

Immersed in a world both breathtaking and in danger

By **CHRISTY LEMIRE**
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

You never get used to it. Even about halfway in, even having settled into your seat with those plastic glasses nestled on your nose, you'll still find yourself dazzled again and again by the impossibly breathtaking beauty of the IMAX adventure "Under the Sea 3D."

Longtime documentary filmmaker Howard Hall took his cameras to Australia's Great Barrier Reef and the Coral Triangle of Papua New Guinea and Indonesia to capture footage of a wild array of sea life. His intention was to entertain with wondrous visuals as well as convey a message about the impact global warming is having on these exotic creatures.

Jim Carrey provides the amusing and informative narration, but the images are so distractingly awesome, it's often hard to pay attention to what he's saying. (We also could have done without the overly feel-good version of the Beatles' "Octopus' Garden" at the end.) But kids will be delighted by the vibrant colors and the film's

frequently playful tone – the sea lions with their expressive eyes, for example, are just too cute for words – while adults will be wowed by the complexity of the three-dimensional technology.

Truly, giant chunks of coral seem to have been plopped right into your lap. A great white shark swims so close to your face, you can count its piercing teeth. And countless black-and-white-striped catfish cascade over each other as they feed on silt, undulating toward you in delicate waves.

The photography is so intimate and the details are so tangible, they'll make you repeatedly wonder: How'd they get that shot?

The task must have been especially arduous with those bulky IMAX cameras. (According to the press notes, Howard and his crew spent more than 350 hours underwater and 110 days at sea to get 10 hours of raw footage. Howard himself spent six hours chasing after a reef stonefish, a hideously ugly and deadly creature that blends in with the rock formations on the ocean floor to sneak up on its prey; all that patience clearly paid off.)

But much of the joy of "Under

the Sea 3D" comes from the simple discovery of creatures you might never have heard of before, such as the ethereal, iridescent reef squid and the delicate leafy sea dragons, which look more like plants than animals.

Then there are the flamboyant cuttlefish, which change color from deep red to bashful beige and back again to communicate with each other. They're a mesmerizing sight to behold – until their long, sharp tongues suddenly snap from their mouths to zap some poor, unsuspecting smaller fish.

Cycle of life, man. Sunrise, sunset – even in some of the most remote places on Earth.

★★★★½
UNDER THE SEA 3D
40 minutes, G

Directed by Howard Hall. Produced by Toni Myers.

Narrated by Jim Carrey.

Playing at **IMAX Theatre Palisades Center**, West Nyack, N.Y.

Printing imperfections present during scanning

