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Best Home Theaters



KING OF THE JUNGLE

An abandoned temple stands hidden by the jungle's lush tropical foliage. Everything within sight is painted with exotic yellow ocher, lime, hematite, and charcoal. A purple fog hangs from the starry sky, echoing with the sounds of wild birds, animal calls, and rushing waterfalls. A stone pathway leads through the darkness, past damp ferns and moss-covered rocks to the torches burning at the temple's entry.

The temple and the theater beyond were created in a home theater showroom in Roswell, Ga., by **Atlanta Home Theater**, to fulfill a request from a client who wanted to re-create some of the experiences from his travels in South America. Themed theaters—this one is called *Bitten by the Amazon*—are moving beyond plush seats and heavy velvety curtains to incorporate architecture, scenery, sculptures, props, plants, and even

mounted game to create an experience in which the owner can completely immerse himself, says Jennifer Ross, CEO of Atlanta Home Theater.

In addition to designing the spectacular scenery of *Bitten by the Amazon*, AHT used superlative video and audio equipment. "So often, custom atmospheric theaters have a weakened presence from a mediocre system contrived with leftover funds from the aesthetic budget," says Ross. "We strive to create a balance so that the 'wow' of the theater's appearance is equaled by the 'wow' of its performance."

The overwhelming sound comes from eight Wilson Audio speakers and subwoofers powered by Krell monoblock amplifiers. To help contain the sound and base, the theater was constructed in a room buffered by 6 inches of Sheetrock and dense "sound bat." The coffered ceiling, multiple floor levels, and silk landscaping help

to enhance the acoustics, says Ross. The projector, a Vidikron Vision One, has been paired with a Faroudja DVP 5000 scaler and a Da-Lite 120-inch Tensioned Contour Electrol screen. The theater also has a Meridian 800 DVD player and a Meridian 861 surround processor.

The theater is activated by taking the Crestron control from the hands of the god of light perched on the back wall. Then the water pouring from the mouths of lions behind you ceases, and the waterfall at the temple's entrance stops flowing. The lights dim, a roar cries out from all seven speaker channels, and just as you begin to wonder what you've gotten yourself into, the video screen slides down over the temple's opening. Now the real show begins.

—DEEDRA ALLISON

Atlanta Home Theater, 770.642.5557