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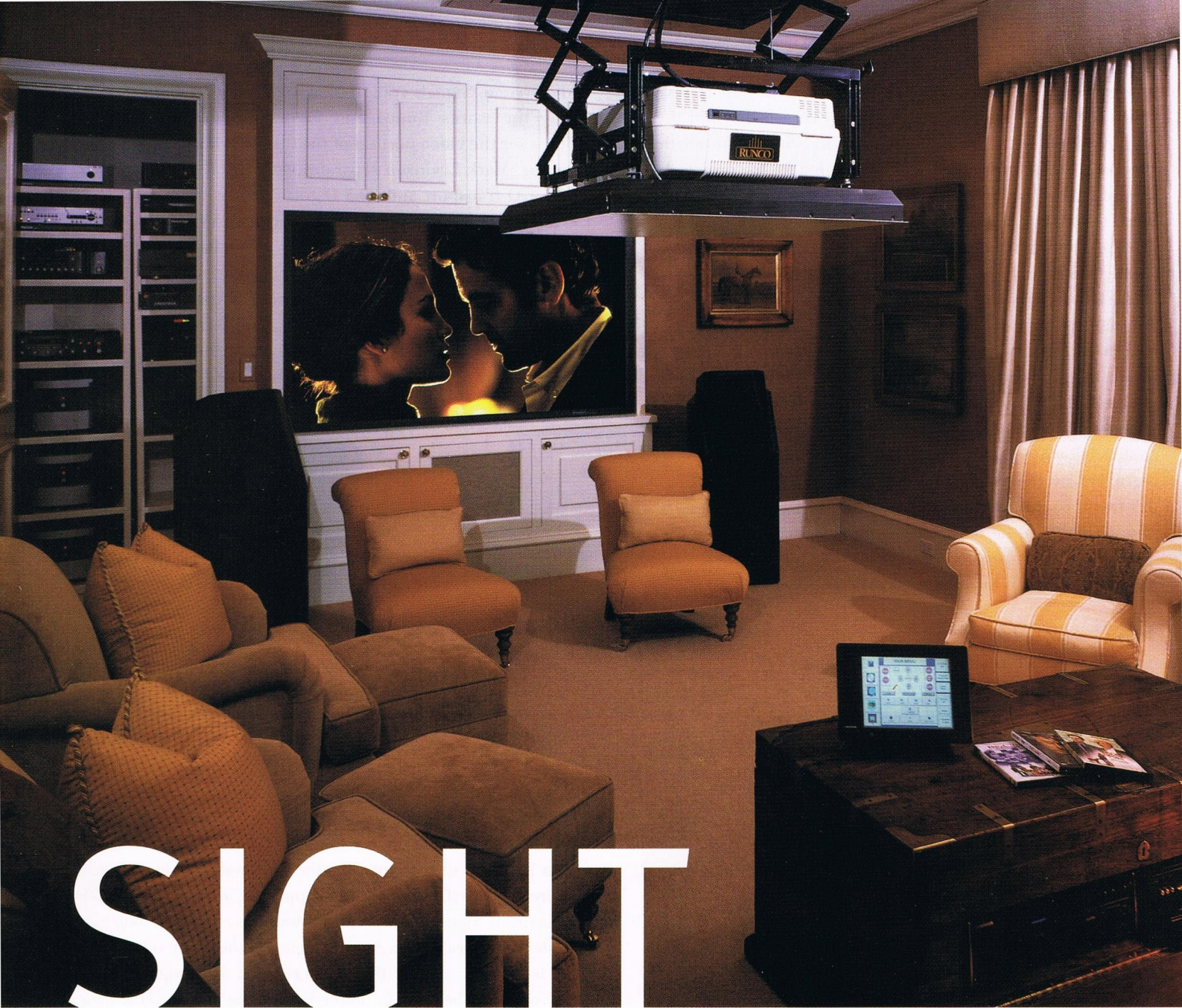
HOW TO HAVE HIGH-END HOME THEATER EQUIPMENT

By Alisha May Turner

From my perspective, there's a lot that has been presented to you, the home theater enthusiast, as if it was written in stone like The Ten Commandments and brought down from installation mountain by the high priests of home theater systems. Just look at all that you've been bombarded with...covers of magazines shouting the dos and don'ts, the must-haves and the do-away-withs. How could you possibly be expected to have it all, or do it all, or even believe it all? Well, of course, these aren't commandments. Although, quite frankly, some may present their convictions to you as if they were; telling you what to believe and what you must do in order to have the perfect home theater system.

