

A custom bar features bamboo ply and a 2-inch-thick cherrywood slab highlighted with LED lighting.

# Japanese Tranquility

A homeowner pays tribute to one of his favorite places in this basement home theater.

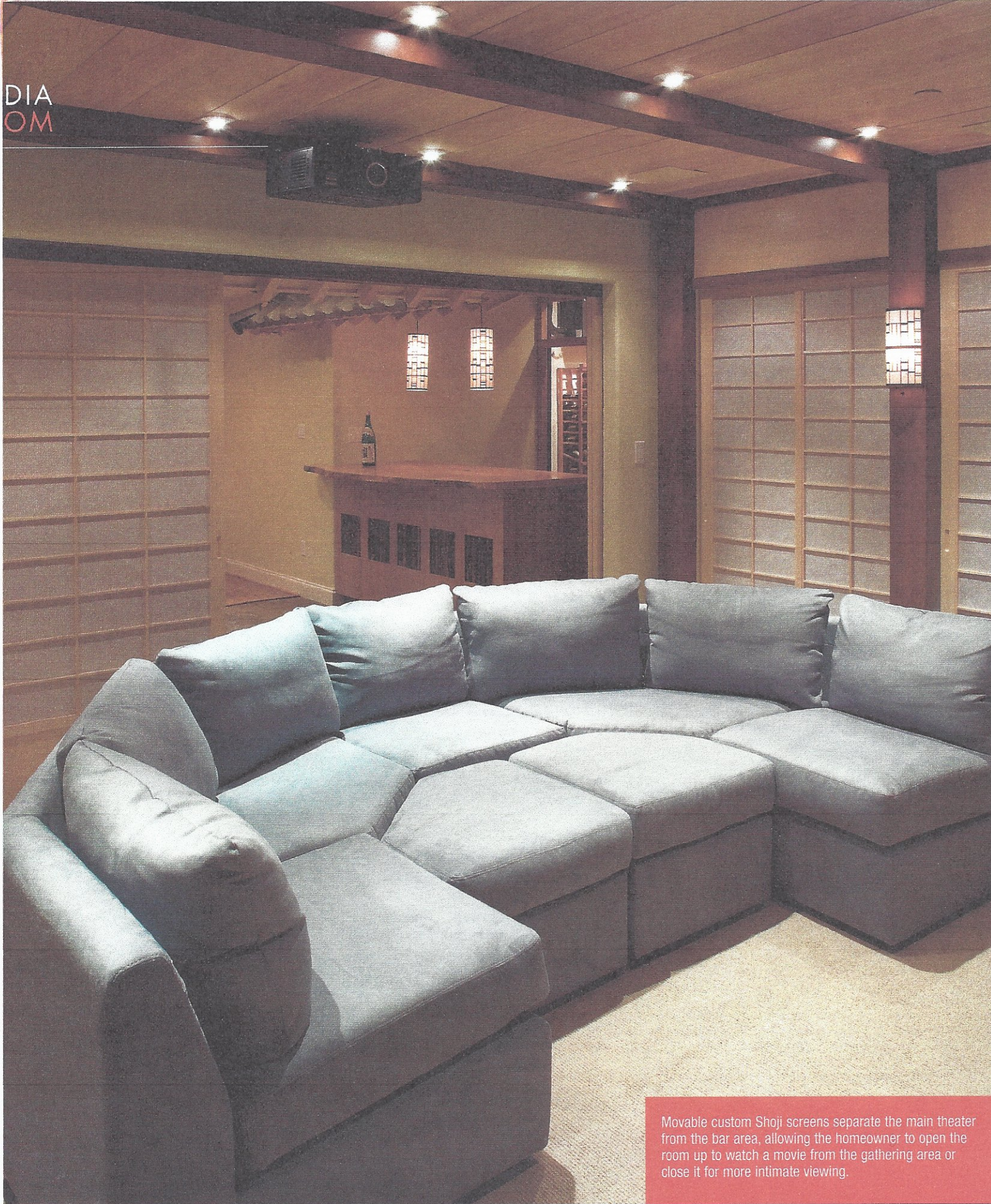
BY ARTHUR STEVENS

Anyone who has travelled the world can appreciate a strong sense of toponophilia—the bond between a person and place—whether it’s the cobblestone streets of France, the canals of Amsterdam, or the beaches of Mexico. This homeowner has that affection for Japan, having business ties there and homes in both that country and the United States. As such, he wanted his home to be in the Japanese style, and that included a place for a Japanese-inspired basement home theater.

