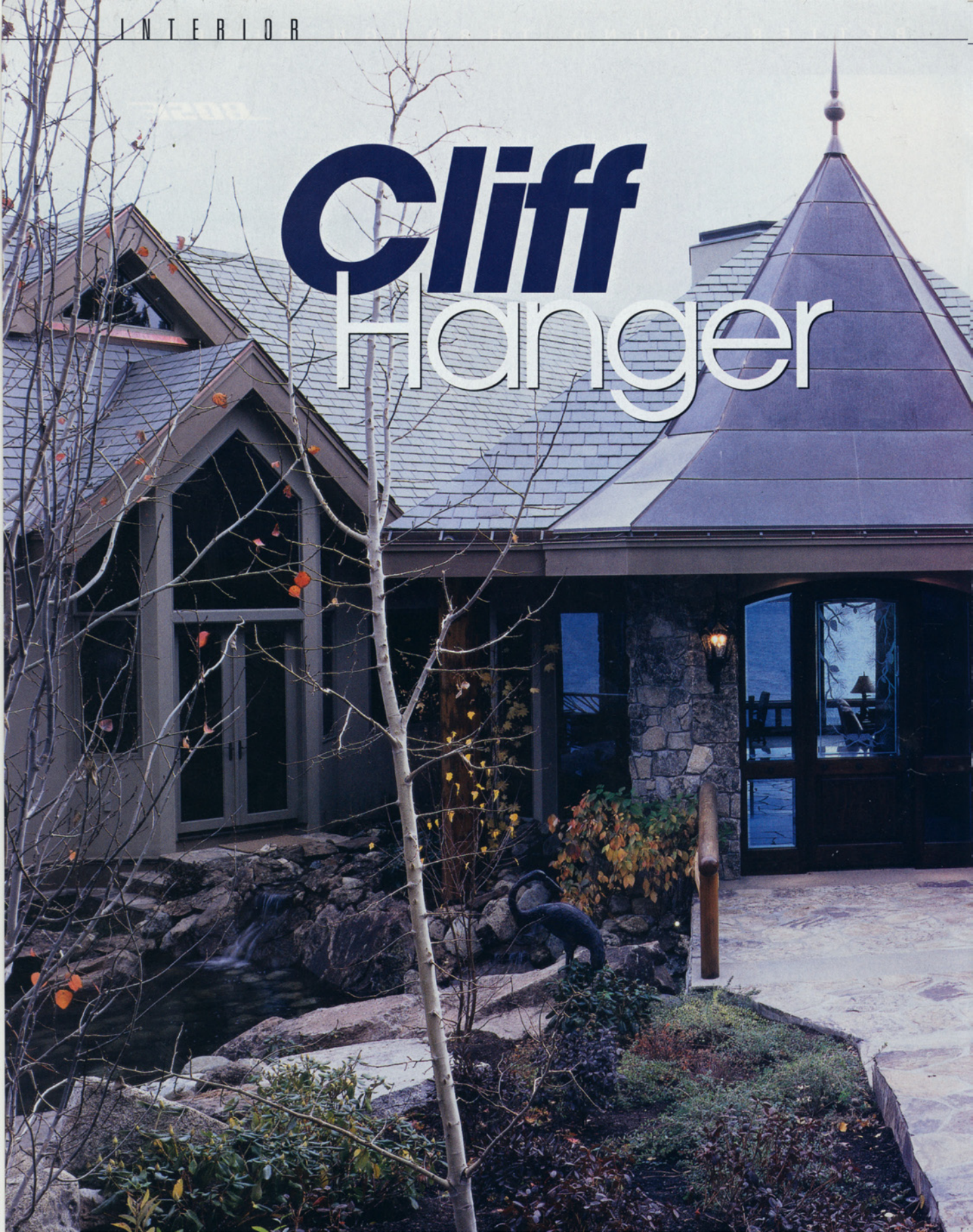
