



The living room with the audio system (shown revealed on this page and hidden on the facing page) that Grimani designed for a former president of ABC Television Network.

TAILORED ENTERTAINMENT

Sound designer Anthony Grimani creates a bespoke home theatre service with Clarity Audio.



By LUANN ALPHONSO

Creating a spectacular home theatre system goes beyond a few well-placed speakers and oversized cinema seats. According to Anthony Grimani, inventor of the Surround EX 6.1 channel audio format that was featured in the movie *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace*, it's all

about integration and managing the environment.

Grimani tells us more about the art of bespoke aural experiences.

What are the mistakes commonly made with existing set-ups? We usually see a flat room with the doors at the front. Which means that if you wanted to go to the bathroom,

you have to interrupt everybody so you can go out. Correctly built, there would be no interruptions. I also feel that many rooms are so narrow that it feels like being in a bus. This means that sound doesn't travel well because the speakers are spread inconsistently.

What sort of considerations do you make



Grimani's 28 years in the audio industry includes stints at Dolby and Lucasfilm THX.

while working within a space? We ask about details such as lifestyle needs, and then design a solution based around the requirements. So that would mean engineering and understanding the acoustic properties of that particular room and the space, putting in the correct equipment and making sure it works for the customer. Ultimately, that whole process is something that we handle on behalf of the client, so that the room is shown to them perfectly completed.

What about the cost? The magic about

“The whole process is something that we handle on behalf of the client.”



the whole thing is that we are the representatives and direct distributors for every brand that Clarity carries. That gives us a lot of flexibility in terms of what we want to do. The whole point is to be able to come up with something that is customised, in accordance with the budget, and to the ideal level of performance that is expected.

What's the most challenging project you've done? It happens to be the apartment of a former president of the ABC Television Network. It's on Fifth Avenue overlooking Central Park in New York. He wanted to be able

to transform his living room into a world-class private theatre when needed. To achieve this, I hid the array of speakers and treatments, such as padding, needed for the theatre within the walls, which were covered with silk from Shanghai that had been made by a well-known artist. When you push a button, a big screen comes down from the ceiling. You push another button and a motorised sliding door closes and then expands to seal the room. Designing and getting that door commissioned was unbelievably complicated. www.clarityhifi.net

SOUND CHECK

Mark Levinson's latest amplifier makes the most of any audio.

By HO YUN KUAN

Two knobs and six buttons on the front panel enable any adjustments the owner wishes to make.
Inset: the back panel.



Much time, effort and dollars can be invested into setting up the perfect sound system, but even the most meticulously arranged speakers would yield weak, tinny sounds when playing compressed audio files. Yet, converting the entire music library into high-resolution audio files is not a feasible option for most – it would take up too much space in the hard drive.

The Mark Levinson No. 585 Integrated Amplifier has the solution. It uses the Harman Clari-Fi processing system, an industry first pioneered by the Harman Luxury Audio

Group to which Mark Levinson belongs.

This technology reconstructs information and bandwidth that is lost through compressions to restore a high-fidelity sound – and does it accurately. Unlike similar systems, it only makes up for what is needed and does not blindly add equalization or bass boosting effects that could alter the intended listening experience. For more information, visit Clarity Group.

www.clarityhifi.net



October - 2014

ROBB COLLECTIONS

RR

← ELEGANT LUXURIOUS STYLISH →

PRECISION TOOL

T+A MP 3000 HV

By HO YUN KUAN

German audio equipment maker T+A claims to have built its finest CD player yet. This player is named MP 3000 HV, with "HV" indicating that it is part of the brand's high-voltage line.

T+A describes the CD mechanism as having "very fast access times and superb error correction". The disc drive is doubly isolated - first sealed in a sound-dampening case to prevent the CD mechanism from

being affected by sounds issuing from other parts of the player, then fitted on a three-point suspension to reduce resonance, which may result in separation of the mechanism from the player's case.

The CD drawer is guided on two stainless steel pushrods, and moves with the aid of a heavy-duty motor.

T+A products are available at Clarity in Singapore. www.taelektroakustik.de

Shown here is the entire HV range by T+A. The MP 3000 HV is on the counter, on the left.





Personal preferences and the limitations of each home will affect the products one eventually chooses.

SWEET MELODY

It's possible to achieve good sound in a home cinema, says Soon Ong, CEO of audio consultation company Clarity.

By HO YUN KUAN

The key to good sound is finding a balance between reflected and absorbed audio. Hard surfaces such as concrete are reflective, while those that are soft and porous, such as curtains and carpets, are absorptive. Sound distortions such as inaccurate pitch and fuzzy speech may occur if the overall balance tips more toward reflection than absorption.

Two configurations are most common for setting up a home cinema: 5.1 and 7.1 surround sound. The former involves six speakers – one subwoofer for low frequency sounds, one centre channel, and left and right speakers for the front and back of the room.

The latter has a similar configuration as the 5.1, but for two additional speakers on the left and right, which add depth and precision to the audio. The 5.1 is

suitable for smaller rooms while the 7.1 works better for larger rooms. For a small room that has no space for a 5.1 set-up, consider bookshelf speakers. Combined with a subwoofer, these can suffice for a basic home cinema system without having equipment dominating the room.

It used to be that elaborate systems came with tangled wires and a dozen controls. Today, technological advancements have made the convenience of controlling everything with just one device possible. The Savant system comes with an app that is compatible with the iOS and Android platforms. With it, home cinema owners can control not just the entertainment system, but also the temperature, lighting and security from their smartphones. www.clarityhifi.net