} Filming was completed in April 2021 according to Benjamin Evan Ainsworth.^[22]

Visual effects and animation

Moving Picture Company provided full animation and visual effects for the film. DNEG contributed a part of the virtual production.^{[23][24]}

Music

Alan Silvestri, a recurring collaborator of Zemeckis', composed the score for the film.^[25] The song, "When You Wish Upon a Star", was performed by Cynthia Erivo as the Blue Fairy.^[26] On August 31, 2022, it was revealed that "Hi-Diddle-Dee-Dee (An Actor's Life for Me)" and "I've Got No Strings" would also be featured, along with the titles of the four new songs: "When He Was Here with Me" and "Pinocchio, Pinocchio" performed by Tom Hanks as Geppetto, "I Will Always Dance" performed by Kyanne Lamaya as Fabiana, and "The Coachman to Pleasure Island" performed by Luke Evans as the Coachman. Only four songs from the original film, "Little Wooden Head", "Give a Little Whistle", and the reprises of "Hi-

Diddle-Dee-Dee" and "When You Wish Upon a Star" did not make the cut. In addition to the songs from the original film, Silvestri and Glen Ballard wrote new songs for the project.^[25] The soundtrack album was released on September 8, 2022, the same day as the film.^[27]

Marketing



A bus advertising the film in Hong Kong

On March 9, 2022, the first look at the upcoming adaptation was released, revealing that the film would be released in September of that year.^[28] The teaser trailer and poster for *Pinocchio* debuted on May 31, 2022, announcing the premiere date of September 8 on Disney+, coinciding with Disney+ Day.^[29] The trailer features part of Erivo's rendition of "When You Wish Upon a Star" as well as footage of Hanks as Geppetto.^[20] On August 22, a teaser used to promote Disney+ Day showed the first look of Pinocchio's CGI appearance, near-identical to the 1940 animated version.^[30] On August 24, 2022, the official trailer and the first-look photos for the live-action adaptation were released.^[31] On August 29, Disney+ released a behind-the-scenes featurette that included interviews with some members of the film's cast.^[32] On September 8, Disney+ released a second featurette which details the impact the 1940 animated version had on the film's cast and crew as well as the satisfaction it gives them to bring the story to a new generation.^[33] On September 15, Disney+ released a third featurette which featured new interviews with composer Alan Silvestri, Benjamin Evan Ainsworth (voice of Pinocchio), Luke Evans and lyricist Glen Ballard sharing insights on their respective contributions to the film.^[34]

Release

On October 29, 2019, it was reported that Disney was considering releasing the film on its streaming service Disney+ due to the box office failure of its 2019 remake of *Dumbo*, though "a theatrical release seems more likely" after the hiring of Robert Zemeckis as director.^[35] On December 9, 2020, the film was officially announced to be moving back to Disney+ instead of a theatrical release in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.^[2] The film was released on September 8, 2022, as part of Disney+ Day.^{[36][37]}

Reception

Audience viewership

According to Nielsen, *Pinocchio* was the 6th most watched program across all platforms during the week of September 11, 2022.^[38] According to streaming aggregator Reelgood, *Pinocchio* was the 5th most watched program across all platforms during the week of September 17, 2022.^[39] According to Whip Media, *Pinocchio* was the 8th most watched film across all platforms in the United States during the week of September 23, 2022.^[40]

Controversy

A Day after the film's release, it was hit with disgusted reactions from UK Parents after the word Bollocks was used in the film. During a scene where Pinocchio & Jiminy Cricket run from the Coachman, they up from a cliff and into the sea, to the Coachman saying "Bollocks, Wooden boy would have been worth a bleeding fortune."^[41]

Critical response

On the review aggregator website Rotten Tomatoes, 28% of 181 critics' reviews are positive, with an average rating of 4.8/10. The website's consensus reads: "Visually dazzling but soulless, the largely inert *Pinocchio* reaffirms that you should always let your conscience be your guide... away from unnecessary remakes."^[42] Metacritic assigned the film a weighted average score of 38 out of 100, based on 37 critics, indicating "generally unfavorable reviews".^[43]

