

Electronic theater

Home in on a stylish entertainment center

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SPECIAL WRITER

Home is where the heart is. It's also the place for great entertainment and information coming to us by way of the electronic industry.

Americans already own a lot of electronic equipment. By this time, nearly everybody has one color TV (97 percent) and most have VCRs (up to 89 percent) — and this doesn't include other equipment and personal computers.

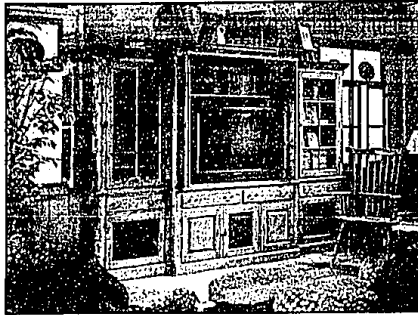
It was inevitable the marriage between electronics and furniture would take place, especially prodded by growing interest in home theater.

Prospects of this happening has generated a lot of excitement at local home furnishings retail stores.

Scott Shuptrine is adding Bob Timberlake's Home Theater that accommodates up to a 60-inch television. Newton Furniture in Livonia and Novi is going with Bernhard's entertainment centers in various styles that hold up to 35-inch televisions. Classic Interiors in Livonia has expanded its popular Pennsylvania House line for a unit for 52-inch televisions.

Meanwhile, Ethan Allen already has introduced its Concept Six, designed to accommodate most 35-inch televisions, laser discs and surround sound components.

These video, audio and speaker cabinet units are being offered in a range of options and are designed to coordinate with the styles of major furniture lines:



Going country: Bob Timberlake's three-piece unit, with space for three speakers in slightly distressed cherry, includes many options in door fronts and shelving capable of accommodating up to a 60-inch TV. \$4,999. At Scott Shuptrine, Troy, Novi, Bloomfield Hills, Grosse Pointe.

The American Impressions, Georgian Court and the Country French Collection.

Concept Six goes well beyond the typical armoire or bookshelf that had provided space for a household's TV and stereo.

Richard Howard, founder and driving force behind The Gramophone in Birmingham since 1976, has been among the first to sell and install total audio and video systems as well as intercoms, paging and alarm devices. For the past 10 years, he has pioneered home theater, using high-quality

components for custom installation. Howard logically can be credited with contributing to the growing popularity of home theater except, in this instance, the units are inconspicuously built-in, allowing one to experience slight ambient sound, uncomplicated by furnishings.

For those who require portability and flexibility in their viewing and who enjoy TV images projected up to 100 inches (over eight feet), then the Sharp XV-1202UA LCD (liquid crystal) projector is the answer. This compact video

projector (which requires a VCR to use it) is available at Hawthorne Home Appliances & Electronics in Birmingham. Prices range from \$1,900 to \$7,000 for the maximum size.

Another version of projection television recently has been offered by Mitsubishi Electronics in the form of the VS-4671 Table Top Big Screen, which features a 45-inch screen, weighs only 130 pounds and fits on the same size shelf as a 27-inch, direct-view television. Legitimate claims are made that this new Table Top is the big screen design of the future because, among other reasons, it is ideal for space-saving apartment dwellers yet provides high-quality images.

The new Kallista Collection from Thomsville includes a canopy bed with an optional leather headrest and a built-in rack for a small television hidden under the canopy, along with all the necessary wiring. For those who like viewing TV in bed, this Thomsville item can be found at Classic Interiors in Livonia among other select retailers.

The only thing new about having a television in the kitchen is that it's become part of an overall media and communications center and can be built to custom specifications. The Madison Design Group in the Michigan Design Center in Troy, for example, will adapt its Heritage kitchen cabinets to any size television, intercoms, radio and tape players. Siemens, also in MDG, is finding one out of four of its custom-built kitchens is being specified to in-



Stylish home theater: This Ethan Allen Concept Six unit accommodates a large-screen television with the sensation of theater-quality sound. Components for the American Impressions and Country French styles are \$6,000; the Georgian Court style is \$5,300. At Ethan Allen.

clude a personal computer.

Perhaps the last word about electronics and the home belongs to Mark Stockwell, a 1993 graduate of Cranbrook Educational Community in Bloomfield Hills. He created an entirely new way of viewing television, influenced by traditional Japanese interior design that defined space through minimal but strategic use of furnishings.

Stockwell's Media Blanket — embedded with a LCD television screen, speakers and reading lights — is clearly intended for the viewer who wishes the ultimate cooing experience as well as an environment to be shared with friends.

The Media Blanket, through counterbalancing devices anchored to the floor, can be held in an upright position or wrapped around the viewer. The remote control is built into one of the small pillows offering back support.

