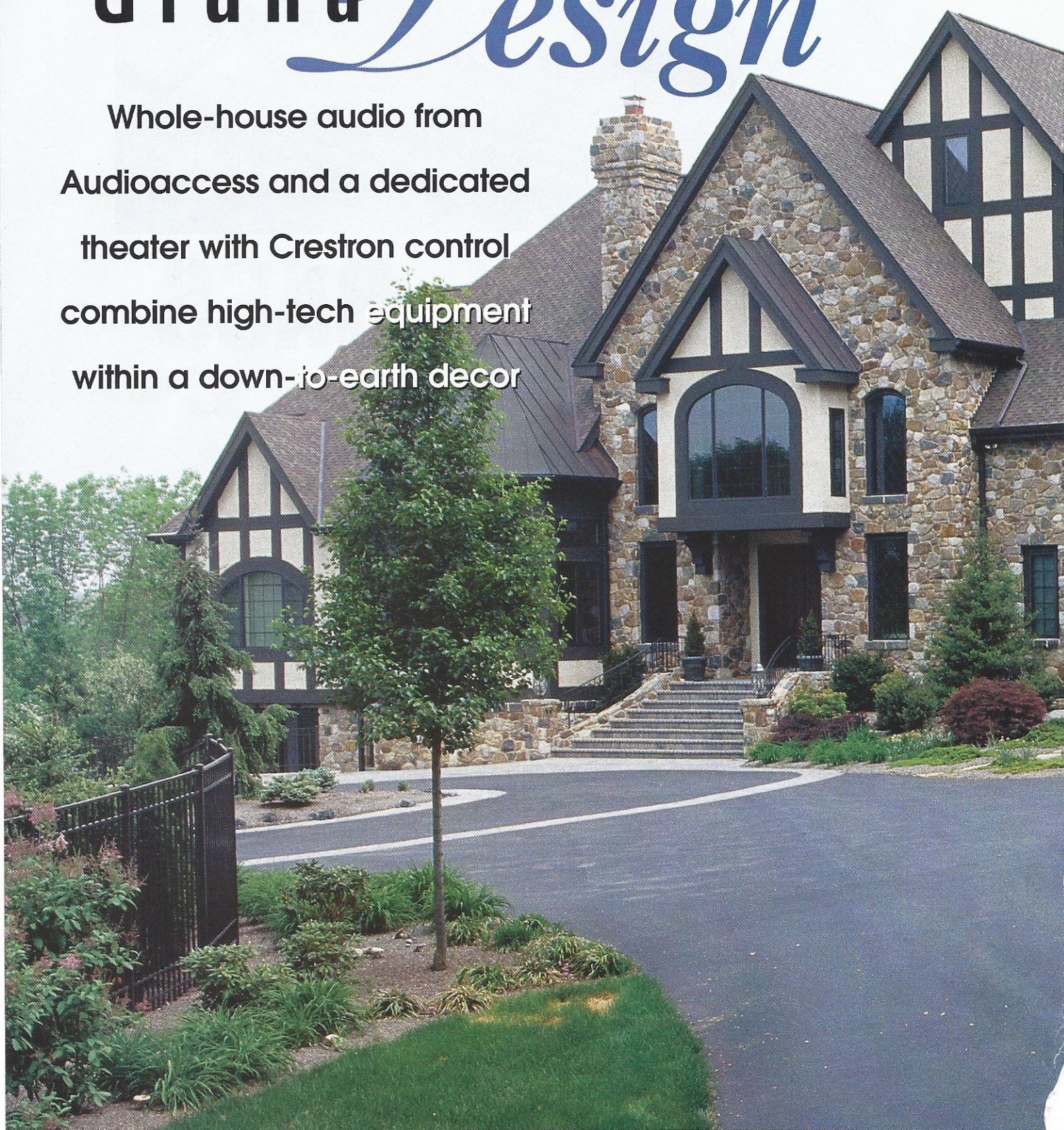


I N T E R I O R

Grand *Design*

Whole-house audio from
Audioaccess and a dedicated
theater with Crestron control
combine high-tech equipment
within a down-to-earth decor

