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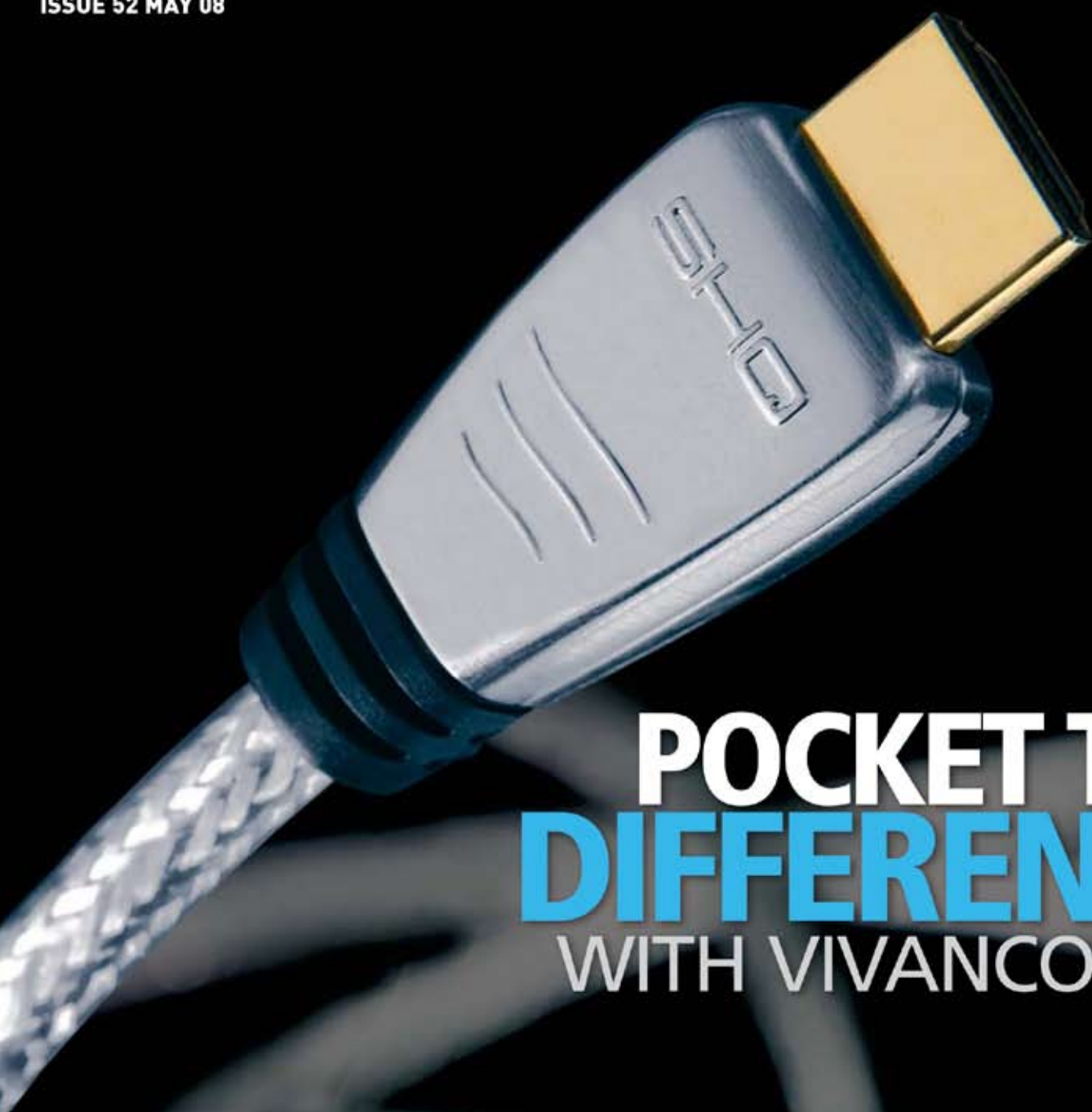
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**TO THE VICTOR
THE SPOILS**

GATHER ROUND AND PAY
HOMAGE TO THE WINNERS OF
THE SVI AWARDS 2008!

HI-FI AND MIGHTY

WE SEEK OUT THE LATEST
AUDIO SEPARATES AND
ONE BOX SYSTEMS



**POCKET THE
DIFFERENCE**
WITH VIVANCO SHQ

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What happens when you mix one luxury apartment, £200,000, a host of electronic gadgetry and a team of installers with the knowledge and expertise to bring it all together? We sent CALLUM FAUSER to find out...

Getting Creative

Venture behind the feathered doors and you'll find the brains of the operation

You may know Grant Bovey as the husband of erstwhile *Blue Peter* presenter Anthea Turner; you probably won't know him as a successful property developer, but that could well be about to change. You see, Bovey's company Imagine Homes is something of a major player in the industry, specialising in providing 'buy-to-let' services to both experienced property investors and those just starting out in what can often be a daunting market. The man clearly knows his stuff, as the superb location (and no doubt highly valuable real estate) of the Imagine Homes-owned Cheyne Apartments goes to show. Situated within a stunning Thameside vantage point, this luxury three-bedroom apartment is part of a larger development of 12, and not only will it serve as the couple's London base in the near future, it also contains lashings of automated and audiovisual finery, the likes of which one doesn't get to see very often.