To perfect the design, Rob Dzedzy of Media Rooms Inc. had to do extensive research in Japanese style and architecture. “Japanese culture is thousands of years old and has strong ties to nature. Harmony, balance, purposeful design, and a relationship with the natural world—plants, rocks, water, and sand—are key elements of Japanese style,” says Dzedzy.

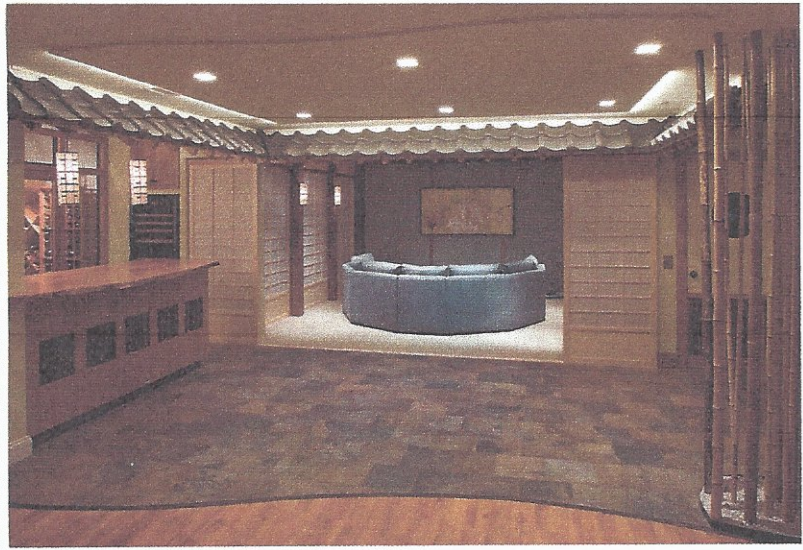
The spot for the theater was an unfinished section of the basement that was intended to be a home theater and wine cellar. The remaining part of the basement had basic white painted drywall, builder-grade plastic laminate flooring, and was used primarily for storage. Media Rooms prepared several different designs and presented them to the homeowner, but the project continually evolved over time. In fact, one of the biggest changes was the orientation and layout of the entire basement. “The large room that was originally intended to be the home theater was to have a left-to-right orientation and the entrance would be on the side,” says Dzedzy. “In this situation, the room would have been a dedicated theater that would be closed off from the rest of the basement.” After looking at designs, the homeowner decided that he wanted to have a storage area, but also wanted the ability to watch the theater from the bar and surrounding areas. Dzedzy



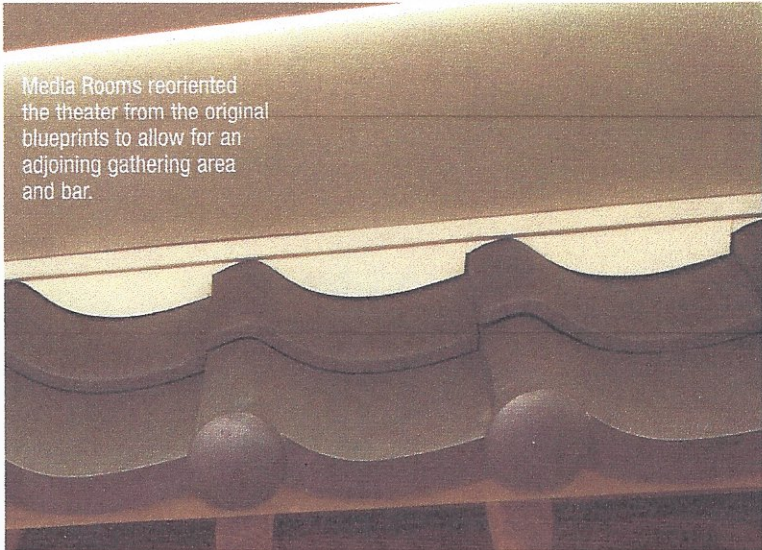


Movable custom Shoji screens separate the main theater from the bar area, allowing the homeowner to open the room up to watch a movie from the gathering area or close it for more intimate viewing.