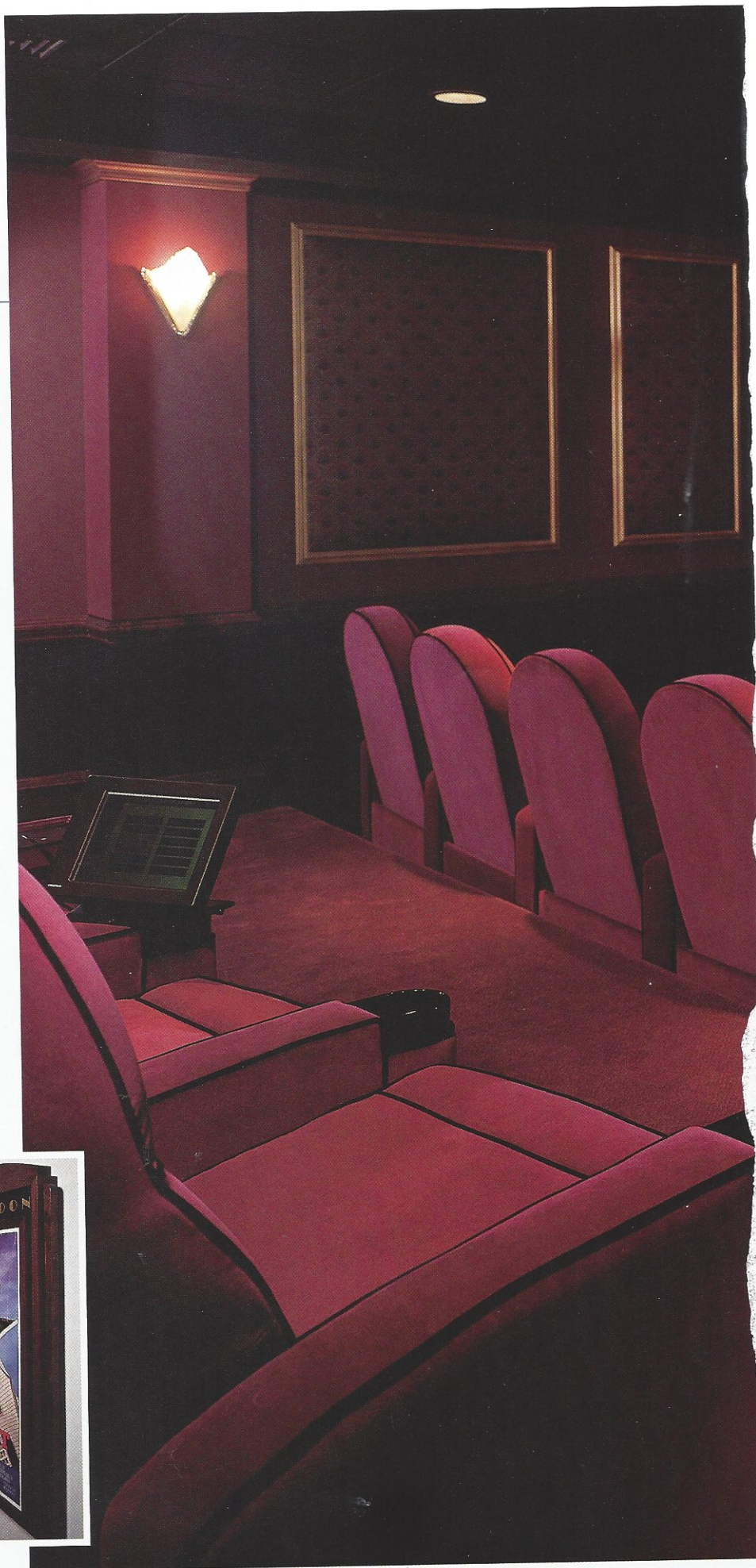
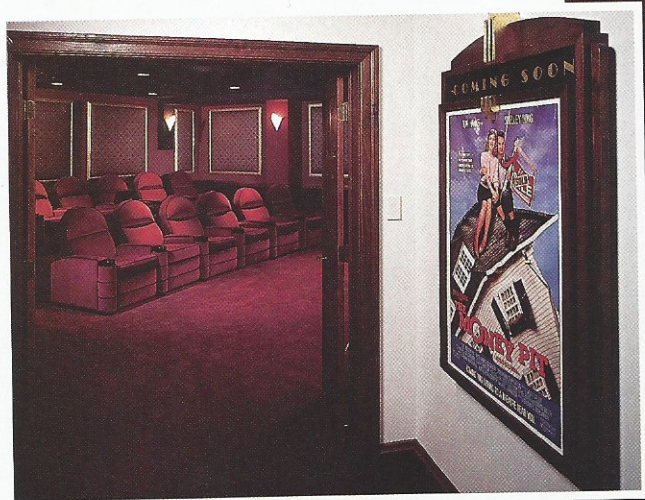


Grand Design

STORY BY NORMAN KOLPAS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY BOB McCLAIN

Pennsylvania's idyllic Brandywine Valley, just southwest of Philadelphia, preserves a vision of stately American life as it was lived a century ago. Home to the renowned painters of the Wyeth family and many world-class equestrian farms, it is also home to fabled Longwood Gardens and several mansions-turned-museums originally built by the DuPonts. In short, the setting calls for design on the grandest of scales, yet ruled by good taste, common sense, and attention to human detail.

