

INSTALL *of the month*



This private cinema in an exclusive apartment complex in London's Docklands provided unique challenges

Home cinema comes full circle

How do you put a cinema in a circle? With the help of a great supplier and versatile products, **Custom Sight & Sound** was able to create a 26-seat cinema to the highest standard

This stunning private cinema, set within a luxury living space in London's exclusive Docklands area, was something of a departure for custom installers Custom Sight & Sound.

It was also one of its greatest challenges. Completed at the end of last year, Custom Sight & Sound was asked by property developers The Ballymore Group to construct a private 26-seat cinema on the ground floor of its new Pan Peninsula development in London's Docklands area.

There was only one problem – the space itself had no straight lines. "It was one of our most challenging jobs," says Custom Sight & Sound's Ian Bolt. "We just didn't have any straight surfaces to work off.

Heart-shaped box

"The room was a difficult one in so much as there are no parallel walls, so setting it out provided some unique challenges – it's was almost heart-shaped," says Ian.

"So we designed a flat wall section on the front elevation and fixed the projector screen to that."

If it was initially puzzling, Custom Sight & Sound's input into the semi-commercial Pan Peninsula project was only one piece of the jigsaw. The cinema installation had to fit around other facilities planned by the developers.

"Our part of it is the less expensive part," says Ian of the £100,000 project.

The well-heeled residents of Pan Peninsula have some remarkable facilities, including a leisure centre, spa and health centre. And though the cinema installation itself is there for residents to enjoy films at

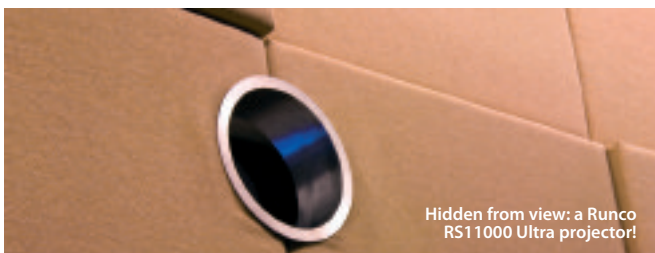
their convenience, it's also intended to be rented out for private functions, such as major sporting occasions and parties.

To top-off the installation, 26 electrically operated reclining leather seats were added, along with a semi-circular lounge area and bar to the side. The finished cinema is expensively furnished and worth a lot more

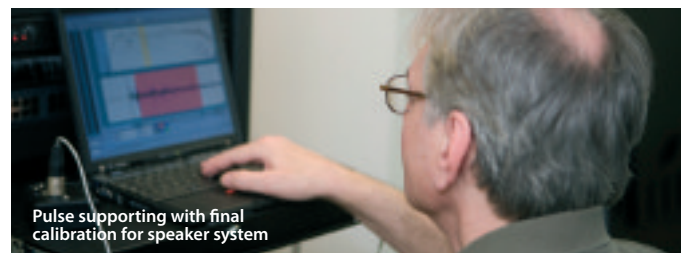
"It was one of our most challenging jobs. We just didn't have any straight surfaces to work off."



As well as the private cinema this exclusive facility includes a private bar and seating area



Hidden from view: a Runco RS1 1000 Ultra projector!



Pulse supporting with final calibration for speaker system



Amplification by Krell, and as usual Custom Sight & Sound cabled like no other installer: lovely, effortless lines...

How to square a circle

The Pan Peninsula cinema installation's 'squashed circle' space didn't just lack flat walls. Both the ceiling and the wall were sloped, which made working out exact calculations tricky.

To help overcome this problem – and before Ian and his team descended on the space to work their magic – a flat wall section was fitted on the front elevation for the projector screen to be fixed to.

Although calculating heights and other measurements was always difficult, Custom Sight & Sound used CAD drawings, 3D modelling and some super-versatile home cinema equipment.



The developers installed a flat wall before the installers commenced their work, but it was still a tricky project





The loudspeaker pack is part of the Procella 7.1 configuration



Procella Audio: the only loudspeakers which could fill the space with effortless ease. A job well done and top sound too



Runco's RS1100 Ultra projector is hidden in a service space on the back of the room

than the £100,000 design and installation fee might suggest. It is, however, the perfect place to relax. Fitting, then, that the project itself ran smoothly once the major challenges of the space had been overcome.

"The main problem was the geometry of the space," says Ian. "Normally you get a flat ceiling and a flat floor, but the ceiling was stepped-up and the floor went down to the screen."

The lack of geometric certainty was reduced when the developers built a flat screen at the front of the room, which the installers at Custom Sight & Sound worked back from.

