



# dimensional appeal

After taking centre stage in the film industry, 3D is stepping into the spotlight of home entertainment. **Will Cade** reports



**SAMSUNG's** brushed-finish system for the film aficionado and aesthete

## THE GRADUAL INCREASE IN 3D

content on the market – from Blu-rays and Sky to computer games and home video – is making even the most devoted movie buffs want to upgrade their home cinema. And why not? With the freedom to press pause, a ready-stocked bar and no necking teenagers or bouffant hairdos blocking the view, watching movies at home is, as we discovered with the advent of VHS and DVD, an unalloyed pleasure. Add the newest generation of 3D glasses (think battery-powered LCD frames and not the classic red-and-blue cardboard cut-outs we used to know) and its allure is hardly surprising. For all this and more, sit back with the perfect setup and enjoy the show leaping into the livingroom.

## AVID MOVIEGOER

With its brushed titanium frame measuring a scant 8mm, Samsung's flagship turns heads even before it's turned on. But its technology goes beyond mere design. If waiting for 3D favourites to hit Blu-ray is too unbearable, this LED converts 2D content to 3D in real time. Such a mode, though handy, falls short compared to original 3D footage, but it will fill the gap until Sky launches its 3D channel in October. A catch-22 of digital proportions, the touch-screen remote also shows a second channel on its 3in LCD screen, which then drains the rechargeable battery as quickly as talking on a mobile phone. As for home theatre, Samsung is offering a polished aluminium arrangement, including wireless 7.1-channel surround sound with 1,330 watts and a 3D Blu-ray player capable of wirelessly accessing multimedia from a PC or mobile device. With its sleek aesthetics and avant-garde gadgetry, Samsung's ultra-slim option packs more punch than competitor models, such as Sony's 803 Bravia series. ►

*SAMSUNG 55in 3D LED TV (€5,999) and Blu-ray Home Cinema System (€1,999)*

**A TOUCH-SCREEN** remote accompanies Samsung's razor-thin LED 9000

PANASONIC is the first brand to release a consumer-ready 3D camcorder



## FAMILY FUN

A system for everyone. Full HD for normal programming, and 3D-ready for Blu-ray titles like *Aliens vs. Monsters* and *Ice Age 3*, this plasma boasts one of the best pictures on the market. Rather than offer paper-thin LED models for its 3D line-up, Panasonic has chosen to focus on plasma's stellar yet affordable picture quality. The albeit bulkier models fare pronouncedly better in terms of "crosstalk", an unsavoury ghost effect from having slightly different visual information sent to each eye. In particular, this model pairs nicely with Panasonic's 3D Blu-ray and home theatre system, which produces virtual 7.1-channel surround sound using only two wireless speakers. Thanks to the company's Viera Link remote control, the single press of a button turns on the whole spread – the simplest way to be the first house on the street watching 3D.

PANASONIC 50in 3D Plasma TV (€2,599); Wireless Home Cinema System and Blu-ray Player (€999 & €500) and Camcorder (€1,399)



PANASONIC offers its V20-series plasma in 50in (above) and 65in

## CINÉASTE

Filmmakers may endorse one brand of projector over another, but rarely for free. This summer, Francis Ford Coppola went one step further and invited industry leaders and journalists to his Napa Valley estate to showcase Sim2's line of projectors, which are now in his studios and home. By stacking two of the company's premium units on top of one another, cinephiles can create their own genuine 3D cinema. Even the battery-free 3D glasses have the traditional film-house feel. Unfortunately, most high-end brands take longer to implement new technology than their mass-market counterparts. Denon, for instance, has not yet updated its flagship models for 3D. Instead, it's offering trimmed-down 3D versions of its universal disc player (via firmware update around October) and receiver. With help from its power amplifier and 7.2-channel surround sound from speaker manufacturer KEF, this system still picks up where its predecessors left off. And for those with home decor in mind, KEF's Reference series has a bespoke finish option, which can take up to three months to complete.

SIM2 3D Projectors (€70,000); Denon 3D Blu-ray player (€700), Receiver (€1,300) and Amplifier (€8,000); and KEF Surround Sound System (about €50,000 with personalised finish)



SIM2's Lumis 3D projector (above) is also available in white, black and gold, while KEF's Reference series come in 12 customisable colours



## 3D GADGETS

FUJIFILM FinePix REAL Camera and Viewer (€499 & €349) Even still pictures can jump off the screen. With its dual-lens technology, Fujifilm's digital 3D camera takes photos in 3D and displays them on its 2.8in screen without the need for 3D glasses. An 8in viewer offers a larger option, also glasses-free.



PlayStation 3 (€300) The first system to boast 3D gaming, the PS3 is slated to receive a 3D Blu-ray update this autumn. Consider a built-in hard drive with 120GB for home video, pictures and music, and the PS3 quickly becomes a convenient 3D solution.