Stockwell's Media Blanket was recently featured as Best in Student Design by the 39th annual design review of ID (International Design) magazine.

We'll have to wait and see whether the built-ins, structural furnishings or wrap-around blanket will be the wave of the future. For now, consumers seem to have plenty of options.

Contemporary from page 1D

redesigned the foyer, living room, dining room, den and powder room.

Kocaj brought warmth to the large rooms with use of texture in the fabrics, floors and wallcoverings and with rich jewel tones colors, such as raspberry red, magenta, plum and fuchsia.

He added brass accents for sparkle. He also used black lacquer touches in tables and accent pieces in every room to accompany the swirl wood dining room set and the large burd display cabinet in the living room.

"The couple ordered everything new from Hudson's except the dining room set and the display cabinet," Kocaj said. "We worked with the Oriental flavor of the original piece while creating a contemporary mood throughout the house."

The house reflects the husband and wife who live there, Kocaj said.

"We are casual, stay-at-home people who love to entertain often," she said.

Their specialty is theme parties. They live at the home with their 1-year-old Black Labrador Retriever, Shelby.

The house boasts large windows and an open floor plan. Kocaj kept that feeling by using simple window treatments and the repetition of color and texture in each room.

The flowing waves of intense teal, magenta and ruby red in the dramatic foyer rug introduce the colors of the interior.

Red raspberry dominates the den. The sectional is teal with small, geometric raspberry designs. Bold raspberry pillows draw out the color, which is repeated in the Roman shades. The matching overstuffed teal chairs covered in chenille invite people to sit down, put their feet on the ottoman and get comfortable.

The custom commissioned textured wallcovering with wrapped yarns also reflects the interior's warm colors. Local weaver Ronnie Fouer made the dramatic piece to hang above the sectional in the den.

The Nel Markle paper sculptures with red, teal and violet swirls framed in Plexiglass dominate the powder room. Kocaj used the mirrored 10-foot-high walls to reflect the hanging sculptures as well as the accent pieces in black

and brass. The raised dining room is the most dramatic room in the house. Kocaj's large silk flower arrangement catches one's eye immediately. It is full, rich and lush in a brass container that complements the Oriental flavor of the dining room set.

Deep jewel tones are repeated in the flower arrangement, the fabric on the host and hostess chairs, in the large duplicate of the foyer rug and in the lithograph with 24-karat gold splashes.

The living room is the most elegant of Kocaj's designs in this house. The soft texture and tones of the oatmeal Berber carpeting are echoed in the L-shaped sectional. Various solid-colored fabric pillows lend more texture. A teal barrel chair and two multicolored chairs complete the seating in the living room.

Kocaj ties the living room and dining room together in many ways. He covered the dining room's host and hostess chairs and the two formal chairs in the living room with matching fabric.

Also, the vertical-striped tailored valance runs along the dining and living room windows in a continuous line.

"Mario designed the interior to look like something we would do ourselves. He worked so closely with us. It fits our lifestyle perfectly. We'll never tire of the look," the wife said.

"The design is classic," Kocaj added. "It's simple yet dramatic; contemporary yet inviting, colorful yet elegant. It's a good example of how clean lines, the right colors and subtle textures can bring warmth into a contemporary design."

Censorship discussed

The Community House in Birmingham presents a public forum, "Censorship of the Arts?" 7 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 7, at the Baldwin Public Library, 300 W. Merrill in Birmingham.

A reception at The Community House, 380 S. Bates, will immediately follow. Admission is free. Reservations are requested. Call the program department at The Community House, 644-5832.

This is another presentation of Viewpoints, an ongoing series of community forums created to present timely issues of local, national and international scope in a town hall format. "Censorship of the Arts?" will begin with a keynote address by Wayne Lawson, director of the Ohio Arts Council. A response panel will continue discussion.

Fanchette is Joseph Bianco Jr., executive vice president of the Founders Society, Detroit Institute of Arts; Barbara Kratchman, director of the

Michigan Council of the Arts 1985-91; John Urice, dean of the School of Arts and Sciences, Oakland University; and Robert Scheffman, a West Bloomfield sculptor whose work was covered during a community exhibit on New Year's Eve.

As director of the state arts organization during the past five months, Lawson had to deal with this exhibit and the controversy that surrounded it. He has served on many program panels for the National Endowment for the Arts and has been chairman of the NEA State Programs Advisory Panel.

"I'll bring to this forum my experience as a public funder, and I'll talk about how to work with legislators, taxpayers and artists," Lawson said. "I can also offer guidelines for local and state agencies as they develop their own policies."

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