

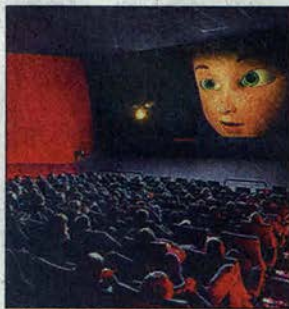
It's all about sound in city cinema

N Venkateswaran | TNN

Chennai: If you thought Rajinikanth flipping a coin was one of the highlights of 'Sivaji', wait till you see the brand new 3D version of the movie in Dolby Atmos. For, the revolutionary sound system enhances the definition and placement of sounds in a movie. Also, with speakers mounted overhead also, the sound one hears is much more natural and clearer.

According to Pankaj Kedia, country manager, Dolby Laboratories, the Atmos sound system can handle up to 128 audio tracks and up to 64 speakers, each of which can be controlled independently. Speaking in the city during the formal launch of Atmos in India, he said, "It is one of our most significant innovations in recent years and represents the future of entertainment."

Chennai can very well be called the innovation capital



MAGIC IN A HALL

of Indian cinema. Among the first to embrace new technology, it has introduced many revolutionary concepts such as digital cinema and non-linear film editing. Sample this: Additive colour printing and 70mm post-production were introduced by Prasad Labs, the first Dolby mixing studio was again set up at Prasad (where 'Rangeela' was the first Indian movie to be mixed), the non-linear editing system Avid was introduced

by the city-based Real Image Media Technologies, digital theatre sound (DTS) was also brought here by Real Image, and Prasad EFX was the first to do digital intermediate (DI) for a full film (Raj Kumar Santoshi's 'Khakhee'). Also, the first Dolby digital 3D theatre in the country was set up at Devi Cineplex in the city.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Chennai trumped other cities in introducing Dolby Atmos. The only theatre in the country that has installed it is in the city (Serene at Sathyam Cinemas) as also the only studio that does the sound mixing (Real Image).

Also present at the launch was Senthil Kumar, co-founder, Real Image, who said, "It is truly a leap forward as it treats every speaker as a different channel and localizes the sound. It offers a truly immersive listening experience that strongly complements the visual impact."

Dolby Atmos is the most significant development in cinema audio since the arrival of surround sound. Developed with inputs from professionals throughout the movie industry, it streamlines distribution and allows filmmakers to position and move sounds anywhere in the theatre, even overhead.

Only six movies (Brave, Taken 2, Chasing Mavericks, Ah Boys to Men, Life of Pi and Rise of the Guardians) have been released in this technology, which was announced by the company in April this year. The seventh, and the first Indian movie, to adopt the technology is 'Sivaji 3D', which will be released on December 12.

According to M S Guhan, managing partner, AVM Productions, the reason for choosing Atmos was that "it brings a new sonic dimension to the amazing visuals 'Sivaji 3D' will deliver to the audiences."