Installers to the stars Creative Home Cinema were responsible for the technological smarts of this stunning abode – and we were lucky enough to get a guided tour courtesy of company MD Mark Buckfield. For Mark and his team, the pressure was on to put together a discreet hardware installation that met with the approval of a client who could perhaps be described as more house-proud than most. At the same time, the man of the house required an entertainment set-up that brooked absolutely no compromises, especially with regards to audio performance. And as if this wasn't a big enough challenge in itself, these two competing requirements also had to be reconciled with the apartment already finished.

seeing is believing

Cross the threshold of this flagship dwelling and straightaway one performs a double-take – because situated in front of a mirrored wall stands a ruddy great full-size Dalek, its illuminated blue eyepiece glaring intently at you. Doctor Who's ultimate nemesis and perhaps the most enduring use of the BBC license fee, ensures that visitors are prepared for the myriad features that await them. Move past Skaro's finest and follow the hallway to the end, and you emerge in an open plan living area encircled by windows, through which it's possible to gaze at a panoramic London vista.

The simple, refined interior is largely the work of Turner, whose 'home furniture packs' are offered to all Imagine Homes clients, and given this property's current status as a show home, the décor is intended as a demonstration of what they can expect from the company's services. There's no doubt that this well-appointed space is easy on the eye, but I've been told that there's bags of electronic trickery making up a powerful home entertainment system in here somewhere. Aside from a sleek, 50-inch wall-mounted flat-panel



Flower power lives on!

that I've spied opposite the sofa, I can't see any speakers, wires, docking stations, AV components... nothing.

The finish has certainly been done to a very high standard. However, as with most retrofit installations, one or two rather unusual design choices had to be made. Most notable of these perhaps, was the decision to install the heavily-laden central rack system in the living area, just metres away from the main flat-panel screen. Cleverly located within a cupboard just deep enough to store the required kit, and concealed behind a pair of doors finished with luxurious leather cladding, its extraordinarily quiet operating levels mean that users will barely even notice that it's there.

Hidden inside, you'll find that hardware components from automation heavyweights Crestron have been used at almost every level to bring the clients' demands to life, from the external 300W power supply and the C2ENET-1 Ethernet card used to enable remote diagnostics programming, right down to the intelligent amplifiers used to distribute a mixture of both stereo and surround digital audio to every room.

Occupying centre-stage in the right-hand column of the rack unit meanwhile, is a Kaleidescape media server system. Capable of storing around 3750 CD albums or 336 DVDs and linked to every TV in the apartment, it acts as a user-friendly, central repository for all of the family's recorded media. Navigation and browsing via the wireless Crestron controllers found in every room is, it must be said, simplicity itself. Using said controllers in conjunction with the living room's vibrant Vidikron plasma screen to browse movies by their cover art, is perhaps the best way to experience what the system is really capable of.



Lashings of high-end kit... check; stylish interior... check; full-size Dalek... check!

Presented as a tiled mosaic of cover imagery, highlight any particular title for more than a few seconds, and the surrounding thumbnail images dramatically coalesce to display films of the same genre, year, lead actor or whichever classification the user wishes. Even better, with three separate disk cartridges and two independent receivers linked to the main server, the adults and kids can simultaneously watch pretty much whatever they wish, whenever they wish.

taking the tour

With the nerve-centre of the AV system taken care of, and so much wall-space in the living area given over to the surrounding windows, where exactly were the speakers required for a fully-fledged 7.1 surround sound system supposed to go? Well, the three in-wall Artcoustic speaker arrays fitted adjacent to the central Vidikron plasma screen were a start, but it took a total of four Speakercraft 'TIME Five' speakers mounted in the ceiling to complete the effect. With the aid of a handy Crestron STX-1700CXP wireless touchscreen controller, Mark demonstrated how a simple series of button presses causes the in-ceiling speakers to reveal themselves and swivel into a surround-sound formation, that delivers rich, well-balanced sonics from all angles.

Moving round the corner into the dining area, my attention is directed upwards to a square outline and within moments, a 42-inch plasma screen has gracefully swung down from the ceiling and come to rest perfectly in line with the seat at the head of the table. Like much of Creative Home Cinema's work here this was ultimately borne out of necessity. The relatively late addition of the dining area's combination wine cupboard and cooler meant that the main screen in the living room, despite being equipped with a motorised left/right tilt mechanism, couldn't be seen by anyone seated at the wrong end of the dining table. Taking advantage of the ceiling space therefore seemed to be the most sensible answer – it's to the team's credit that they were able to come up with snazzy solutions such as these essentially on-the-fly.

Moving through to the kitchen area, one is struck by the no-nonsense gleaming chrome and stainless steel surfaces, which make for something of a contrast with the design classicism we've witnessed elsewhere. The work surfaces, hobs, appliances, sinks and storage units are all ranged across the left-hand side, with the opposite wall taken up by a formidable arsenal of professional-grade Gaggenau cooking equipment. These hard edges are softened slightly though, by the colourful 'Ambilight' halo produced by a wall-mounted Philips Aurea flat-panel TV situated at the far end of the room.

