



A view of the apartment's main living room, with its hard-to-backlight display cabinets

# Riverside views

**Llanor Alleyne** reports on a London Docklands apartment where attention to lighting design detail and well-programmed control systems have been key to keeping the customer happy

**L**ike so many of Europe's post-industrial spaces, London's Docklands area has come a long way since lucrative shipping ports lined its coastline during the 18th and 19th centuries. Replacing the spice factories and warehouses that sheltered the fine silks, teas and goods from India and East Asia, today's Docklands are the result of a revitalisation process that has been taking place over the last 20 years – a process most evident in the host of iconic financial institutions and luxury apartments that make up its new skyline.

Nestled in one of those luxury buildings, the Horizon Building to be exact, is a 2,200 sq ft, two-bedroom penthouse apartment that recently got a sophisticated audio and lighting makeover thanks to custom installation firm Martin Kleiser. Recommended by lighting control company Lutron after the owners of the property looked them up on the internet, the Martin Kleiser three-man team was headed up by Steve Martin.

"We were given a small brief with a limited number of light circuits to keep cost down," says Martin. "But the furniture designer encouraged the owner to do more things, along with [her partner], who has a love of toys."

Taking the furniture designer's advice, the flat owner's initial budget of £80,000 ballooned to £205,000 as the Kleiser team – after the owner paid a visit to the Kleiser showroom for a demonstration of what was possible within the space – designed both standard and unique audio and lighting features for installation in the flat's main living room, master bedroom and ensuite bathroom.

"The worst thing about some installations is that people don't talk about performance," says Martin. "As soon as you start giving people choices with vertical pricing and introducing them to increasingly good-quality products, they realise what they want."

With the penthouse completely gutted and rewired to accommodate the elaborately planned AVL setup, Martin and his team set to work on the main living room. This features a 50in plasma screen for daytime viewing and a SIM2 HT300 video projector and Vutek drop-down screen for a cinematic feel at night, with AV content coming from an AMX MAX DVD server – this has been linked to four rooms to provide a library of instant films. Both plasma and projector are connected to Future Automation mechanics for automated drop-down operation. As with all the rooms in the flat, Linn amplifiers power B&W in-ceiling speakers, with sub-woofers hidden within the furniture. All secondary room audio systems, including those in the master bedroom and ensuite bathroom, are controlled via Lutron keypads through the AMX and Linn systems.

"One of the big challenges in the living room was the display cabinet," Martin recalls. "This was to be back-lit and we had to find a way of doing this without heat

build-up behind 10mm frosted glass. So we dimmed the fixtures with three circuits of a Lutron Grafik Integrale."

In the master bedroom, furniture designer Big Design wanted to make an impact and used the bed as the canvas on which to make that statement. The custom-made bed has been enhanced with the warm glow of built-in lights and a sub-woofer hidden in its base to give true meaning to the phrase "feeling the music". The bed has also been fitted with a 23in Sony LCD screen that disappears on the movement of a Future Automation lift.

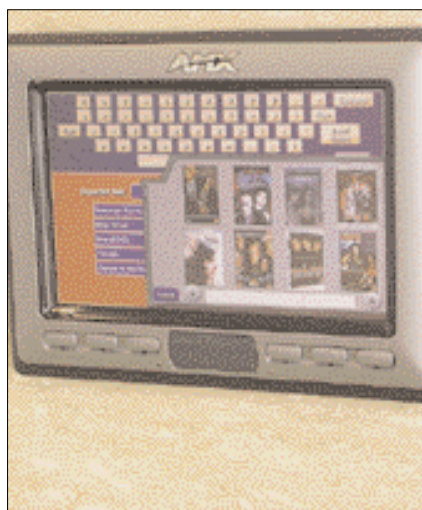
In the master bedroom's ensuite bathroom, lighting is the main feature. Martin used Blue low-voltage lights to create a mode on demand, Kreon floor uplights and LED 'runway' lights for a total of eight circuits – not bad for a room measuring just 12m square. The room is further fitted with a Television in-wall LCD screen, which is linked to the AMX MAX server. Though visually stunning now, the bathroom design didn't come without its share of problems.

## Installed

- AMX 4000 series control processor
- AMX MAX DVD server
- AMX 7in touchscreens
- AMX 8400 wireless screen
- Linn Intersekt distributed audio system
- Linn Kisto, Unidisk + Chakra home cinema system
- SIM2 HT300 projector
- Vutek trap-door screen
- B&W Nautilus speakers
- B&W ceiling speakers
- Television in-wall LCD
- Lutron Homeworks Series 8 processor w/RPMs, WPMs, Grafik Integrales, motor modules
- Future Automation drop mechanic for projector + plasma
- Sony LCDs + plasmas



Built-in lighting, a sub-woofer hidden in the base and a pop-up Sony 23in LCD screen combine to let the end users 'feel the music' in bed!



One of several AMX 7in LCD touchscreens which control the audio, AV and lighting systems (above left) and the guest bathroom with 'blue glow' fibre-optics in the bath itself

"The bathroom doors were a real challenge," says Martin. "They slide into the wall and the client wanted them motorised.

also received first-class makeovers. The second bedroom and the cloakroom share a dimmable fluorescent light box, which acts

string tucked around the outside edge under the frame to create a glow on the floor, a solution he came up when room beneath the glass tiles proved non-existent. The frosted glass sink stand is lit with two low-voltage IP65 lights. In this room, even the water gets a highlight, with the team using fibre optics inserted into the waterflow and linked to sensors to create a blue glow.

A Lutron Homeworks Series 8 processor, controlled via several AMX touchscreens, handles lighting control for all the luminaires in the apartment. The system has been programmed to accommodate a number of specific requests, including day and night scene settings, manual sequences and global scenes across multiple keypads.

Completed over 14 months, the penthouse apartment shows off the meticulous and intricate melding of several systems creatively brought together under a consistent design. For the Kleiser team, it was a triumph that illustrates what contemporary systems design is all about.

## 'As soon as you start giving people choices and introducing them to increasingly good-quality products, they realise what they really want'

They initially weren't mounted well and were warped, so when we fitted a custom made [sensor-based] motor for them, getting them to work was a nightmare."

The penthouse's secondary rooms have

as a partial wall between the two spaces and has been programmed to take into account such logistics as the time of day and awareness of lights on in another room. In the guest bathroom, Martin used a neon

As Martin himself puts it: "There was no particular element of the project that stood out, because the project was essentially about integration, and that is always the best bit." ■■

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