



connected design |

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The Pursuit of Excellence

A challenging home theater project aims to provide the highest quality results

When technology is late to the planning party, massive issues and delays occur. One team that recently completed a project in Jackson Hole, WY, passed through the valley of late entry to show up on the other side successfully, but it was not easy.

"The project was very far along in planning when we came into the picture, and there were certain constraints we were unable to work around," said Ryan Brown, president of Paradise Theater, who worked with Sam Cavitt, the founder and chief vision officer of Paradise Theater; Gideon Perry, president of Fantastic Theaters and Robert Bracero, chief science officer at Roberts Audio & Video on the integration project. "It is ideal to come in the planning stage, massage the room size and alter its placement to do the best that we're able to do. But for this one, we had to do our best within a framework."

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When the homeowner made a last-minute change on the audio system, Perry was asked to fit giant speaker boxes in the room with minimal impact and without compromising the performance. When the interior designer didn't notice anything had changed, they knew they had been successful.

A Less-than-Ideal Location

The homeowner had done several home theater projects before, but this afterthought of an addition was not to be done without intensive detail and research. It was after all part of an inspired architectural design — completed by Bozeman, Mt.-based CLB Architects — where five separate structures of the home are connected by glass-walled passages to optimize the surrounding views. The problem with this carefully designed plan was that these structures were connected by converging mechanical systems; these all transverse through the space the client designated for the theater.

“We just had a massive rat’s nest of ductwork coming across the theater,” said Brown, explaining that their engineers had to determine how much noise the mechanical systems would create and rework all the ducting to reduce in-room noise, and at the same time, reduce the noise coming from the theater itself, all while conserving limited space within the room.

At another home of the client’s, the kitchen is right above the home theater and playing the system loudly would cause the floor to rumble slightly. For this project, the team needed to make sure that the vibration transfer was fully mitigated.

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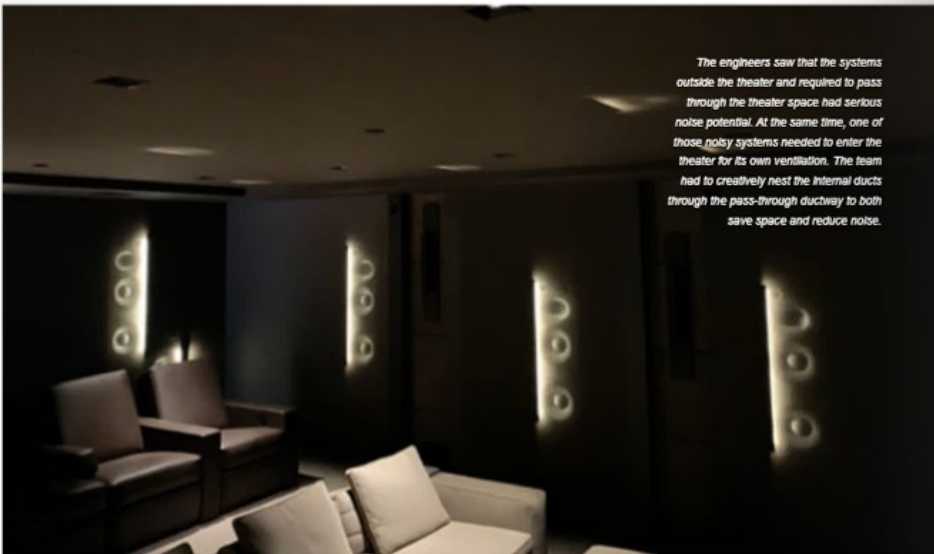
By Erinn Loucks



"We never use the word 'soundproof,'" added Brown, crediting Perry for facilitating the construction of the space, nesting the internal ducts with the pass-through ductwork and for reducing the sound emanating from the theater to other spaces in the home. "But it's not truly feasible in residential construction."

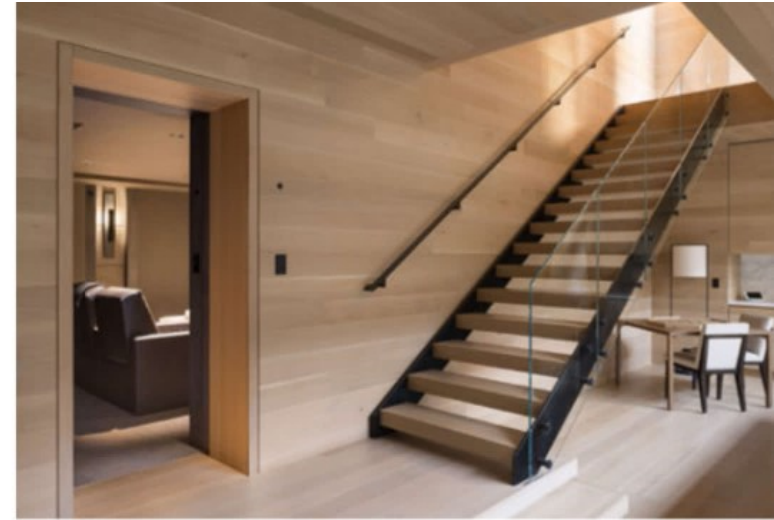
Like the homeowner's one-of-a-kind luxury cars, the home theater was held up to the highest expectations. Nothing less than the absolute best was required, even if that meant uprooting carefully laid plans.