Venturing further, we stop to take in the master suite. Similar to the main living area in terms of the colour scheme and use of plush cladding on the walls, it boasts an innovative surround-sound set-up that's been achieved through yet another well thought-out speaker arrangement – two either side of the wall-mounted plasma in front of the bed, two in the ceiling above and, most clever of all, a non-directional Artcoustic subwoofer built into the venting that runs along the base of the left-hand wall. The television fun naturally extends beyond the



KITLIST

Main Rack

- 2x Middle Atlantic Products AX-S24 24-space Equipment Access Systems
- 5x Artcoustic PA-300 2x 300W amplifiers
- 1x Crestron CNAMPX 16x 60 Channel Intelligent Amplifier
- 1x Crestron CNAMPX 7x 200 Intelligent Amplifier
- 1x Crestron AV2 Professional Dual Bus Control System
- 1x Crestron C2ENET-1 10/100 Baset 1 Port Ethernet Card
- 1x Crestron CNRFGWA 1-way Remote RF Receiver
- 1x Crestron C2N-SPWS-300 24V 300W External Power Supply
- 1x Kaleidescape KSERVER-1500 media server
- 4x 750GB Kaleidescape KDISK Cartridges
- 2x Kaleidescape KPLAYER-5000 Server Clients with integral optical drives
- 1x Netgear Gigabit Pack
- 2x Netgear WG602 Wi-Fi Access Points
- 2x Crestron C2N-DAPBRC 7.1 Surround Sound Audio Processors
- 1x Crestron CNX-PAD8A Enhanced Professional Stereo Audio Distribution Processor
- 1x Crestron CNX-PVID8X4 Professional Video Distribution System
- 2x Thomson DS18215 Sky HD Digiboxes

Lounge Area

- 1x Vidikron VP-500 Flat-panel Plasma Display
- 1x Future Automation MOT-50 Motorised Swivel Bracket
- 1x Sonance IW-2 iPod Dock
- 1x Crestron STX-1700CXP 2-way RF/Wi-fi Touchpanel Controller
- 2x Artcoustic DFF180-43 Wall-mounted Loudspeakers
- 4x SpeakerCraft TIME Five In-ceiling Speakers

Dining Area

- 1x Future Automation PH Plasma Hinge Drop-down Lift
- 1x Vidikron VP-42HD Plasma Display Screen
- 1x Artcoustic DF-MULTI 42-inch Centre Speaker
- 4x Speakercraft TIME Five In-ceiling Speakers

Kitchen

- 1x Crestron MT-1000C Hand-held Remote Control
- 1x Philips 42PFL9900D Aurea Wall-mounted LCD TV
- 2x Speakercraft AIM8 Five In-ceiling speakers

Master Bedroom/Ensuite

- 1x Crestron MT-1000C Hand-held Remote Control
- 1x Vidikron VP-500 Plasma Display Screen
- 1x Artcoustic Diablo In-wall Subwoofer panel
- 5x Speakercraft TIME Five In-ceiling Speakers
- 3x SpeakerCraft 6.5-inch Dual Tweeter In-ceiling Speakers
- 1x Aquavision AV-F17-2 17-inch Water-resistant TV

Bedroom 2

- 1x Future Automation PH Plasma Hinge Drop-down lift
- 1x Crestron MT-1000C Hand-held Remote Control
- 1x Vidikron VP-42HD Plasma Display Screen
- 2x Speakercraft AIM8 Five In-ceiling Speakers

Bedroom 3

- 1x Future Automation PS42-A Swivel Plasma Bracket
- 1x Crestron MT-1000C Hand-held Remote Control
- 1x Vidikron VP-42HD Plasma Display Screen
- 2x Speakercraft AIM8 Five In-ceiling Speakers

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

www.creativehomecinema.co.uk

walk-in wardrobe to the en suite bathroom, where an Aquavision TV mounted on one of the walls serves to accompany long soaks with the latest goings-on in soapsland.

The remaining two rooms boast similar hardware specifications – a 42-inch Vidikron plasma screen, two in-ceiling speakers and a Crestron wireless remote can be found in each, with both wired up to the main rack unit via a series of digital audio and HD component video connections. Sporting contrasting interiors, the light and airy 'Vivienne Westwood' room features the same 'drop-down' ceiling-mounted plasma TV arrangement as found in the dining area, with the bold, retro designs of the Mary Quant-inspired third bedroom complemented by a tiled Vidikron plasma resting discretely upon the wall.

When taking on this project, Creative Home Cinema found themselves facing the challenge of a complete retrofit. Not that you'd ever know, as despite Mark describing to me how the required cabling had to be added to the walls, floors and ceilings, I have found it impossible to make out any architectural scars. The surroundings all look absolutely flawless, and with such a generous amount of kit to play with, my only complaint is that I didn't have at least another 24-hours to spend in this impressive property!