That also neatly sums up the challenges recently presented to and met by Rob Dzedzy, President of Media Rooms Inc., designers of custom audio and video environments based in the Brandywine Valley town of West Chester. "My client wanted to achieve some fairly grand concepts," says Dzedzy.





Highlights of the home's Art Deco theater include plush seating from First Impressions, a proscenium, and columns that hide the speaker system. A step-down ceiling conceals a Runco 980 projector, and the 100-inch Stewart screen appears to float against a curtain of black acoustic fabric.

Grand Design

Installation and construction by Media Rooms Inc., 20 Hagerty Blvd., #5, West Chester, PA 19382; (610) 719-8500.



Whole House Audio

Audioaccess PX-600 (2)
Audioaccess PX-612 (2)
Audioaccess PX-603
Audioaccess KPS touchpads (15)
Audioaccess computer interface board
B&K AV6000 amplifier
Denon TU-380RD tuner
Pioneer PDF107 CD changer
RCA DSS receiver
Russound volume controls (4)
SpeakerCraft 6.2 CRS speakers (5 pr.)
SpeakerCraft 6.5 CRS speakers (11 pr.)
SpeakerCraft 8.1 BAS subwoofers (2)
SpeakerCraft WS-520 outdoor speakers (3 pr.)
Energy EPS-100 subwoofer

Energy C-2 speakers (1 pr.)
StereoStone rock speakers (1 pr.)
Panamax Max1000 Surge Protectors (2)
Mid-Atlantic equipment racks (2)

Satellite/Television

RCA DSS Deluxe dish
RCA DSS receivers (5)
Wineguard antenna
Channel Plus 8 Way splitters (4)
Channel Plus 4 Way splitters (2)
Mitsubishi 40-inch televisions (2)
Mitsubishi 60-inch television
Panasonic 20-inch televisions (6)
Panasonic 13-inch televisions (2)
Sony 27-inch televisions (4)

Home Theater

Runco 980 Video Projector
Faroudja LD200 line doubler
Stewart 100-inch Luxus Snapper screen
Citation 5.0 controller
Citation 7.1 amplifiers (2)
Citation 5.1 amplifier
Citation 7.2 main speakers (3)
Citation 7.3 surround Speakers (2)
Citation 7.4 subwoofers (2)
Panasonic LX900 Laser Disc Player
Panasonic PV-S4580 VCR
Denon DVD3000 DVD Player
RCA Digital DSS receiver
Niles AC-3
Panamax Max1000 Surge Protectors (2)

Home Automation & Closed Circuit Television

Crestron VT-3500 VisionTouch Panels (5)
Crestron Cresnet Mini system
Crestron CN Rack
Altinex Video matrix switcher
Altinex Video Distribution Amplifier
Channel Plus Modulator (13)
Channel Plus 7201 color camera (7)
Panasonic WVCP214 color camera (6)
Channel Plus DA1000 amplifier

Guest Bedrooms & Office Suite

Denon DRA-565RD receivers (4)
Denon DMC-360 CD players (4)
Denon DRW-580 cassette players (4)
SpeakerCraft 6.2 CRS Speakers (6 pr.)
Russound Volume Controls (3)

Landscape Lighting Control

HomeWorks Electronic subpanels (3)
HomeWorks 15 Button keypad (2)
HomeWorks 10 Button keypad (3)
HomeWorks 5 Button keypad (6)
HomeWorks 2 Button keypad (4)
HomeWorks IP5 Keypad
HomeWorks Vareo 600W dimmer (30)
HomeWorks Vareo 1000W dimmer (32)
HomeWorks Vareo 1000W switch (1)
Remote switches (24)
GrafikEye 3 zones (1)
GrafikEye 4 zones (2)
GrafikEye 6 zones (8)
GrafikEye accessory controls (6)
Power Boosters (11)
Grafik Eye Wireless remote (2)

