



CHRISTMAS FILMS

Scrooge

Scrooge

Directed by: Brian Desmond-Hurst

©: Renown Film Productions Ltd.

Production Company:

Renown Pictures Corporation

Produced by: Brian Desmond-Hurst

Production Manager: Stanley Couzins

First Assistant Director: Denis O'Dell

Casting Director: Maude Spector

Adaptation and Screenplay by: Noel Langley

Adapted from A Christmas Carol by:

Charles Dickens

Director of Photography: C. Pennington-Richards

Camera Operator: C. Cooney

Film Editor: Clive Donner

Art Director: Ralph Brinton

Mechanical Victorian Dolls Loaned by:

Mr M. Steiner

Mechanical Toys Loaned by: Bracher and Partner

Costume Designer: Doris Lee

Costumes for Mr Sim/Mr Hordern/Miss Edwardes

Designed by: Constance Da Pinna

Make-up Artist: Eric Carter

Hairstylist: Betty Lee

Musical Score by: Richard Addinsell

Conducted by: Muir Mathieson

Sound Recordist: W.H. Lindop

Studio: Nettlefold Studios (Walton-on-Thames)

uncredited

Associate Producer: Stanley Haynes

Continuity: Margaret Ryan

Focus Puller: Gerry Turpin

Clapper Loader: Tom Friswell

Stills: Richard Cantouris

Assistant Editor: Anne Barker

Set Dresser: Freda Pearson

Draughtsmen: T. Hopewell Ash, Edward Marshall

Sketch Artist: Patricia Neville

Property Buyer: Chris Chapman

Construction Manager: Wallis Smith

Assistant Costume Designer: Phyllis Dalton

Wardrobe Master: W. Walsh

Assistant Make-up: Aldo Manganaro

Assistant Hairdresser: June Robinson

Sound Camera Operator: Charles Earl

Boom Operator: Fred Ryan

Dubbing Editor: Leonard Trumm

Publicity Director: Hugh Findlay

Cast:

Alastair Sim (*Ebenezer Scrooge*)

Kathleen Harrison (*Mrs Dilber*)

Mervyn Johns (*Bob Cratchit*)

Hermione Baddeley (*Mrs Cratchit*)

Michael Hordern (*Jacob Marley*)

George Cole (*Scrooge as a young man*)

John Charlesworth (*Peter Cratchit*)

Francis De Wolff (*the spirit of the present*)

Rona Anderson (*Alice, Scrooge's sweetheart*)

Carol Marsh (*Fan, Scrooge's sister*)

Brian Worth (*Fred, Scrooge's nephew*)

Miles Maleson (*Old Joe*)

Ernest Thesiger (*undertaker*)

Glyn Dearman (*Tiny Tim Cratchit*)

Michael Dolan (*the spirit of the past*)

Olga Edwardes (*Fred's wife*)

Roddy Hughes (*Mr Fezziwig*)

Hattie Jacques (*Mrs Fezziwig*)

Eleanor Summerfield (*Miss Flora*)

Louise Hampton (*laundress*)

C. Konarski (*the spirit of the future*)

One of the best-known adaptations of Charles Dickens' Christmas classic, Brian Desmond Hurst's 1951 film stars Alastair Sim as the notorious curmudgeon Ebenezer Scrooge, visited by the ghosts of Christmas past.

Although the film is stolen by Sim, for whom it would be become his most famous role, he's supported by a fine cast of British talent including Michael Hordern, Kathleen Harrison, Patrick Macnee and George Cole as Scrooge in his younger days. While the film may lack the cinematic flair of David Lean's famous adaptations from a few years earlier (*Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations*), Sim's delicious characterisation ensures a lively and memorable adaptation that will remain a mainstay of Christmas viewing for generations to come.

bfi.org.uk

Although there will always be dispute over which is Alastair Sim's finest screen performance, there's little doubt as to which is the best known. His 1951 characterisation of Charles Dickens' notorious curmudgeon Ebenezer Scrooge is not only generally regarded as definitive, but is also the only one of his films to achieve wide circulation in America, where it became a Christmas television perennial to rival *The Wizard of Oz*. There, it was known by the title of Dickens' original story *A Christmas Carol*, but in Britain it was named after the lead character.

And rightly so, because despite the stellar cast and a middle section where he is temporarily usurped by George Cole playing his younger self, this is Sim's film through and through. Clearly relishing the chance to play Scrooge as both villain and reformed hero, he takes an almost indecent delight in mocking the trappings of Christmas at every opportunity, shooin' away carol singers and refusing to contribute to a fund for the poor. But after he's learned his lesson, he becomes almost childishly gleeful, dancing a little jig as he realises that he might actually enjoy living as a reformed character.

