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From Spiderman to hobbits, 3D filmmaking—2012-style—is making a major cinematic comeback.

REPORTING BY ADAM PITLUK | PHOTOGRAPHY BY MISHA GRAVENOR

This July, as the butterflies take hold of your stomach during *The Amazing Spider-Man*—where you’ll watch our hero scamper up walls and swing between buildings from his first person perspective—it’s because of 3D technology.



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LEFT EYE RIGHT EYE

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And this December, as you watch Daisy (Carey Mulligan) in *The Great Gatsby* staring into a mirror and vividly seeing what her life could have been with the tragic Jay Gatsby (Leonardo DiCaprio), or when you can’t resist ducking as hobbits dodge flashing swords in Peter Jackson’s upcoming *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey*, it’s also because of 3D technology.

FORGET THE GOLDEN AGE

Of course, these experiences won’t be the 3D of the 1950s and 60s. If you’re a veteran 3D moviegoer—as in, you saw Alfred Hitchcock’s *Dial M for Murder* in the theater—you may

remember those “golden age” 3D movies more for their irritations (some actually caused headaches) than for their ambitions.

But recently, after decades of 3D films generally falling out of favor, a new kind of 3D experience is back, one that delivers only what was good about the medium when things went right—a vibrant, pull-you-in-to-the-screen sensory experience.

Film buffs, you’re no doubt already thinking of 2009’s *Avatar* courtesy of James Cameron, which is now practically synonymous with 3D’s improved, state-of-the-art experience.

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But here's a name you may not know: Steve Schklair, founder of L.A.-based 3ality Technica, which has been propelling 3D film technology further into the future—in evolutionary leaps and bounds.

THE RISE OF 3ALITY TECHNICA

Schklair, who a few years back made the courageous decision to abandon his studio job and start a company devoted fully to 3D filmmaking—"I was a little insane," he jokes now—has been one of the few Hollywood visionaries, like Cameron, to recognize the medium's potential when fused with a little 21st-century technology.

"Sound had migrated from mono to stereo to surround, but picture hadn't changed in a hundred years," Schklair says. "Resolution had gotten a little better, but that was it. So it was clear that the picture was going to change and I wanted to do it."

So how is Schklair and 3ality Technica—which has produced such recent and upcoming films as *The Amazing Spider-Man*; *Pirates of the Caribbean: On Stranger Tides*; *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey*; *Jack the Giant Killer*; *Oz: The Great and Powerful*; *Prometheus*; and *The Great Gatsby*—reviving a dying medium for our viewing pleasure?

Essentially, Schklair took an unwritten rule of movie making, and he did the complete opposite.

When shooting 3D, which is essentially the process of capturing and then simultaneously showing two images of the same scene—left-eye and right-eye views—to create the illusion of depth, videographers and directors tend to focus on the rig, or the device that holds the camera, to get these dual angles, says Schklair.



But 3ality Technica's approach is different: using software that certainly wasn't around fifty years ago, its 3D experts can zero in on the audience experience, shot-by-shot, frame-by-frame to manipulate and massage the 3D visuals into extraordinarily rich cinematic experiences.

"Our belief is, across all spectrums, your audience needs to pay a price to see a 3D movie," Schklair says. "Certainly ticket price, but also you're paying a price just by having to wear a pair of glasses in a theater. So what do you get for that price? If it's not any better than the 2D version, then it's just not worth it, so we've maintained the belief that the content really does have to be more compelling in 3D, or you're paying a price and not getting anything in return."

COMING TO A THEATER—AND TV—NEAR YOU

These days, there are a few upcoming 3D entertainment ventures that are especially on Schklair's mind—which means they'll likely soon be on yours.

Beside *The Amazing Spider-Man*, which comes out July 3, director Baz Luhrmann's upcoming film version of *The Great Gatsby* is on the front burner for 3ality Technica, because anything by Luhrmann is going to be widely anticipated—and scrutinized.

And then there's *Stalingrad*, a story about World War II's battle for the city; it's also the first Russian IMAX film, and it's slated for release in October 2013.

"*Stalingrad* is a Russian-language film," Schklair explains. "Russian director. Russian crew. A few of us Americans are handling the 3D side. The director is a guy named Fyodor Bondarchuk, a



famous director in Russia whose father actually directed *War and Peace*, so he's a movie kid. It's one of the best scripts I've ever read."

But Schklair isn't merely satisfied with his company's emerging international domination of 3D movies. And 3ality Technica is also about to revolutionize the television industry by expanding on the current 3D-TV craze. The world leader on the television front is BSkyB, which specializes in round-the-clock 3D broadcasts.

"They have three units constantly shooting and that's all our technology and our training, which is fairly cool," Schklair says, "so we're the start of the first big [3D] network. Whether we could pat ourselves on the back or not, the technology just works, and it works better than anything else out there on the market."



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