

A young boy lies awake in his room one snowy Christmas Eve, excited and alert.

Breathing silently. Hardly moving. Waiting.

He's listening for a sound he's afraid that he might never hear – the ringing bells of Santa's sleigh.

The time is five minutes to midnight.

Suddenly, the boy is startled by a thunderous roar. Clearing the mist from his window he sees the most amazing sight – a gleaming black train rumbles to a stop right in front of his house, the steam from its powerful engine hissing through the night sky and the softly falling snowflakes.

The boy rushes outside, clad only in his pajamas and slippers, and is met by the train's conductor who seems to be waiting just for him. “Well, are you coming?” the conductor asks.

“Where?”

“Why, to the North Pole, of course. This is the Polar Express!”

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Academy Award-winning team of Tom Hanks and director Robert Zemeckis (*Forrest Gump*, *Cast Away*) reunite for *The Polar Express*, an inspiring adventure based on the beloved Caldecott Medal children's book by Chris Van Allsburg.

When a doubting young boy takes an extraordinary train ride to the North Pole, he embarks on a journey of self-discovery that shows him that the wonder of life never fades for those who believe.

Combining classic storytelling with cutting-edge filmmaking, *The Polar Express* debuts a highly advanced version of motion capture technology developed and tailored to meet Zemeckis' uncompromising vision and is the first feature ever to be shot entirely in this format.

Sony Pictures Imageworks, with senior visual effects supervisors Ken Ralston, a five-time Oscar winner, and Jerome Chen, a 2000 nominee, help bring this enchanting holiday story vividly to life in full CG animation through a brand new system called Performance Capture, Imageworks' next-generation motion capture process. This innovative technique allows the actors' live-action performances to drive the emotions and movements of the digital characters in a way never seen before, throwing open the door to a whole new era of freedom and creative options for actors and filmmakers.

Castle Rock Entertainment presents, in association with Shangri-La Entertainment, a Playtone / ImageMovers / Golden Mean Production of a Robert Zemeckis Film: Tom Hanks in *The Polar Express*. Directed by Robert Zemeckis from a screenplay by Zemeckis & William Broyles, Jr., the film is produced by Steve Starkey, Robert Zemeckis, Gary Goetzman and William Teitler and is based on the book by Chris Van Allsburg. Tom Hanks, Jack Rapke and Chris Van Allsburg are the executive producers.

The production team includes directors of photography Don Burgess, A.S.C. and Robert Presley; production designers Rick Carter and Doug Chiang; and editors Jeremiah O'Driscoll & R. Orlando Duenas. Senior visual effects supervisors are Ken Ralston and Jerome Chen. Co-producer is Steven Boyd. Music score is by Alan Silvestri, and original songs by Glen Ballard and Alan Silvestri. Costumes designed by Joanna Johnston.

***“It doesn't matter where the train is going.
What matters is deciding to get on.”***