

A CINEMA OF YOUR VERY OWN

After his career in film sound came to an end, one reader decided to build the ultimate home cinema

WE'VE SEEN SOME top-quality home cinema installations in our time, but this has to be one of the most impressive. Designed to meet the fastidious standards of David C, a former film sound mixer with several BAFTA Award nominations under his belt and a career history spanning countless big-budget movies, it's one of the best-sounding systems we've heard.

Clearly, as the brainchild of someone with more than a passing knowledge of proper film sound, David's system has been pieced together using truly high-performance kit. Naturally, there's a high-end 1080p front projector with cinemascope lens and screen in situ, installed and calibrated by the Runco specialists at Pulse Marketing. Pulse also liaised with David to ease the installation of his chosen speaker system, made by Sydney-based company Procella.

Expert involvement at every step

In yet another nod to Hollywood, this is a fairly new company founded by two ex-employees of film sound specialists DTS, Gerben Van Duyl and Anders Uggelberg. Each man sports a track record in home cinema sound to rival the best: small wonder David chose to turn to them to provide his dream speaker system.

But as much as the quality of the projector, processing, power amplification and speakers, it's the way the whole system comes together as a whole that really takes the breath away. The result of a two-year development process, the cinema has been built in a specially imported Scandinavian cabin at the bottom of the garden.

If that doesn't sound promising, it's actually spectacular in every sense: the building looks gorgeous, but just as importantly, it works very well on a technical level. That's partially because it's self-contained, so sound transfer to other rooms isn't an issue (although there's plenty of sound deadening built-in to avoid annoying the neighbours!). The wooden construction also works superbly from an acoustic perspective, and it was a simple matter to adapt the interior space to deliver optimal performance.

Sensational sound and vision

Certainly, its owner and chief architect is more than happy with the finished result. "I've been able to recreate the look and feel of the Regal Cinema that first inspired me to get involved in the film industry way back in the 1950s" beams David. "It's great: it feels as if after years of working on films I've been able to recapture the thrill of my first experiences with the cinema, as if I've gone full circle. I consider it a privilege to be able to use it each day".

After a prolonged listen, we'd have to agree: this is both a thrilling and an evocative home cinema, one that readily evokes the outstanding clarity and dynamic reach of 'the real thing', and its picture quality is simply glorious, too. And isn't it reassuring to learn that at its very heart, rubbing shoulders with all that exotic, powerful and expensive kit, there's an eminently affordable Panasonic Blu-ray player? You might not be able to afford a system like David's - but at least you'll have a love of Blu-ray in common...



Panasonic's budget DMP-BD30 Blu-ray player provides superb HD pictures and quality sound in David's cinema set-up



"I've been able to recreate the look and feel of the Regal Cinema that first inspired me to get involved in films"

A cinemascope screen boasts powered curtains



Lights guide the way to David's cinema palace



Special room treatments help optimise the sound



"It's great: it feels as if I've been able to recapture the thrill of my first experiences with the cinema, as if I've gone full circle"

Not your average shed at the bottom of the garden, this



Runco's 1080p DLP projector adds that cinematic feel



Procella's neat rear speakers - the fronts are hidden