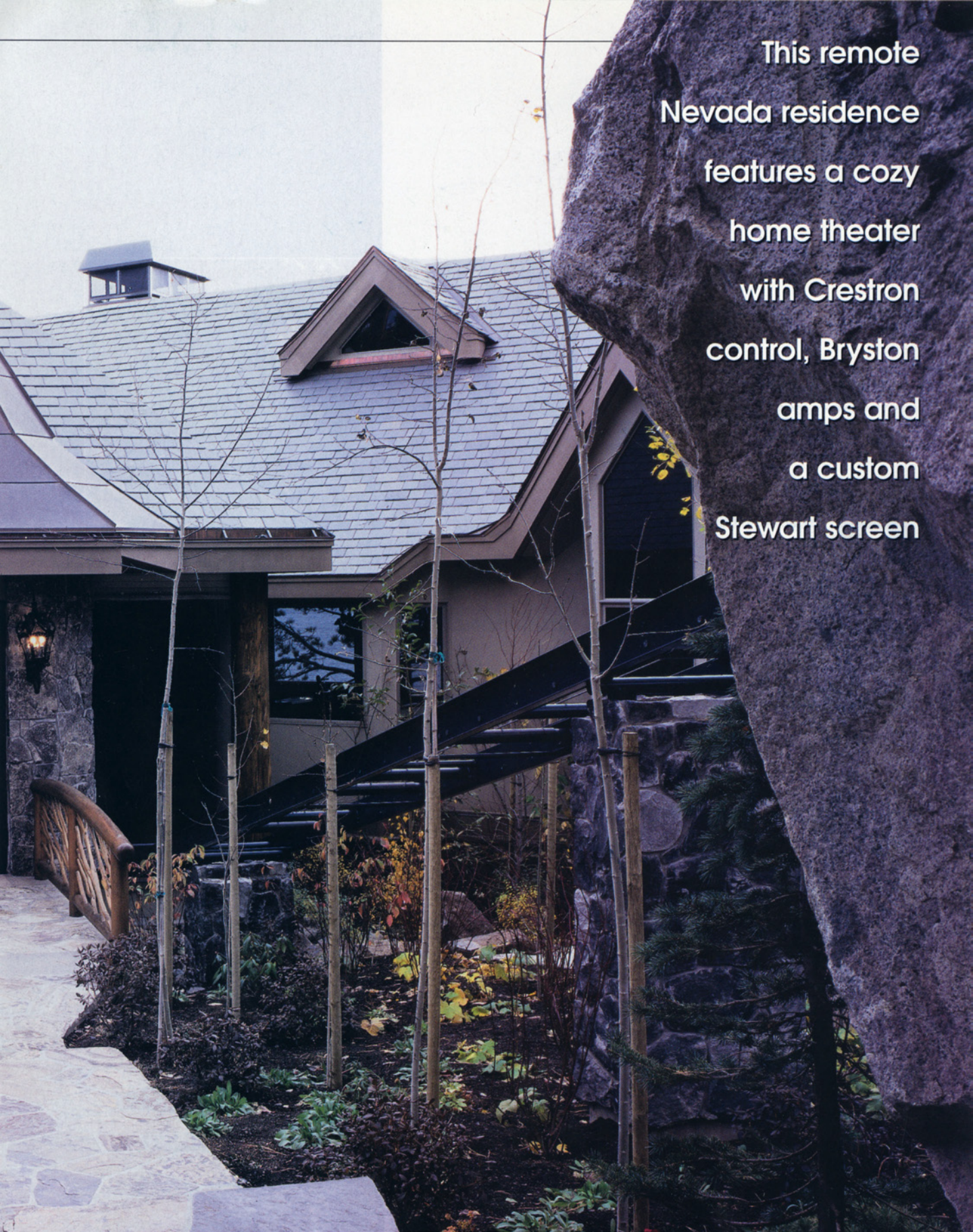
Cliff Hanger