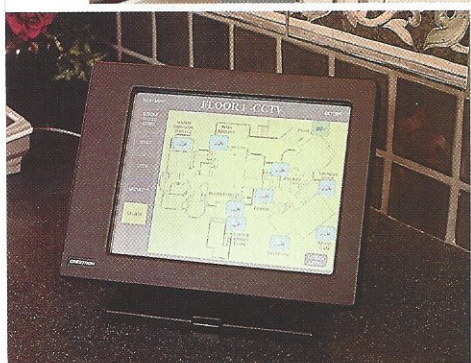
Phone System

Panasonic digital phone system
Panasonic KXT7230 Digital LCD display phone (7)
Panasonic KXT7020 speaker phone (20)
Panasonic T7880 900 MHz Cordless Phone (2)
Panasonic door phones (4)

HVAC System

Enerzone StatNet thermostats (13)
Enerzone StatNet 232 adapter
Enerzone Zone control unit

Grand Design



Crestron touchpanels offer easy control of audio/video, lighting, HVAC and security for the 18,000 square-foot house.

Indeed, "grand" seems a bit of an understatement when you consider the scope of the project he faced. The new 10-acre estate would feature an 18,000-square-foot main residence. Two outbuildings would also occupy the grounds, one with a four-car garage and upstairs offices, the other with a three-car garage, an upstairs apartment for the live-in chef, and a basement changing room for the swimming pool.

As vast as the domain itself would be was the scope of the owners' desired electronic systems. The husband asked for designs that supplied both the main house and its outbuildings with audio, satellite television distribution, lighting control, and security with closed-circuit television, all fully linked and integrated. In addition, he wanted a state-of-the-art home theater. Meanwhile, his wife, who was not as much of a technology fan as her husband, wanted Dzedzy to provide a corre-

sponding ease of operation and lack of intimidation.

The Media Rooms crew arrived on the scene as soon as the three buildings had been framed and were under roof. "We pulled miles and miles of all different types of wires through special chases before the drywall went in," says Dzedzy. They also saw to it that the main house's entire lower level, where the central control units would be located in an equipment room, had a drop ceiling that concealed still more wiring. So, as systems expand or change with new technology, "we can add more wiring, anywhere, at any point in time."

With this electronic network in place, Dzedzy and his team set out, system by system, to grant the wish list. An RCA DSS Deluxe dish and seven RCA DSS receivers supply 32 different television locations with satellite signals. The audio system is

divided into 12 zones and three subzones, each controlled by one of 14 full-function Audioaccess touchpads and one weatherproof outdoor keypad. Most rooms on the system have a pair of in-wall or in-ceiling SpeakerCraft speakers, which Dzedzy and the homeowners felt "were a perfect match for their needs both sonically and pricewise." The exception is the living room. With its spacious dimensions, including a 30-foot ceiling, it needed a pair each of speakers and subwoofers. Yet, their output would have been wasted had they been mounted in walls or the ceiling. Instead, Media Rooms concealed them in the custom mahogany cabinetry to the left and right of the fireplaces. "As large as the space is," says Dzedzy, "the sound turned out fabulous."

Just as fabulous in its scope and effect is the indoor and exterior lighting provided by a Lutron HomeWorks system. Fifteen keypads located throughout the house in key areas including the foyer, master bedroom, kitchen, garage, and



The guest bedroom and office suite includes a 40-inch Mitsubishi television that blends into a custom-built cabinet. An RCA DSS Deluxe dish and seven RCA DSS receivers supply 32 different television locations with satellite signals.

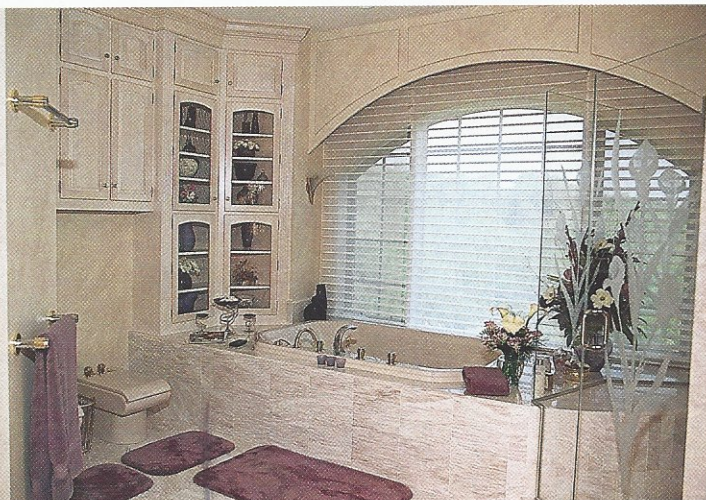
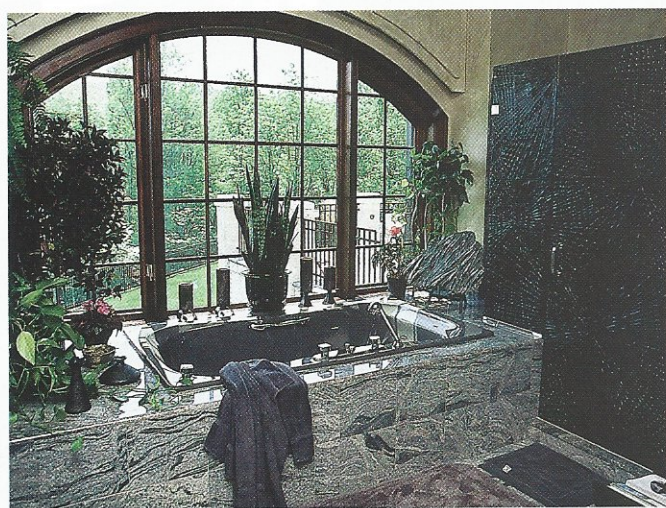
lower-level entrances provide at-a-touch control and adjustment of lighting effects. The versatility endowed by the Lutron system is most dramatically evident outdoors at night, when strategically placed spotlights surrounding the main house create any of several different preprogrammed lighting scenarios.