He's given ample support by an impressive supporting cast: Mervyn Johns and Hermione Baddeley as the downtrodden Cratchits, Michael Hordern as Scrooge's deceased partner Jacob Marley, Patrick Macnee as young Marley, Kathleen Harrison as Scrooge's Cockney housemaid, and a scene-stealing Ernest Thesiger as an over-eager undertaker. But the film's true voice of authority comes from Rona Anderson as Scrooge's fiancée Alice: in a crucial central scene, she bitterly rebukes him for favouring material wealth over love of his fellow man.

Eliot Makeham (*Snedrig*)
Peter Bull (*first business man*)
Douglas Muir (*second business man*)
Noel Howlett (*first collector*)
Fred Johnson (*second collector*)
Henry Hewitt (*Rosebed*)
Hugh Dempster (*Groper*)
Maire O'Neill (*Alice's patient*)
Richard Pearson (*Mr Tupper*)
Patrick Macnee (*young Marley*)
Clifford Mollison (*Mr Wilkins*)
Jack Warner (*Mr Jorkins*)
David Hannaford
UK 1951©
87 mins
Digital

Casting aside, Brian Desmond-Hurst's production is competent rather than inspired, with little of the cinematic brio that David Lean brought to his Dickens films a few years earlier. But the Victorian London setting is effectively staged, alternating between a picture-postcard white Christmas to an altogether harsher impression, as homeless women clutch their children to their ragged bosoms. Not only does this implicitly rebuke Scrooge for his callousness, it reminds us of the reforming zeal underpinning Dickens' own work.

Michael Brooke, BFI Screenonline, screenonline.org.uk

CHRISTMAS FILMS

The Apartment

Tue 10 Dec 18:30; Mon 23 Dec 20:30; Sat 28 Dec 14:10

The Bishop's Wife

Sat 14 Dec 15:10; Fri 20 Dec 20:45; Sat 21 Dec 18:10

The Shop Around the Corner

Sat 14 Dec 17:40; Fri 20 Dec 14:30

Meet Me in St. Louis

Sun 15 Dec 14:40; Sat 21 Dec 12:10; Mon 23 Dec 18:10

It's a Wonderful Life

Fri 20 Dec 18:10; Sat 21 Dec 14:45; Sun 22 Dec 14:50; Mon 23 Dec 17:45

Scrooge

Sat 21 Dec 12:20; Sun 22 Dec 18:10; Mon 23 Dec 14:30

BFI IMAX

Polar Express 20th Anniversary screening

Sun 1 Dec 10:45; Sat 7 Dec 10:30; Sun 8 Dec 14:00; Sat 14 Dec 11:45; Sun 15 Dec 10:45

The Red Shoes

Sun 5 Dec 11:00

Ghiblioteque presents: Tokyo Godfathers Tōkyō

goddofāzāzu + intro

Sat 7 Dec 13:00

The Wizard of Oz

Sun 8 Dec 16:30

The Green Knight

Wed 11 Dec 20:30

Die Hard

Sun 15 Dec 13:15

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BIG SCREEN CLASSICS

Little Women

Sun 1 Dec 18:10; Mon 16 Dec 14:30; Fri 20 Dec 17:50

My Night with Maud Ma nuit chez Maud

Mon 2 Dec 18:10; Thu 5 Dec 12:20; Tue 17 Dec 20:30

Merry Christmas Mr. Lawrence

Tue 3 Dec 20:35; Sat 21 Dec 14:50

When Harry Met Sally

Wed 4 Dec 18:10 + intro by Ruby McGuigan, BFI Programme and Acquisitions; Fri 20 Dec 20:50; Sun 22 Dec 12:15

Torch Song Trilogy

Fri 6 Dec 18:05; Fri 13 Dec 20:30

Female Trouble

Fri 6 Dec 20:50; Wed 18 Dec 20:50; Sun 29 Dec 18:30

Fanny and Alexander Fanny och Alexander

Sat 7 Dec 19:30; Sun 29 Dec 14:15

The City of Lost Children La Cité des enfants perdus

Sun 8 Dec 15:15; Fri 27 Dec 20:45

Tangerine

Mon 9 Dec 20:45; Sat 21 Dec 20:45

Monty Python's Life of Brian

Wed 11 Dec 18:10 + intro by Justin Johnson, BFI Lead Programmer, Thu 19 Dec 12:30; Sun 22 Dec 18:30

Carol

Thu 12 Dec 12:20; Sat 21 Dec 20:40; Mon 30 Dec 17:50

Eyes Wide Shut

Sat 14 Dec 20:00; Wed 18 Dec 17:40; Sat 28 Dec 17:00

Goodfellas

Sun 15 Dec 17:50; Mon 23 Dec 20:10; Sat 28 Dec 20:15