This remote Nevada residence features a cozy home theater with Crestron control, Bryston amps and a custom Stewart screen

Cliff Hanger

STORY BY GREGORY A. DETOGNE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY CHERYL UNGAR

High above a rocky promontory just above 6,000 feet is an architectural dream come to life. Shared by a couple seeking to artfully blend the latest entertainment technologies with a traditional Nevada design, this residential vision took on real dimensions using the work of Reno architect Jeff Lundahl as its foundation.

To create a sense of unity with the majesty of the surrounding mountains, Lundahl's blueprint adopted a largeness of scale. The home is a low, rambling structure divided into main quarters and a guest wing which follow the winding, natural contours of the site. Within the main living space, 11 principal rooms include a polygonal family room, billiards room, solarium, library, home theater, master bedroom, and a gymnasium. "Our goal was to provide a lake view from every major room," notes Lundahl. "To take full advantage of the site's features, we decided to push the house as far out onto the promontory as we could. As a result, the structure wound up following the curves of the hillside terrain in a somewhat serpentine fashion, with each room having a different view of the lake."

A custom Stewart screen and Digital Projection DLP projector bring viewing quality that matches the theater's luxurious decor. Surround sound by Cello, and Sunfire subwoofers literally raise the roof since the ceiling is suspended by spring isolators designed to adjust its height in response to the room's sound pressure level.

The entertainment begins right away in the theater with overstuffed leather chairs, thematic film reel furniture and a fiber optic night sky that changes to day when the lights go up.

While the home's exterior is indeed marked with traditional style, the convenience of electronic technology was equally important. Housewide lighting and HVAC networks, audio system, security and surveillance, and a plush home theater were all integrated by Intelligent Systems Unlimited, (ISU), a Nevada-based firm owned by Wayne Crawford. "Managing the A/V systems in a home of this size would be a nightmare without automation," he says. "Fortunately, given today's technology, we were able to chart a different course. This project took a considerable amount of planning and work on our part, but the end results were quite rewarding."

ISU approached this cliff-top challenge by dividing the electronic systems into individual groups, each reporting to their own centers of control. Within this scheme are three Crestron modular processing units. "These are the main devices which provide our clients with their primary household interface to all systems, including electronic multimedia," Crawford explains. "With over 35 miles of cable and fiber connecting the various systems in this home, there are well over 100 inputs and outputs within the base-level Crestron network alone."

Crawford also installed both wireless and hardwired Crestron touchscreens throughout the house to bring the desired levels of control to the owners' fingertips. In the home theater and family room, VideoTouch LCD touchscreens manage a vast array of systems.

The crown jewel of this residence is an elegant home theater outfitted with a custom micro-perforated electric masking screen from Stewart and a Digital Projection Power DLP projector. A Theta Digital DaVid DVD/CD transport is joined by a Pioneer Elite DVD/LD/CD player. Four Cello Stradivari Legend surround loudspeakers fulfill audio needs in conjunction with Cello Stradivari Grand Master loudspeakers for front- left- and right-channels and a Cello Stradivari Pro Armati center-channel. Sunfire MK-II subwoofers add low-frequency sound reinforcement.

Equipped with double walls featuring hidden diffusers, refractors, and bass traps, the home theater

Audio/video installation and design by Wayne Crawford, ISU Inc., 930 Tahoe Blvd., #802-341 Incline Village, NV 89451; (775) 832-4458. Interior design by Carol John Designs, 16770 Mt. Rose Hwy., Reno, NV 89511; (775) 849-3343. Architecture by Lundahl & Associates, Jeffrey A. Lundahl, president, 1755 East Plumb Lane, Ste. 218, Reno, NV 89502; (775) 348-7777.

Home Theater

Aragon 8008X3 3-channel amplifier
Aragon 8008 ST amplifier
Bryston 7B-THX center-channel amplifier
BTX motorized drapery system 5060
Cello Duet 350 amplifier
Cello Stradivari front/left/right speakers
Cello Stradivari Pro Armati center-channel speaker
Cello Stradivari Legend surround speakers (4)
Cello Strings balanced line interconnect cables
Crestron VT-3500 video touchscreen control panel
Crestron CNMS Cresnet integrated control system
Crestron CLC-6 lighting control system
Crestron ST-PC dual-power control modules (2)
Crestron ST-CS dual-current sensor modules (6)
Crestron ST-COM RS-232/422 COM module
Digital Projection Power 5gv DLP projector
Illumination Lite-Wash fiber optic illumination system
Panamax 1500 line conditioner
Pioneer Elite DVL-91 DVD/LD/CD player
ReplayTV video system
Sony CDP-CX90ES 200-CD player
Sony SAT-A3 DSS receiver
Sony SVO-2000 S-VHS VCR
Stewart Custom 74.5-inch x 168-inch micro-perforated screen
Sunfire MK-II True powered subwoofers (2)
Theta Digital Casablanca music & cinema controller
Theta Digital DaVID DVD/CD transport
White Instrument 4828 equalizer

