

# design NJ

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*a* kitchen.  
solution *in maplewood*

home theaters the smart home  
subterranean splendor



PHOTOS BY ROSEMARY CARROLL



PHOTOS BY MARISA PELLEGRINI

## ABOVE & BEYOND

When Tenafly homeowners decided to create a home theater above their garage, they called on J.D. Audio & Video Design to design it. They broke through a bedroom to connect the house with what was originally a detached garage, designer Elysse Bongiorno says. Because the theater is in the garage's attic space, the designers incorporated the eaves to give it more interest. The chair rail and other moldings are in keeping with the home's traditional style. The classic color scheme includes nine reclining theater chairs in navy leather and a carpet of navy with red and gold accents. Acoustical fabric, fashioned to look like Venetian plaster, hides speakers for the 110-inch motorized screen. When the homeowners press start on their touch panel to begin a movie, blackout curtains descend in front of the windows.

SOURCES: design, installation, and chairs, J.D. Audio & Video Design in Fort Lee; carpet, Stanton in Syosset, New York; motorized window treatments, CMI Interiors in Springfield.

## DISAPPEARING ACT

"My purpose was to make things disappear," Robert Stevens Jr. says of the media room he designed for the 2006 Hammonton Show House (above). Stevens, of Real Life Designs, hid speakers in columns flanking the screen, the center channel speaker in the cabinet beneath the screen, the rear speaker in the ceiling, and the receiver, DVD player, and cable box in a closet. A touch-panel remote controls it all. He calls the space a "multipurpose or media room" as opposed to a home theater. Still, he chose an 86-inch front-projection TV "to give people the feel of being in a theater." Interior designer Lenore Spinelli, who worked with Stevens, says most home theaters feature theater-style seats in rows. "This room wouldn't allow for that set-up, but I didn't want it anyway; I wanted it to be as comfortable as a family room," she says. She maximized seating with a banquette (at right in photo) and a leather sofa and recliner near the screen. The room, with its stained glass window, lent itself to the Craftsman style, which Spinelli reinforced with the leather sofa and recliner and a collectors chest used as a coffee table. Serving as an "introduction" to the room, a staircase and landing outside are painted black and feature murals of screen legends.

SOURCES: electronics design and installation, Real Life Designs in Hamilton; interior design, Lenore Spinelli of Sheffield Furniture and Interiors in Malvern, Pennsylvania; sofa, La-Z-Boy in Monroe, Michigan; recliner and collectors chest, Stickley in Manlius, New York; murals, James McLaughlin of Painted Pastimes in Audubon.