

Blu-Ray Review: Beloved 'True Grit' Remake in Bonus-Packed Edition

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on June 21, 2011 - 3:48pm

- [Barry Pepper](#) [2]
- [Blu-ray Review](#) [3]
- [Brian Tallerico](#) [4]
- [Ethan Coen](#) [5]
- [Hailee Steinfeld](#) [6]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [7]
- [Jeff Bridges](#) [8]
- [Joel Coen](#) [9]
- [Josh Brolin](#) [10]
- [Matt Damon](#) [11]
- [True Grit](#) [12]
- [Theater, TV, DVD & Blu-Ray](#) [13]

CHICAGO – With the highest domestic gross of the entire career of the beloved Coen brothers (over \$170 million domestically, ranking #13 for 2010 releases) and an amazing ten Oscar nominations, "True Grit" was easily one of the most popular films of the last year. I had some issues with the piece overall but I'm ecstatic that a piece like this one outgrossed so many of the more obviously commercial entries from the holiday season. It serves as proof that quality can still be profitable and the excellent Blu-ray release from Paramount treats the film's many fans with appropriate respect.



Blu-ray Rating: **4.0/5.0**

Synopsis: "Mattie Ross (Hailee Steinfeld), is determined to avenge her father's blood by capturing Tom Chaney (Josh Brolin), the man who shot and killed him for two pieces of gold. Just fourteen, she enlists the help of Rooster Cogburn (Academy Award Winner Jeff Bridges), a one-eyed, trigger-happy U.S. Marshall with an affinity for drinking and hardened Texas Ranger LaBoeuf (Academy Award Winner Matt Damon) to track the fleeing Chaney. Despite their differences, their ruthless determination leads them on a perilous adventure that can only have one outcome: retribution."

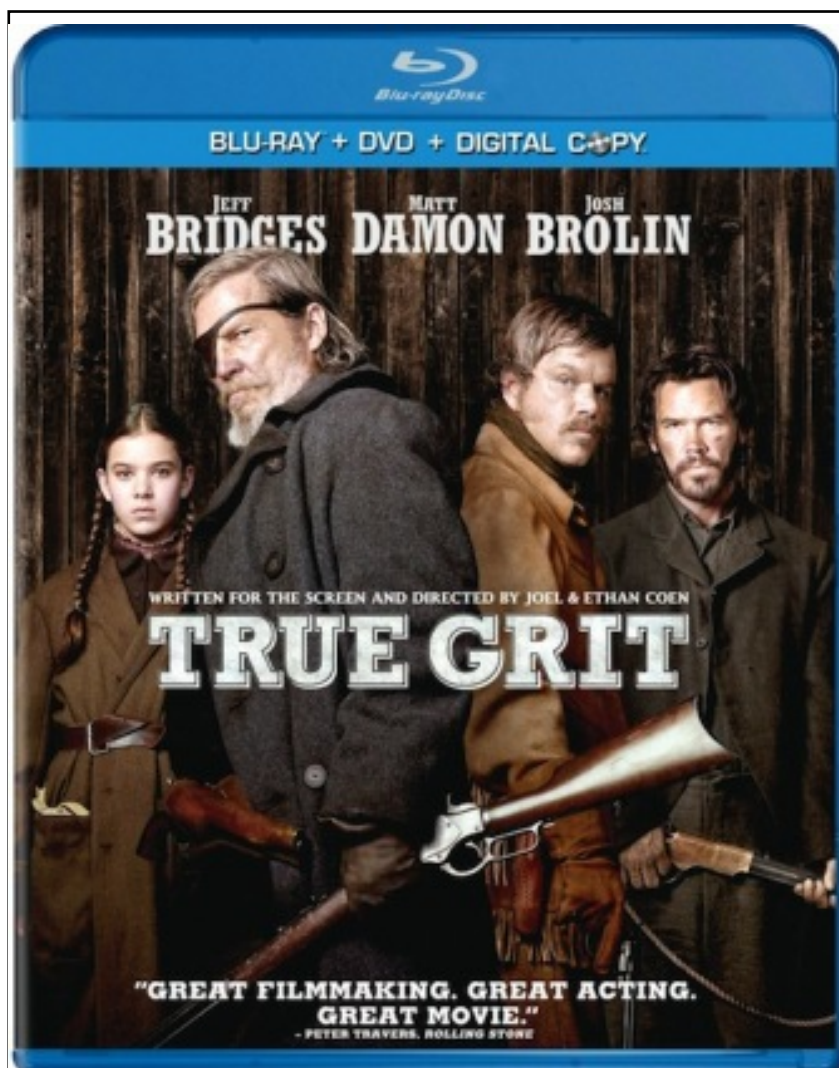


True Grit

Photo credit: Paramount Pictures

For this critic, the best element of "True Grit" was the stellar cinematography from the legendary Roger Deakins (who, almost miraculously, still doesn't have an Oscar after "No Country For Old Men," "Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford," "The Shawshank Redemption," and many more) and that shines through notably in the HD transfer from Paramount. This is easily one of the most visually striking films of 2010 and, for that reason alone, it's a movie that you should definitely own on Blu-ray if given the chance. It's what the format

was made for.



True Grit was released on DVD and Blu-ray on June 7th, 2011.

Photo credit: Paramount

As for the actual film, I've been a HUGE fan of the Coen brothers for years. I've written papers on them and reviewed almost all of their films at one point or another. And I've defended them against the arguments that they were too distant or cold for decades now. They have long been accused of being technical masters without enough heart and I've never really agreed until "True Grit." I wanted to love the film instead of admire it. I wanted to enjoy it instead of respect it. The emotional hook of the piece just isn't there for me. So, while I will watch "True Grit" and always admire its technical accomplishments, I'd much rather spend time with previous Coen creations like Anton Chigurh, Marge Gunderson, Barton Fink, and H.I. McDunnough. I simply enjoy their company more than I do the lonely denizens of the plain of "True Grit."

Having said that, the performances are strong, especially Hailee Steinfeld, who actually steals the show, delivering the most engaging performance in the film (and she was DEFINITELY the lead, not supporting, Academy categories be damned). But Jeff Bridges can do this kind of thing in his sleep. There's not the depth to this character that he usually brings to his best performances although I think it's a distance that can be attributed more to the director than the actor. Josh Brolin and Barry Pepper also bring the piece to the life with a bit of scene-stealing in the final act and Matt Damon does nothing wrong.

Whatever disagreements we may have on the film, the Blu-ray release is a quality one with great transfers and a wide variety of special features. I wish there was a commentary but know that the Coens are not likely to take the time to do one. They're too busy making another movie.

Special Features:

- o Behind the Scenes with Mattie Ross
- o Outfitting the Old West: Buckskins, Chaps and Cowboy Hats
- o Colts, Winchesters & Remingtons: The Guns of a Post-Civil War Western
- o Re-creating Fort Smith
- o The Cast
- o Charles Portis - The Greatest Writer You've Never Heard Of ...
- o The Cinematography of True Grit
- o True Grit Theatrical Trailer
- o DVD Version
- o Digital Copy Of Feature Film

"True Grit" stars Hailee Steinfeld, Jeff Bridges, Matt Damon, Barry Pepper, and Josh Brolin. It was written and directed by Joel and Ethan Coen. It is rated PG-13 and was released on DVD and Blu-ray on June 7th, 2011.



[14]

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