Adrian Horton of The Guardian gave the film three out of five stars, saying, "A live-action take on the classic animation has effective visual moments and an impactful turn from Tom Hanks but never quite justifies its existence."^[44] Richard Roeper of the Chicago Sun-Times gave the film three stars out of four, writing, "Every frame of *Pinocchio* is filled with rich and lush detail — at times this almost looks like a 3-D film — and the performances, whether live action or voiced, are universally excellent."^[45] Danny Leigh of the Financial Times thought that "The animation is now so hyper-advanced, the landscape of the movie so eerily both this and that, it is easy to get confused about where reality stops and ones and zeros take over."^[46] Jennifer Green of Common Sense Media gave the film three out of five stars and felt it "boasts an impressive mix of CGI animation and live actors and settings, but the final product feels a little jumbled".^[47]

Amy Nicholson of The New York Times was critical of the script: "Geppetto [sings] about his freshly concocted dead son. Someone wished to burden the old whittler with more motivation, and tacked on a dead wife to boot."^[48] Christy Lemire of RogerEbert.com called Key's performance "by far the film's highlight", but felt other updates to the story "too often feel empty and add no insight".^[49] Alex Godfrey of Empire gave the film two stars out of five, saying, "It's hard to invest much in Geppetto and Pinocchio's relationship when they spend barely any time together. Ultimately, it's all a bit flat, and feels like an exercise. It exists because it can."^[50] In a "C" review, Christian Zilko of IndieWire wrote, "While the original story remains undeniably excellent, *Pinocchio* fails at re-telling it because it ignores its own advice. ... If Disney truly believed that timeless virtue and character were more important than having a shiny new exterior, this remake would never have been made."^[51] Patrick Cremona of the Radio Times thought it

"never does enough to justify its own existence, failing to improve on the tremendous 1940 animation in any meaningful way."^[52] Andrew Barker of *Variety* was similarly negative, saying, "There may be no strings on this *Pinocchio*, but there isn't much of a heart in him either."^[53]

Accolades

Award	Date of ceremony	Category	Recipient(s)	Result	Ref.
<u>Golden Raspberry Awards</u>	<u>March 11, 2023</u>	<u>Worst Picture</u>	Derek Hogue, Andrew Milano, Chris Weitz, and Robert Zemeckis	Nominated	[54]
		<u>Worst Director</u>	Robert Zemeckis	Nominated	
		<u>Worst Actor</u>	<u>Tom Hanks</u>	Nominated	
		<u>Worst Supporting Actress</u>	Lorraine Bracco (voice)	Nominated	
		<u>Worst Screenplay</u>	Screenplay by Robert Zemeckis and Chris Weitz; Based on the 1940 Disney animated film and the novel <i>The Adventures of Pinocchio</i> by Carlo Collodi	Nominated	
		<u>Worst Remake, Rip-off or Sequel</u>	<i>Pinocchio</i>	Won	
<u>Hollywood Music In Media Awards</u>	<u>November 16, 2022</u>	Best Original Score – Streamed Live Action Film (No Theatrical Release)	<u>Alan Silvestri</u>	Nominated	[55]
		Best Original Song – Streamed Film (No Theatrical Release)	"I Will Always Dance" Written by Alan Silvestri and Glen Ballard; Performed by Kyanne Lamaya	Nominated	
<u>Golden Reel Awards</u>	<u>February 26, 2023</u>	<u>Outstanding Achievement in Sound Editing – Non-Theatrical Feature</u>	Bjørn O. Schroeder, Leff Lefferts, Randy Thom, Malcolm Fife, Pascal Garneau, Teresa Eckton, Goeun Everett, James Spencer, Chris Frazier, Dee Shelby, Christopher Manning, John Roesch, and Shelley Roden	Nominated	[56]
<u>Visual Effects Society Awards</u>	<u>February 15, 2023</u>	<u>Outstanding Animated Character in a Photoreal Feature</u>	Christophe Paradis, Valentina Rosselli, Armita Khanlarpour, and Kyoungmin Kim (for Honest John)	Nominated	[57][58]

See also

- Guillermo del Toro's Pinocchio

- Geppetto

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