Well-lit grounds enhance security, of course; a concern Home Media also addressed with a sophisticated electronic security system that includes sensors on all locks, motion detectors, and 13 closed circuit television cameras located at key areas throughout the three buildings and surrounding grounds. The signal from any of the cam-

eras can be viewed at any time from any one of the estate's 32 television locations.

With such an array of extensive, sophisticated systems installed, Dzedzy more than fulfilled the basic requests made by the husband. But the client had also recently visited the Consumer Electronics Show. There, Dzedzy says, "He spent a lot of time at the Crestron booth," falling in love with one final system that would automate and integrate all the others in a way that would fulfill the wife's stated desire for ease of use.

All audio, video, lighting, and security systems, as well as climate control, were tied into the Crestron units, which are in turn operated from five



10 1/2-inch full-color touchscreens throughout the main residence. Dzedzy even commissioned an artist to paint a portrait of the house expressly for the Crestron system. "When you touch one of the screens to activate it," he explains, "that's the first image you see."

For what you see next on those screens, Media Rooms worked closely with Crestron programmers, says Dzedzy, "to develop user-friendly, intuitive displays." Take those 13 closed circuit TV cameras, for example. Touch their icon on any of the Crestron screens and you get a diagram of the entire camera network; then, touch the image for a particular camera, say the front door, and the Crestron touchscreen instantly gives you a real-time video image from that particular camera.

Crestron brings similar efficiency and convenience to the estate's climate-control system. When the homeowners want to go down to the office above one of the garages on a cold winter's day, for instance, they can call up the heating system from anywhere in the main house and give the command to have the work space toasty-warm when they arrive.

Yet, Media Rooms also built in a redundancy that makes it possible to sidestep the Crestron master controls for simplicity's sake. Lighting control keypads at such strategic locations as the front and back doors, kitchen, and master bedroom enable easy on-the-spot adjustment of illumination levels. Likewise, separate keypads for the audio and security systems enable adjustments to be made without the need of entering the Crestron system. "That allows easier accessibility for staff and owners alike," says Dzedzy.

Just as the Crestron system affords estate-wide control, it also functions brilliantly for the owners in a smaller-scale but no less complex setting—their home theater. Built into an armrest of one of the First Impressions Cinelounger chairs, the touchscreen in that room presents a theater menu not seen elsewhere in the house. It provides instant and easy control of such diverse aspects of the movie viewing experience as lighting scenarios, DVD commands, and changing from standard to wide-screen formats; at the same time, it can also be used to access a closed circuit camera should the front doorbell ring.

As much as Rob Dzedzy of Media Rooms takes pride in the theater's audio and video installations, however, he also is keen to point out his team's work in designing and constructing the room's art deco interior. Highlights include a proscenium whose columns hide the speaker system, as well as decorative wall treatments incorporating sound-absorbing panels that maximize the space's acoustic properties. A step-down ceiling conceals the Runco 980 projector, and the 100-inch Stewart screen appears to float against a curtain of black acoustic fabric.

"I have always had a strong personal passion for film-making, art deco design, interior design, and furniture making," says Dzedzy, summing up the talents that he brought to play in the estate's theater. And, like every other aspect of the home's audio and video systems, those particular passions have translated into a design at once grand and entirely down-to-earth. ♦

As an added touch, an artist was commissioned to paint a portrait of the house expressly for the Crestron system.

