

# Movinn Pictures

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P O P C O R N

## STRATEGIC LOCATIONS, IN 3-D

The next time you go to a 3-D movie, choose your seat carefully. So says a longtime executive in the digital realm of filmmaking and exhibition.

"Just a few rows make a difference," offers **Rob Hummel**, president of 3-D conversion company **Legend3D**. He suggests sitting 1.5 screen heights from the screen. Any closer than that and the stereo appears shallower than the filmmakers intended. Sit too close, and it hardly looks 3-D at all.

This advice flies in the face of some moviegoers' instincts to sit as close as possible for an immersive cinema experience. That's still true

for 2-D movies, Hummel says, but the opposite is true for 3-D. Try it sometime: Stand near the front of the auditorium during a 3-D screening of, say, "Shrek 2" (which Legend3D has converted for 3-D Blu-ray), walk backwards up the aisle, and you'll watch as the castle in the kingdom of Far Far Away moves, well, farther and farther away.

Actually, don't. Moving around during a stereo screening is disorienting and even induces vertigo, as the images — especially the ones projecting out of the screen — don't move with you as expected.

Although 3-D cinema claims to mimic how

we experience the real world, "3-D is not 3-D," Hummel says. "The proper term is 'stereoscopic illusion.'" This is because in real life, our eyes both focus and converge on whatever we're looking at. With 3-D movies, however, our eyes focus on the screen but converge at a point either in front of or behind it. "Your brain gets tricked into thinking it's something like a stereoscopic depth cue," creating the illusion of 3-D, says Hummel.

The truth is everybody experiences 3-D differently. Up to 10 percent of the population can't even see it. And some apparently are sitting too close to the screen to fully appreciate it. — *Annlee Ellingson*