Cats is being patched with ‘improved visual effects’



Theaters are receiving a new version of *Cats* with “some improved visual effects,” just days after it premiered to dismal reviews. The update to the CGI-heavy movie was available to download on Sunday night, with hard drives otherwise ready to ship by Tuesday, according to a memo reviewed by *The Hollywood Reporter*. The change was requested by the film’s director Tom Hooper (*Les Misérables*, *The King’s Speech*), according to *THR*.

Hooper admitted to finishing the film just a day before its Friday premiere after working on it for “36 hours in a row.” The last-minute tweaks left room for mistakes, apparently, like Judy Dench’s human hand slipping through unnoticed.

> *This isn’t a joke: CATS was rushed into theaters before being finished so a new version is being sent to theaters with updated effects. How do you know if you have the old version? Look for Judi Dench’s human hand, wedding ring and all. pic.twitter.com/VDUOevePU9*

— Jenelle Riley (@jenelleriley) December 22, 2019

The exact improvements haven’t been detailed. Hooper’s been updating the visuals ever since the first trailer startled audiences with “digital fur technology” that transformed the likes of Idris Elba, Ian McKellen, Taylor Swift, and Jennifer Hudson into bipedal cats.

Changes to films already in theaters are extremely rare, but they do happen. *Vanity Fair* lists a few examples, including *The Shining* which Stanley Kubrick reportedly re-cut to trim the ending shortly after it premiered. However, that was pre-digital, making it a much more costly affair to swap out the old reels on a national or international scale. Let’s hope the advent of digital distribution doesn’t usher in an era of nearly-complete film releases akin to nearly-complete software releases like iOS 13.

https://www.theverge.com/2019/12/23/21034843/cats-film-updated-digital-fur-technology