Well, take a step back. When you do, you'll realize we're each just telling you what we believe, based on what we've seen and heard. And, sometimes, we'll give you conflicting advice. So, what are you to believe? And how should you get started? Well, to begin, keep reading that magazine you're holding in your hands, as well as its sister publications, *Home Theater* and *Home Theater Buyer's Guide*. You'll learn a great deal, and actually be able to hold your own in a conversation on the subject.

Then, it'll come time for the next step, hiring an audio/video installation company to accomplish more than you could've imagined possible. Realistically, nobody wants an Average Joe



SIGHT

THAT STANDS APART FROM THE REST, YET FITS RIGHT IN.

installer to come in and start redesigning, breaking down or building up walls, and installing equipment that they've been told was "perfect" for them, only to later find out that it's not exactly what they would've wanted. Only you can determine what you like to view and how you'd like it to sound. So, the real way to get started is by physically checking out home theater for yourself. Then, bring in the people who'll perform the way you want and meet your expectations in every imaginable manner.

Getting Started

After the self-employed homeowners of this residence completed their discerning look-sees into home theater

possibilities, they chose Signals Audio/Video Inc. of Los Angeles, California. Growing up with Hollywood in their backyard, these residents sought an enjoyable home theater system for the purpose of watching movies or lively sports events, and serving as an entertaining theater venue for their teenage children and their peers.

Upon first hearing "self-employed," you're told something. A flag immediately goes up, telling you that these people are self-

Signals had a box designed to match the interiors of the room, which would hold the projector and lift. For the screen, a fixed Stewart SNOg1 with a 1:85 ratio was mounted on a new front wall, created to look like complementary cabinetry.

starters. They do things their way, not because anyone else says that's the way to go. This is the primary reason they did their own research. So, when the time came to bring an installation company in, they weren't only well prepared for the project, but versed in the products they desired, knowing how it would all need to function in unison.

Now, cutting your own path doesn't come easy in any arena, home theater included. Thinking back to all those engravings in stone tablets, they knew it would be in their best interest to question any so-called commandments. In fact, the more they dug up, the more stone tablets they overturned, the more they realized that placement isn't a religion and installation companies don't drive their belief system down your throat. They found that installers are the tools and installing is the job. It's incumbent upon us to use these tools to get the job done in the most effective way. Signals performed the project with expertise and professionalism to the clients' wishes.

Project Stardom

Off the side of the family room, stood the media room, destined for greatness. From the start, the clients expressed their desire for a front projection system and a very high-end

audio system. Signals couldn't have spoken a moment sooner taking the words Runco and Faroudja right out of their mouths for the video portion of the install. For the clients' CD listening, Mark Levinson separates were installed, along with a 31.5 CD transport and 30.5 D to A converter for the three Levinson 333 amplifiers. A Proceed PAV/PDSD THX processor with Dolby Digital & DTS is the heart of the A/V system. Once again, the clients put their knowledge to the test.

Upon auditioning a pair of Wilson "Witt" speakers, they were very pleased with the full range performance.

The clients had purchased their new home just three and half years prior to the start of the project. When Signals came in, they learned that the home had already been pre-wired by the original owners. The media room had some existing video cable in the ceiling, but it was insufficient enough for the caliber of system the clients desired. All new Audio Quest audio and video interconnects and speaker cable were wired throughout the system. Canare RGB video cable was used for the projector. The clients also wanted the projector hidden from view when not in use. Since no space existed in the ceiling to recess the projector and the SVS Mini-7 lift system it requires, Signals had

a box designed to match the interiors of the room, which would hold the projector and lift. For the screen, a fixed Stewart SN091 with a 1:85 ratio was mounted on the front wall. The look of just the screen by itself, however, wasn't appealing in the eyes of either the clients or Signals, so a new front wall was created to look like complementary cabinetry. A set of stairs on the other side of the new wall goes up to the master suite, creating a small cavity of space behind the lower half of the screen. This area houses the M&K MX-150 THX subwoofer as well as the recessed Wilson "Cub" center channel speaker, which is behind a custom grille fabric for aesthetic purposes. Now, the clients are very pleased that they own high-end products that stand apart from the rest, yet fit right in to their surroundings. Right in place, and right out of sight.