Laying out what the room would look like wasn't easy, but installers at Custom Sight & Sound always use CAD systems for everything they do. "We also model the room

"We can give the client a very precise idea of what it would look like and how the space would feel."

in 3D so we can give the client a very precise idea of what it would look like and how the space would feel," says Ian.

With surround sound to think of, working out the heights was also a huge challenge for Ian and his team. "A lot of the equipment is working fairly close to its limit and it was hard to find products that fitted in with that need."

And that's where Custom Sight & Sound's relationship with Pulse Marketing helped deliver the goods. "Pulse Marketing has some truly exceptional products," says Ian.

The equipment choice was largely based around Pulse Marketing's portfolio. A 150-inch diagonal, acoustically transparent Screen Research ClearPix Supreme projector screen was chosen for the front of house, while behind it are centre, left and right speakers by Procella Audio. Amplification is by Krell (its S1000 processor and S1700 multichannel power amp), while the source is a Denon DVD-2500 Blu-ray player, which is cut into the wall on right hand side of the screen – as is a Crestron TPS06L

control system, which also masters a Sky+HD box. The Denon unit is accessed from its front face, while the rack is hidden. "We trained various members of staff at Pan Peninsula how to use the system, but the use of a Crestron system makes it very straightforward," says Ian.

Firm foundations

To finish-off the cinema, Custom Sight & Sound used a Runco RS1100 Ultra projector. If you're wondering why you can't see the projector in any of our pictures, it's because it's hidden in a service space on the back of the room – another aspect of the awkward installation space that had to be taken into consideration.

For similarly practical reasons Custom Sight & Sound always use Crestron for control systems ("We know its products are the best there are," says Ian), largely because there is always one to suit every application – and, for the most part, the same goes for Runco.

Crucially for Custom Sight & Sound, Pulse are able to offer a lot of support from a technical point of view. "It's just a safety check," says Ian about Pulse's involvement in all aspects of the installation. "We think we know what were doing, but it's great to have someone sitting behind that has the background and experience with the product," says Ian, who adds that the staff at Pulse were always happy to lend a hand, and the odd idea or two. "They are pretty bold in saying, 'have you thought about that?' or 'have you considered doing it this way?' They became part of the team."

"When you've got a supplier like Pulse who you can absolutely trust, it makes it much easier."

Every installer needs to know there's always someone to talk to if a problem needs solving immediately. Ian thinks he's found that with the team at Pulse: "When you've got a supplier like Pulse who you can absolutely trust, and within it some real technical knowledge, it makes it much easier, because every job we do is bespoke and every challenge is different. It's great to know they have the technical expertise to make life easy on what was a complex job."

Despite these many challenges, on-the-job support from Pulse helped Custom Sight & Sound complete the job relatively quickly. "A lot of our projects are long term," says Ian, "but we were involved in this installation from mid-2007 to late 2008 – that's actually quite short for us."

A lot of that was down to great relations with the developers. The customer is always right, of course, but the tricky geometric nature of the space meant that Ian and his team had to make a series of adjustments and recommendations to the Ballymore Group, one of Europe's largest developers. Happily, they were only too ready to cede to the expert's advice.

"We had a lot of help from the developers," says Ian. "We had to do it a certain way to make it work. They had their own views on how it would look, but they listened to us and were happy to make changes."

"It's not always that way in bigger projects, with lots of people onsite, especially with tight health and safety regulations. The developers stayed very much interested and we were always aware what was needed next – it was also a very stable team so we always knew who to deal with."

The results are there for all to see.

www.cssinstall.co.uk

www.hcdmag.com



Runco, Screen Research and Procella kit all come together to complete this beautiful cinema



A private seating area helps make this cinema installation into a small entertainment complex

Kit used

The equipment choice was based around Pulse Marketing's products. A 150-inch diagonal Screen Research CleanPix Supreme was chosen for front of house, while P Series speakers



(pictured) and a subwoofer from another of Pulse's brands, Procella Audio, was picked for its adaptability in a 7.1 set-up. The Procella array sits on a support frame behind the projector screen.

"We put in DSP sound processors from Procella to get sound correction to compensate for the



fact that the walls weren't straight, and then acoustically treated the surfaces," says Ian.

A Runco RS1100 Ultra projector (above) was used alongside a Krell S1000 processor and a S1700 multichannel power amplifier.

Crestron's TPS06 touchpanel was chosen to control lighting and the sources, a Sky+HD box and Denon's DVD-2500 Blu-ray player.