

Themes to the Extremes

These three award-winning theaters incorporate today's greatest technologies, while transporting you to other times and places.

ARE YOU A FAN of the movie *Casablanca*? Can't get enough of elegant art deco architecture? Or maybe you'd like to explore underground chambers with Lara Croft. Whatever your passion or pastime, it can be applied as the theme of your home theater. And we're not talking about a few posters and knickknacks. As the owners of these three super-dedicated spaces demonstrate, you can take your theme to the extreme—to create a one-of-a-kind theater that reflects the essence of your personality. The theaters showcased here were recently honored as the gold, silver, and bronze winners of Themed Theaters in *Electronic House's* 2011 Homes of the Year contest.





In this *Casablanca*-style theater, Wilson Audio speakers, Krell amps and a Screen Innovations display outshine Bogie and Bergman. *photography by Johnny Cain*

FOR A BIG-NAME Atlanta developer and fan of the Bogie-Bergman classic *Casablanca*, there was never any doubt about this theater's design. "When we first started talking about it, we decided to model it after Rick's Café in the movie," says Scott Ross, president of Atlanta Home Theater in Atlanta, Ga. "The homeowner loved the wartime scenes and the café's open-air feel."

This theater's entertainment performance is far from the tinkling piano of Rick's. Wilson Audio Maxx 3 and Watch speakers, as well as Velodyne subwoofers and Krell amps, produce audio to accompany a Digital Projection projector and Screen Innovations display that would transport Bogie and Bergman to another *time goes by*.

"Anyone who watches a movie in that room is blown away by what the 7.2 system is capable of," Ross says. "When you're getting into that kind of reference-quality level, it's definitely not the norm." To fill the 600-square-



Custom Control

Change is often borne out of necessity. Or frustration.

Five years ago, when Atlanta Home Theater's Scott Ross was installing his own private home cinema, he designed a custom interface for the Crestron TPMC-8X touchpanel to operate his theater exactly the way he wanted. "I originally installed a standard interface and I couldn't stand it, so we created our own based on the way I felt it should be done. And it's been a success ever since—we use it for [the larger] theaters we design."

His custom solution: group everything—lighting, HVAC, security systems, motorized blinds and all audio/video options—on one touchscreen page for easy access and user sanity. "It takes about two minutes to learn how to operate our interface," he says. In many large theaters, Ross' company incorporates a head shot of every family member on the interface for quick access of their customized controls. When a 4-year-old touches her customized button, she's provided with the only two options she needs—an icon of a satellite receiver for watching TV, and an icon of a Blu-ray player for watching DVDs, for example.

Today, Atlanta Home Theater's custom-designed interface has become its signature touch.

Systems & Equipment

Video projector: Digital Projection

Screen: Screen Innovations

Speakers: Wilson Audio

Lighting and control: Crestron
Rack: Middle Atlantic

Details

Room size (L x W x H):
30 x 20 x 12 feet

Cost: \$380,000
(includes installation and labor)

Project Duration: 4 months
Construction: New

Highlights

- ◆ The Crestron DVPHD-PRO processor allows the owner to watch numerous shows on one screen.
- ◆ The custom woodworking includes nearly 200 pounds of mahogany, valued at more than \$12,000.
- ◆ The basement's "fun" zone also includes a full kitchen and bar, a family room, kids' playroom and a sauna.

foot room with sound, Atlanta Home Theater went with the larger-than-normal Wilson Maxx 3 and Watch speakers, accompanied by Velodyne subwoofers and Krell amps (the Krells are proudly positioned atop Billy Bags stands below the screen).

"To achieve really high-volume levels, we had to go with amps that were capable of pushing to that extreme," Ross says. The projector, Digital Projection's dVision 30 HD, couples with Screen Innovations' 160-inch TR160 display to provide a picture that would make Bogie blush—and capture it vividly.

By design, the theater transports viewers to a faraway place and time. It's fronted with

large, hand-carved mahogany entry doors that face a portrait of the film's famous last scene. The theater boasts another of the film's vignettes on the back wall: A pair of custom-made mahogany shutters that replicate a window in Rick's Café and conceal the wall-mounted Watch speakers. The starry night sky above, anchored by Atlanta Home Theater's radical rendition of flying butresses, twinkles over the masculine leather theater chairs by Palliser and contrasting leopard-print carpeting.—*C.D. EH*

SYSTEMS DESIGN & INSTALLATION: Atlanta Home Theater, Atlanta, Ga., www.atlantahometheater.com **BUILDER:** Artesian Builders, Marietta, Ga.
INTERIOR DESIGNER: McNamara Designs, Atlanta, Ga.



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YEAR**  **ELECTRONIC
HOUSE**

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Atlanta's Casablanca



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