

## Has Home Cinema Finally Come of Age?

Anyone who is interested in Home Cinema will be well aware of the explosive proliferation of 'good' projectors in recent years. It seems like only yesterday that when people spoke about Home Cinema it was in hushed tones of envy or, sometimes more graciously, admiration. But how it's all changed! No more, those humungous and horrendously expensive rich-kid toys of yesteryear – the new kids on the block promise a similar impact on Home Cinema as the Ipod has had on the joys of personal stereo.

I remember beholding the Sanyo PLV-Z1 just prior to its launch way back in 2002. I was awed by it. It promised a revolution: it was destined to bring the thrill of true-widescreen to the masses. No more sneaking the office demo projector home for the weekend (and risking the other-half's wrath at turning the lounge upside down) and no more fumbling with the 4:3 – 16:9 converter (stretcher) if it had one. And it was a milestone. Just don't look too closely at the gridlines! It was exhibited at the spring 2003 Ideal Home Show to open mouths and quaintly naïve questions like, "What is it...?"

Oh from those humble, nostalgic beginnings eh? Of course, arguments raged henceforth with the advent of the new DLP projectors. Many will fondly recall the delicious little InFocus (Screenplay) 4805 or the jaw-dropping (at the time) 5700. A leap forward, to be sure. But not without faults, like that irksome 'rainbow' effect that occasionally danced before the eyes, and not yet a challenge for that gold-plated Runco or SIM the premiership footballer snuggled up to with his WAG on a Friday night.

And then things really started to get interesting. Manufacturers like Optoma began introducing new features and enhancements to its famed Themescene range with an alacrity akin to Ford's 100 year history being condensed into a single decade. Contrasts doubled, and then doubled again; the number at the end of the chip increased year-on-year just as Pentium's processor did, and it wasn't long before we were embracing the revolutionary 3-chip configuration. Improvements in colour management, too, gave us vibrant images that humbled the poor little PLV-Z1 and nullified the 'rainbow' effect that we'd all learned to live with.

So has Home Cinema finally come of age? Well, if the latest Themescene projectors are anything to go by, yes it has. Because now you don't have to be a famous footballer or pop star to enjoy the hitherto unattainable heights of truly stunning Home Cinema. Now it's within easy and affordable reach of everyone.

What makes the new Themescene HD86 so amazing? Well, for a start there's a clue in the title. It's a High Definition model (full 1080p no less). But so are many models nowadays. What makes this projector so special, though, is a host of cutting-edge technologies that propel it way beyond the performance offered by its contemporaries.

ANSI contrast, for example, has become the new benchmark for judging the 'real world' contrast a projector delivers. And here the Themescene HD86 excels, producing a high ratio that other projectors can only aspire to. Watching a scene from Batman-The Dark Knight is simply breathtaking. You witness blacks as pure as a desert night-sky, natural colours so rich you want to stroke them and a definition so sharp you almost forget to breathe.

And then there's the Themescene HD86's new PureMotion2 technology. If you've ever watched football on an LCD TV and thought the ball looked more like a lump of fluff bouncing across puddles you'll grin like a child when you watch it on this. It produces fast-motion images so seamless you'll be dumbstruck. It is without doubt the closest thing to actually being there.

It is impossible to adequately describe the spine-tingling sensation of watching the new HD86 in action. It is, quite simply, divine. If you get the opportunity to see one for yourself, bite that hand off before it's snatched away from you. You'll be one of the lucky few. And you'll witness a Home Cinema miracle.

© David Hayles, 2009.

David Hayles writes technology-based articles for UK-wide Home Cinema specialists, IntoAV Ltd. The new Themescene HD86 projector is on display at their state-of-the-art demonstration suite in Stevenage. For an exclusive preview phone 01438 311625 or visit <http://intoav.com>