

# The New York Times

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## *New at Movieplex: Return of the Wide Screen Format*

As moviemakers increasingly explore digital processes, **Super Vista**, a relatively young company, has reached back to the 70-millimeter wide-screen film format to create a new experience for moviegoers.

In screenings that begin today, the company, based in Los Angeles, is demonstrating what it calls the Super Dimension-70 system with a film narrated by Walter Cronkite, which includes a carriage ride in Central Park and a stomach-churning journey through the Grand Canyon. The process, for screens 50 feet wide or wider, enhances the brightness and clarity of the film and is meant to envelop the viewer.

"It's our opinion that motion picture theaters have to provide a variety of motion picture experiences," said Robert C. Weisgerber, president of Super Vista and creator of the Super Dimension-70 system, for which he holds patents.

With SDS-70, as it is known, film is shot at 48 frames a second rather than the conventional 24 frames. It is then manipulated further and shown on a special projector.

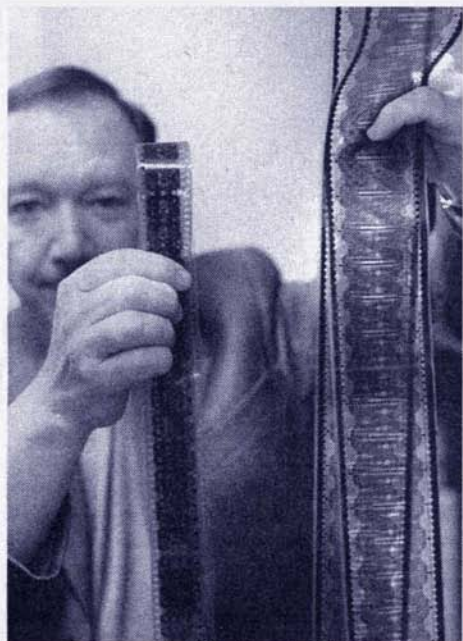
Mr. Weisgerber said the company does not intend to compete with giant-screen IMAX films like "Everest" and "Fantasia/2000." IMAX is strictly a special-venue format, he said, while SDS-70 can be adapted to 35-millimeter for use in regular theaters.

"What we're trying to do is create a bigger bang for the buck," he said.

Wide-format films were tried in the past, as with Cinerama in the 1950's and '60's, and various movies released in 70-millimeter prints during the 1970's and '80's that used the wider film in part to carry multichannel sound tracks. The advent of digital sound in the 1990's eliminated an important incentive for 70-millimeter films.

After a screening of an SDS-70 test film last fall, George Spiro Dible, the national president of the International Cinematographers Guild, wrote in the guild's magazine that the system was well received. Mr. Weisgerber is hopeful. "There's always room for greater entertainment," he said.

BARBARA WHITAKER



Gerard Burkhart for The New York Times

Robert C. Weisgerber has created a new big-screen 70 millimeter film process.