

## **VIRTUAL 3-D:**

An Explanation by its Inventor, Lauren Steinhauer

### **Why 3-D?**

From the moment of our birth, thanks to eyes set 2.5 inches apart, in the relatively flat plane of the face and designed to record two slightly different views of the same scene, we perceive a world of depth, a rich world of three dimensions. Far from a “gimmick,” this very human, very special, very natural way of interacting with the world is sorely missed when we view a flat, two-dimensional photograph, printed page in a magazine, projection of a standard film in a movie theater or tv broadcast.

The best of the classic 3-D movies produced in the 50s, *The House of Wax*, *The Creature from the Black Lagoon*, *It Came from Outer Space*, *Kiss Me Kate* and *Dial M for Murder* (the one 3-D film directed by Hitchcock) only confirms that adding a sense of depth to theatrical releases enhances the viewer’s involvement in dramatic content and enriches the overall experience.

### **3-D Video Before VIRTUAL 3-D**

Until VIRTUAL 3-D proprietary glasses, 3-D video simply hasn’t worked well. To date, tv viewers without an expensive black box and electronic glasses have relied on what are called anaglyph glasses (red and blue filters). They have experienced two kinds of disappointing 3-D video: 3-D Blu-ray discs or DVDs for sale or rent and special 3-D network broadcasts.

3-D Blu-ray discs (and a handful of DVDs) currently available suffer from the same three major problems: Problem one, mostly mediocre low-budget source material sloppily produced technically and dramatically, films such as *Cat Women of the Moon*, *The Bubble and Comin’ At Ya*; problem two, poor translation of the original 3-D footage to disc resulting in annoying double images and weak three dimensional effect; and problem three, the need for the viewer to “tweak” the tv set—often with no instruction—resulting in little improvement in 3-D effect and leaving the viewer to return the tv set after the show to normal viewing settings with varying degrees of success.

Televised 3-D to date has included movies of varying dramatic quality but all plagued with the same technical problem, poor translation of the original 3-D footage into broadcast video resulting in migraine-inducing double images and poor three dimensional effect. 3-D broadcasts have included special events such as a recent *Shark Week* on the Discovery Channel featuring documentary footage which required distribution of a special pair of glasses using what is called a Pulfrich system where one lens is clear and the other dark. This system requires movement in one particular direction for its illusion of depth. The three dimensional effect is slightly better than traditional red-blue anaglyph 3-D viewed on tv with its troublesome double images but limited because of the technique’s reliance on movement in one particular direction.

### **What Is VIRTUAL 3-D?**

VIRTUAL 3-D is a new technique using special proprietary glasses and enhanced Pulfrich overriding regular Pulfrich limitations. The original footage does *not*, repeat, does *not*, need to be in 3-D. The viewer wears a special set of inexpensive Virtual 3-D glasses. These glasses are not the standard anaglyph red and blue glasses; they are a vital part of the Virtual 3-D experience. Expensive, bulky LCD glasses and set top boxes are

*not* required. VIRTUAL 3-D requires no special tv settings; settings that give a good image for regular tv viewing work well with VIRTUAL 3-D.

### **Why VIRTUAL 3-D?**

Classic movies originally filmed in 3-D such as *The House of Wax* may now be viewed in 3-D closely approximating the theatrical experience. They may be standard broadcasts without the need for special equipment. Through the magic of VIRTUAL 3-D, films never filmed in 3-D may now be broadcast as a special event. Imagine the *Star Wars* series, the *Indiana Jones* series, *Jurassic Park* and other films viewed in 3-D with no additional production costs over and above VIRTUAL 3-D licensing. Special network productions may now be released in the VIRTUAL 3-D process for added impact and to up ratings. In a megachannel world, VIRTUAL 3-D can make any video or broadcast stand out from the crowd. The application of the VIRTUAL 3-D process is limited only by the imagination of today's producers and directors.

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