This came up when Bracero set the owner up with a meeting to receive an immersive audio demonstration at Pro Audio Technology's Professional Home Cinema experience center. After the whole experience, the owner went all out with a Professional Home Cinema



The engineers saw that the systems outside the theater and required to pass through the theater space had serious noise potential. At the same time, one of those noisy systems needed to enter the theater for its own ventilation. The team had to creatively nest the internal ducts through the pass-through ductway to both save space and reduce noise.

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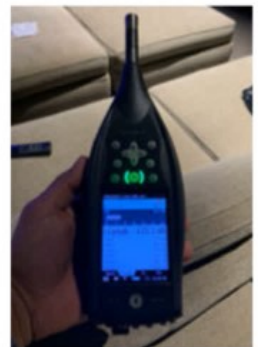
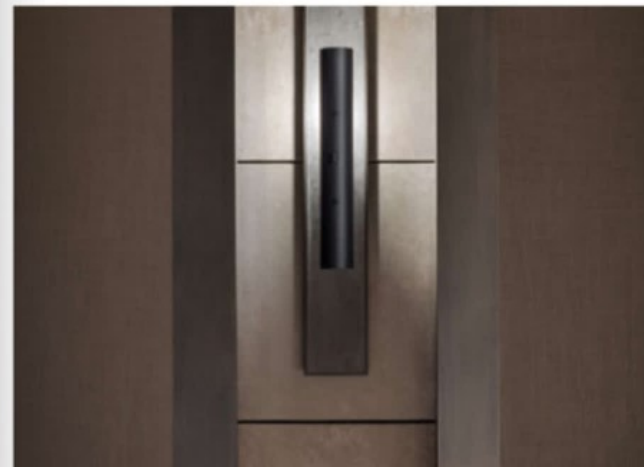


System, including 58 channels and nearly 40,000 watts, comprising of dual 15-in. three-way screen-wall speakers, eight dual 12-in. three-way speakers, eight 8-in. two-way immersive speakers, two 24-in. subwoofers and four dual 12-in. bass management subwoofers. This immense change put a kink into the plans.

Under Bracero, the team had to make sure the speakers would even fit before analyzing the effect on the room's acoustics. Then the design and construction of the room changed as they determined what the

impact of the additions would be on the aesthetic of the space. In the end, the detail to the room's audio — despite the last-minute changes — pleased the homeowner significantly.

"There was a little bit of two steps forward, one step back, but ultimately he got what he wanted," said Brown, adding that along with reaching 133 decibels of sound, the theater also is what he would call a "distraction-free" environment. "When you're in the room [without the system on], you hear nothing. It's a serene space."



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While not the traditional set up for a home theater, there was no shortage of quality there, including acoustic treatment, carpeting and statement seating.

A Contemporary Design

Working in conjunction with the AV teams was interior designer Philip Nimmo, who aimed to match the quality of the technology with the caliber of the design. Particularly echoing the modern and precise architecture of the home, Nimmo created a "cool, Italian and contemporary interior" that continues the peacefulness of the project. Everything on the lower level is slab on grade, but the floor of the theater was built up to achieve the correct ergonomics of the theater. The steps into the room are introduced with an elevated landing, and then the stair meets a raised platform, before stepping into the theater.

The home theater itself is designed simply and elegantly, without frills or distractions and with a neutral palette of high-quality materials. Lights hidden by Perry at strategic locations were programmed by Bracero to create backlighting at the end of a movie, revealing all of the surrounding speakers that were nearly invisible before. It's these small but impactful details that made this theater so successful, despite the challenges it faced.

"We loved having a client that was so passionate about the home theater," said Brown. "They really liked being invested in the whole process and appreciated all our effort to create something extraordinary."



"The lesson learned is that we just need to keep helping people understand that when it comes to identifying the size and shape and volume, and placement of your private cinema in the home, it's never too soon," said Brown.



Project Resources

Engineering, Design, Management:
Paradise Theater
www.paradisetheater.tv

System Integration
Roberts Home Audio and Video Inc.
1511 S. La Cienega Blvd. | Los Angeles, CA 90035
www.robertshomeav.com

Architecture:
CLB Architects
clbarchitects.com
(307) 733-4000

Interior Design:
Philip Nimmo Design
philipnimmodesign.com

Theater Construction:
Gideon Perry, Fantastic Theaters