

Concluding our practical series on giving advice on lighting different areas of the home, REBECCA WEIR considers the ultimate in light shows -

home cinemas



Home cinemas are increasingly popular, and they are good spaces in which to have fun with the lighting design, and to let your imagination run wild. Layers of light and the introduction of several circuits provide flexibility for using the room for different purposes: watching the screen as well as reading, for example, or for children to play. Lighting systems need to reduce glare from both natural and artificial light - which may interfere with the screen-image quality - as well as ensure adequate background light to prevent eye strain, and enable people to move round the room safely even when most of the lights are switched off and a film is being screened.

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▲ A 'Sparkle Wheel' incorporated into 'Roblon' fibreoptics provides a magical effect of light shimmering throughout the space. Low-voltage bronze 'Grille' lights set into the steps complement the stripes of the carpet, and are a safety feature, guiding viewers to and from their seats. They cost from £26.50 each, at Light IQ



▲ Low-voltage ceiling lights provide a good general light in this room. However, to create a more seductive setting, one recessed downlight, on its own circuit, can be used to provide a focal point - here, the modern wood-burning stove - and soft background lighting.

◀ In this cinema-cum-playroom, a 'Roblon' fibreoptic 'starry sky' from Light Projects (tel: 020-7231 8282) provides an enchanting space for relaxation and play, and costs from £800. To maintain the clean lines of the audio-visual equipment and furniture, all freestanding decorative lighting is restricted. To provide additional reading light while others are watching a film, a niche was built to house 'Xenlight' - a linear, low-voltage light source that accentuates the wooden finish of the niche, and illuminates the back of the room. 'Xenlight' costs from £125 a metre. For further information, call Light Graphix on 01322-527629



Tools of the trade

Sophisticated control systems such as Crestron (website: www.crestron.com) and AMX (website: www.amx.com)

integrate lighting, audio-visual equipment, blinds, air conditioning and heating, allowing all elements to be controlled from a single handset. The portable 'Philips Pronto' (shown here), from £599, will also allow you to close your curtains, drop the TV screen, and change your lighting, all at the touch of a button. For stockists, visit www.pronto.philips.com □

