

SPECIAL ISSUE: 2010 HOME OF THE YEAR AWARDS

# ELECTRONIC HOUSE

May/June 2010

SMART | GREEN | SAFE | FUN

## VIDEO NIRVANA

OUR HOME OF THE YEAR IS PICTURE PERFECT

**PLUS**  
AWARD-WINNING  
FAMILY ROOMS, THEATERS,  
MASTER SUITES AND MORE



**WHAT'S COOL**

This A/V system produces sweet sights and sounds. Period. Nothing more is needed.



# *secret* **INGREDIENT?**

What's so special in this theater is simple audiophile- and videophile-grade quality. *by Steven Castle, photography by Olson Photographic*

**THERE MAY NOT BE ANYTHING** about this home theater space that stands out and wows you. The decor is very nice. Its wood trim and warm look is inviting. And there's a 123-inch fixed screen showing a Full HD 1080p picture from a top-of-the-line three-chip DLP projector. We'd take that in a heartbeat.

Then there are the B&W 804S front speakers, paired with a B&W HTM3S center channel, four B&W Signature 7NT surrounds, and two REL R-505 subwoofers producing some very fine sounds.

There are comfortable Acoustic Innovations Deco home theater chairs, a nearby rack containing a Rotel processor and amplifiers, a Pioneer Elite Blu-ray player and a DirecTV HD receiver. Finally, there's a slick Crestron TPS-6X wireless touchpanel to control it all. Very nice, indeed.

What's not to like about this 28-by-28-foot home theater space? Oh, that's right: It has no super-duper

descending screen or WOWEE button that's going to make us gush about what an awe-inspiring innovation it is. It doesn't even have superwide CinemaScope (2.35:1 aspect ratio) capability!

So, wait a minute: A \$35,000 three-chip SIM2 C3X projector isn't *wowee* enough? The SIM2 projector produces a great picture, even for that exalted price range, says electronics installer Barry Reiner of Innerspace in Port Chester, N.Y. And the projector itself has a really nice look, he adds. It's not a big, hulking thing hanging from the ceiling. "It has a lot of style, and it's not obtrusive looking."

Reiner's also a big fan of the B&W speakers—as well as the B&W and Rotel electronics pairing. "We think B&W makes a wonderful product. They're great performers. And with Rotel, we wanted to use a nice-quality surround product above the mid-priced range."

Okay, so there's seriously good audio and video here. And a nice looking room. But shouldn't we be,

**THE TEAM**

**Systems Design and Installation**

Innerspace  
Port Chester, N.Y.  
www.innerspaceelectronics.com

**Acoustics**

SoundSense  
East Hampton, N.Y.

**Interior Design**

Pat Kreisler Interior design  
New York, N.Y.

**Architect**

Max Parangi Architects  
White Plains, N.Y.

**General Contractor**

Sinis Contracting  
Purchase, N.Y.



#### SYSTEMS & EQUIPMENT

**Control:** Crestron  
**Projector:** SIM2  
**Video Display:** Stewart  
 Filmscreen  
**Speakers:** B&W  
**Receiver:** Rotel  
**Amplification:** Rotel  
**Blu-ray Player:** Pioneer  
**Home Theater Seating:**  
 Acoustic Innovations

**ROOM SIZE**  
 28 x 28 feet

**PROJECT DURATION**  
 2 years

like, bouncing off our seats at some incredible application or pop-up geegaw?

Instead, let's talk acoustics. Yes, as in boring, old acoustics. Reiner says the family in this house wasn't crazy about adding acoustical treatments, but at the same time, they didn't want sound from the theater leaking upstairs to the family room. The idea was that the parents and the teenagers could entertain separate guests in separate areas without audible conflicts between the two.

So acoustics company SoundSense engineered an acoustically suspended ceiling that is separated from the rest of the home's structure, thereby preventing sound vibrations from traveling from the theater to the upstairs areas.

SoundSense and Innerspace also had to treat a curved back wall of the theater, which is an architectural element, so sound wouldn't reflect off of it uncontrollably. Even the soffit area of the tray ceiling is treated acoustically.

Well, gee, all that's really nice, too. But ... er ... isn't there something else to rock our electronics world? Nah. This theater system is already good enough. **EH**

#### MAKING AN A/V INVESTMENT COUNT

If you invest in a very good audio and video system, as the owners of this home theater did, you want it to sound and look its best. And that often requires an additional investment in acoustical treatments and audio and video calibration.

First, the rounded portion of the back wall in this theater posed a problem, because sound can reflect off a rounded surface in undesirable ways. Acoustical treatments were added to that wall to achieve the optimal delay time for the surround sound. (A small delay time in the surround channels, for example, adds some spatial ambience to surround effects.) Other portions of the theater, such as the soffit and the walls, were also treated with acoustical materials.

Once the system was installed, audio calibration was performed with an SPL (sound pressure level) meter and Digital Video Essentials Calibration software. Final audio adjustments were made with room analysis software. Video calibration was completed to ISF (Imaging Science Foundation) standards.

As a result, these homeowners enjoy the kind of top-of-the-line performance that their high-end audio and video systems can deliver. Without the acoustical treatments and calibration, their performance would surely be compromised.