Media Rooms reoriented the theater from the original blueprints to allow for an adjoining gathering area and bar.



When the screen is down, the Digital Projection M-Vision Cine 260-HC projector provides a stunning image without a lot of extra noise, protecting the tranquility of the theater.



changed the orientation of the theater and removed the back wall. Without a permanent back wall, the video screen would be viewable to the entire basement. If the homeowner wants to have a more intimate viewing experience, he simply can close the custom-built Shoji screen doors.

Media Rooms takes a turnkey approach to home theater design, infusing the theater with custom features that are designed and fabricated in Media Rooms' in-house cabinet shop. "Colors, textures, materials, and layout were all focused on the harmony and natural characteristics of Japanese design," says Dzedzy.

In the theater room, you can't see any audio-video components. The 106-inch Draper motorized video screen descends from one of the cherry wood beams that run across the room when it's time to enjoy a movie. When the screen is up, you see nothing but Japanese artwork on the wall, below which sits a stone meditation garden. The ceiling itself is constructed of 12-inch-wide natural cypress boards. To keep the sense of harmony in design, miniature recessed ceiling lights in the theater are tucked behind the beams so they are barely visible as you enter the room. Shoji screens on the left side of the room hide a large storage closet and the rack of audio video equipment, and the front Triad speakers are hidden behind large fabric panels.

But don't let its tranquil appearance fool you; when the homeowner fires up the system using his URC MX-980 Remote Control, the room is a beast. Press a button on the remote, and the screen descends, the Digital Projection M-Vision Cine 260-HC High-Definition DLP Projector fires, which was chosen for its great image and ultra-quiet operation, protecting the sanctity of the space. Then, the Triad speakers begin to play, with extra bass from two Triad subwoofers, all hidden. Here, the homeowner can watch all his favorite movies from an Integra Blu-ray player, whether it's Seven Samurai or Spirited Away. And the mood is just right thanks to Lutron lighting control.

Outside the theater there is a custom bar constructed of bamboo ply with a 2-inch-thick cherry slab countertop accented by LED lighting. From here, the homeowner can watch the screen as requested thanks to the movable shoji screens. The bar and gathering area is delineated by traditional clay Japanese roof tile, highlighted by miniature LED strip lighting hidden around the edge of the drywall. Each tile weighed 15 pounds, so Dzedzy and his team had to provide structural reinforcement to with-

stand the weight. A bamboo garden area separates the Japanese area from the rest of the basement and hides a structural column. To enter the wine cellar, homeowners pass through commercial doors chosen for their large glass surface and minimal framing. Dzedzy customized the frame by wrapping it in cherry wood.

After the theater was installed, Media Rooms Inc. also installed a wholehouse Lutron Lighting system and Crestron control throughout the home. "The client is ecstatic about how well the project turned out. All of his goals were met—having a state-of-the-art home theater in a very traditional Japanese setting," says Dzedzy. ■

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The 106-inch motorized video screen is hidden in the ceiling when not in use, revealing only Japanese artwork and a stone meditation garden.

## ■ equipment Contact the CEDIA member for a complete equipment list.

**Digital Projection** M-Vision Cine 260-HC High-Definition DLP Projector (1.56 to 1.86:1 lens), Ceiling Mount Hardware Kit; **Draper** Premier (16:9) Motorized Video Screen, Motorized Screen Trigger; **Arlington** In-Wall Power Kit; **Integra** DHC-80.3 Audio Video Preamp Processor, DTA-70.1 Multi Channel Amplifier, DBS-30.2 Blu-Ray DVD Player; **ReQuest** MP Plus Media Player; **Triad** InWall Bronze/4 LCR Speakers, InWall Bronze/4 Center Speaker, InWall Bronze/4 Surround Speakers, InCeiling Silver Sealed Rear Speakers, InWall SlimSub/4 Subwoofer with Rack Amp; **Tripp Lite** AV3500PC AV Power Conditioner; **Middle Atlantic** Equipment Rack; **Lutron** Grafik Eye; **Straight Wire** Audio Interconnects; **ICE** 14/2 Speaker Cable & HDMI Cables; **Universal Remote** MX-980 Remote Control, MRF-350 RF Kit