Audio/Video Distribution Systems

AutoPatch 4YDM audio/video matrix
Blonder-Tongue CAMS-60s stereo channel modulators (8)
Blonder-Tongue ZTA35 RF line amplifier
Blonder-Tongue RMDA550-50 distribution amplifiers (2)

Lower Gallery/Spa

Crestron ST-1550C wireless touchscreen control panel
N.E.A.R. CAF-2 outdoor loudspeakers (2)
LiteTouch 3-button control station
LiteTouch 5-button spa/alarm/light control station

Master Suite/Deck

Crestron VT-3600 Video touchscreen control panel
Crestron CNMS Cresnet integrated control system
Crestron CNIRP (IR) emitter probes (6)
Crestron ST-CS dual current sensor modules (6)
Crestron ST-COM RS-232/422 COM module
Crestron ST-1550C wireless touchscreen control panel

A Crestron control system delivers housewide audio/video and shares whatever is playing in the theater with the rest of the house.

is beneath a hand-painted dome ceiling that changes its appearance from a day sky under normal lighting conditions, to a night sky complete with shimmering starlight. The ceiling is suspended upon the house's superstructure in a floating design using spring isolators that permit it to move an inch up or down according to the amounts of acoustical energy present in the room. The home theater is linked to other display sources via the Crestron network so whatever is being shown on the Stewart screen can be distributed throughout the house.

For the housewide music system, Crawford kept everything completely out-of-sight with "invisible" SA2 flat-panel loudspeakers from Sound Advance Systems. The speakers were ceiling-mounted and then covered with either plaster or a drywall masking compound, depending upon their locations, which spread across a good part of the living spaces and galleries.

Construction to the finish stage took over two years to complete, and Crawford walked away from the job knowing that his clients were happy. "We gave them more home entertainment options and capabilities than they even dreamed about," he concludes. "And they can all be accessed by pressing a single button."

Denon AVC-3000 A/V receiver
Mitsubishi HS-U70 S-VCR
Pioneer Elite DVL-91 CD/DVD/LD player
Pioneer VSX-D1S A/V controller
Pioneer PD-TM1 18-disc CD changer
Sony KV-36XBR200 35-inch television
Sony SAT-A3 DSS receiver
Sony KV-9PT60 9-inch televisions (2)
Sony KV-20VM30 20-inch television
Sonance TR4000 loudspeakers (4)
LiteTouch 7-button control stations (2)
LiteTouch 4-button skylight/light control station
N.E.A.R CAF-2 outdoor loudspeakers (2)
Niles VCS-2D-HP volume control
Sound Advance SA2B in-ceiling loudspeakers (2)

Lighting Control System
LiteTouch Elite CPU & CCU system
LiteTouch 8-channel relay modules (14)
LiteTouch 8-channel dimmer modules (16)
LiteTouch Quad dimmer modules (19)
LiteTouch dual power supply
LiteTouch single power supply
Sentrol SE-6187CTX weatherproof PIRs (2)

Bar & Billiard Room
LiteTouch 9-button control stations (2)
Niles VCS-2D-HP volume control
Sony KV-36XBR200 35-inch television
Sound Advance SA2B in-ceiling loudspeakers (2)

Solarium
LiteTouch 3-button control station
Niles VCS-2D-HP volume control
Sound Advance SA2B in-ceiling loudspeakers (2)

Great Room
Bohlender-Graebener RD-75 Radia Planar in-wall loudspeakers (2)
Bohlender-Graebener R-12 12-inch subwoofers (2)
Bryston 3B-ST power amplifiers (2)
Crestron VT-3500 video touchscreen control panel
Crestron ST-VC volume control modules (2)
Crestron ST-CS current sensor module
Crestron CN-IRP Infrared (IR) emitter probe
Clearview Active crossover module
Mitsubishi CS-40707 40-inch television
Rane MLM-82 microphone/line mixer
Rane ME-15B 2-channel equalizer
LiteTouch 16-button control station

Kitchen & Breakfast Area
IBM ThinkPad laptop with Crestron VisionPC control software
LikeTouch 9-button control stations (2)
Mitsubishi CS-40707 40-inch television
Niles VCS-2D-HP volume controls (2)
Sound Advance SA2B in-ceiling loudspeakers (2)
Sonance TR4000 speakers (2)