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**Annie Claus Is Coming To Town (2011/Gaiam Vivendi DVD)/Bloody Christmas (2012/MVD DVD)/The Christmas Pageant (2011/Gaiam Vivendi DVD)**

Picture: C+/C-/C    Sound: C+/C/C+    Extras: D    Main Programs: C/D/D

To show how exploited Christmas is long before it arrives, here are three titles that would seem different, but are more the same than not.

First we have the one viable and still-boring entry **Annie Claus Is Coming To Town** (2011) which has Maria Thayer in the title role getting involved with a man. Too bad it was not with a better script. Vicki Lawrence and Vivica A. Fox turn up thinking this could work out to be some 'cute' holiday favorite of some sort, but it never pans out. Instead, we get a long 87 minutes of mostly clichés and too often backwards thinking. It's attitude towards women is mixed and I was mostly bored, though it could have picked up, but the lack of energy and honesty sabotages that as well. There are no extras.

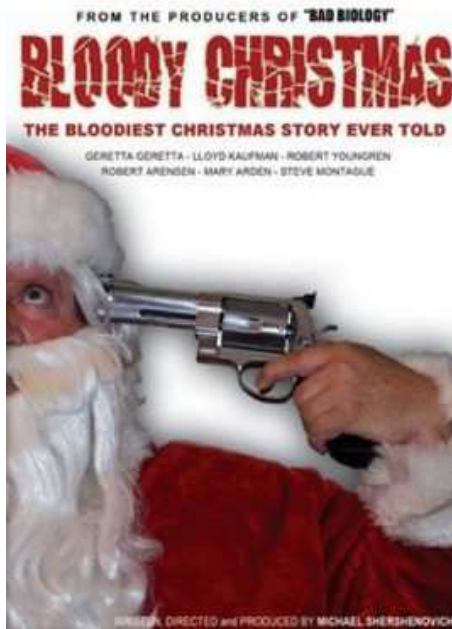
Michael Shershenovich's **Bloody Christmas** (2012) is a Horror exploitation bit about a public access Santa on a killing spree (the cover as featured above expresses our attitude at the site about this glut of XMas-ploitation from Horror to The Hallmark Channel) that is just a sloppy mess and an excuse for blood to be splattered all over the place, yet it echoes the splattering of phoniness and pseudo-morality in the dramas it would send up if it were smarter. This is awful, but so is the opposite alternative, which is the reason to include it to make said point.

Extras include Cast Interviews, a Trailer of some sort and lame Deleted Scenes.

That brings us to **The Christmas Pageant** (2011) with Melissa Gilbert (yes, that's her despite all the plastic surgery, really!) as a big Broadway star who is fired from her latest job (who does she think she is?!?) and forced to do a smaller production, but there, she meets a man (yawn) who could change her life (put her back in the kitchen?) and it gets worse from there making it about as mean and pointless as a Santa on a killing spree.

Edward Herrmann even shows up, but this is a disposable bore, is borderline misogynist and even outright insulting in its smugness and condescending sense of self. There are no extras, but it is awful.

The anamorphically enhanced 1.78 X 1 image on all three DVDs are poor, but **Annie** is the only one that is watchable, as **Pageant** is softer and has more noise than expected and **Bloody** is just a mess. The lossy Dolby Digital 5.1 on **Annie** and **Pageant** just spread out simple stereo at best, while the lossy Dolby Digital 2.0 Stereo on **Bloody** has awful location



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- > Cinderella: Diamond Edition (1951/Disney Blu-ray w/DVD and Digital Copy)
- > Magic Mike (2012/Warner Blu-ray w/DVD)

audio, bad sound editing, bad sound mixing and can be harsh in its playback along with some distortion and compression.

- Nicholas Sheffo

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