

What can we Learn from the Cinema of the 1950's? (invited paper)

Nick Lodge

Standards and Technology Division
Independent Television Commission (ITC)
UK

The 1950's cinema saw an explosion in gimmicks as movie house owners were desperate to counter falling box-office receipts. The reason for this was that people were staying at home to watch the new medium of television! This presentation will look at the ambitious and sometimes bizarre technologies that were developed to fill the cinemas of the 1950's, all aimed at making the movie experience a more realistic and immersive one. Examples are: Cinerama, 3D, surround audio, Sensorama, Aromarama, Percepto, Sensurround and Smell-o-Vision. But why did they all die out? Were they just one-off gimmicks? And are there lessons to be learned for today's immersive entertainments?