While the front wall and projector box were being designed and installed, pre-wiring of the room for the Faroudja LD200 video processor, Runco IDP-980 projector, and pair of Triad THX on-wall dipole rear channel speakers was being accomplished. Due to a blackout curtain and the location of the entry to the clients' media room, Signals opted to position the rear channel dipoles on the ceiling above the main seating. A closet, located on the front wall to the left of the screen, was the perfect place to store the complete array of media equipment and ideal for Signals to "home run" the cables. To facilitate the process of watching and

EQUIPMENT LIST

- Proceed PAV THX preamp processor
- Proceed PDSD Dolby Digital/DTS processor
- Mark Levinson 30.5 D to A converter
- Mark Levinson 31.5 CD transport
- Mark Levinson 333 amplifiers
- Wilson "Witt" speakers
- Wilson "Cub" center channel speaker
- M&K MX-150 THX subwoofer
- Triad THX on-wall dipole speakers
- Runco IDP-980 projector
- Faroudja LD200 video processor
- Stewart SN091 fixed screen 1:85 ratio
- Pioneer Elite DVL-90 laserdisc/DVD combo
- Sony SLV-R-1000 S-VHS VCR
- Sony SAT-A3 DSS
- Crestron CT-3500 touchpanel remote
- Crestron control system
- SVS Mini-7 lift system
- Panamax MAX-1000 surge protection
- Canare RGB video cable projector
- Audio Quest audio/video interconnects and speaker cable





A Crestron CT-3500 touchpanel remote and control system is the right choice for simplifying the audio/video equipment throughout the residence.

changing movies, the video sources (Sony SLV-R-1000 S-VHS VCR and Pioneer Elite DVL-90 laserdisc/DVD combo) were wired in while remaining completely hidden from view within a custom retrofitted antique trunk.

Once the projector box and screen wall were completely installed and painted, new carpet added a clean, sharp appeal. Equipment storage racks were created to match the look of the room, as well. Signals special projects' techs fabricated two wood equipment racks with adjustable shelving and hidden castors. Finally, the SVS lift system holding the Runco projector was installed into the box and the screen was installed within the provided front wall space.

A Crestron CT-3500 touchpanel remote and control system was then added. Designed to automate and simplify the entire process with one touch, the system turns on and selects the desired source, the projector drops, etc. Signals then took the time to calibrate the audio/video equipment for the clients.

Now that you realize placement isn't a religion, you'll feel empowered to act on what you know and what you've proven to yourself. ■

ABOUT THE INSTALLER

Todd DeAngelis, Richard Schaffer, and Ly Duong are the founding fathers of Signals Audio/Video Inc. Together, with their new and existing clientele, along with many referrals, and the addition of four more installers, they began to grow at a phenomenal rate. In fact, their sales have increased by 30 percent each year they've been in business. Signals became incorporated in 1996, the same year they joined CEDIA and the Better Business Bureau.

Signals has since evolved into a design, sales, and custom installation firm that specializes in turnkey home audio/video systems. This includes pre-wire and retrofit for home THX theater, multiroom A/V, lighting, home automation, satellite, security, access control, and telephone system installations. They offer a complete patching and painting package for their more retro installations. In addition, their installers have backgrounds in construction, which aids clients in the one-stop-shopping they believe they offer.

Authorized dealers of Runco, Faroudja, Stewart, Crestron, Sony, Denon, Proceed, JBL Synthesis and many others, Signals realizes the high-end tech-

nological needs of today's clients and provides them with state-of-the-art, upgradeable, value-oriented systems to meet both their present and future needs.

Today, Signals retains an exclusive, high-profile clientele due to their elevated standard of customer service. As many of Signals' clients have second homes outside of their home state of California, they've also completed home theater project installations for those residents and other out-of-state client referrals. With their

knowledge, attention to detail, and competitive pricing, Signals feels extremely confident that they provide their clients with successful installations and, as such, guarantee their complete satisfaction.

Contact

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