

smartlife

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luxury living

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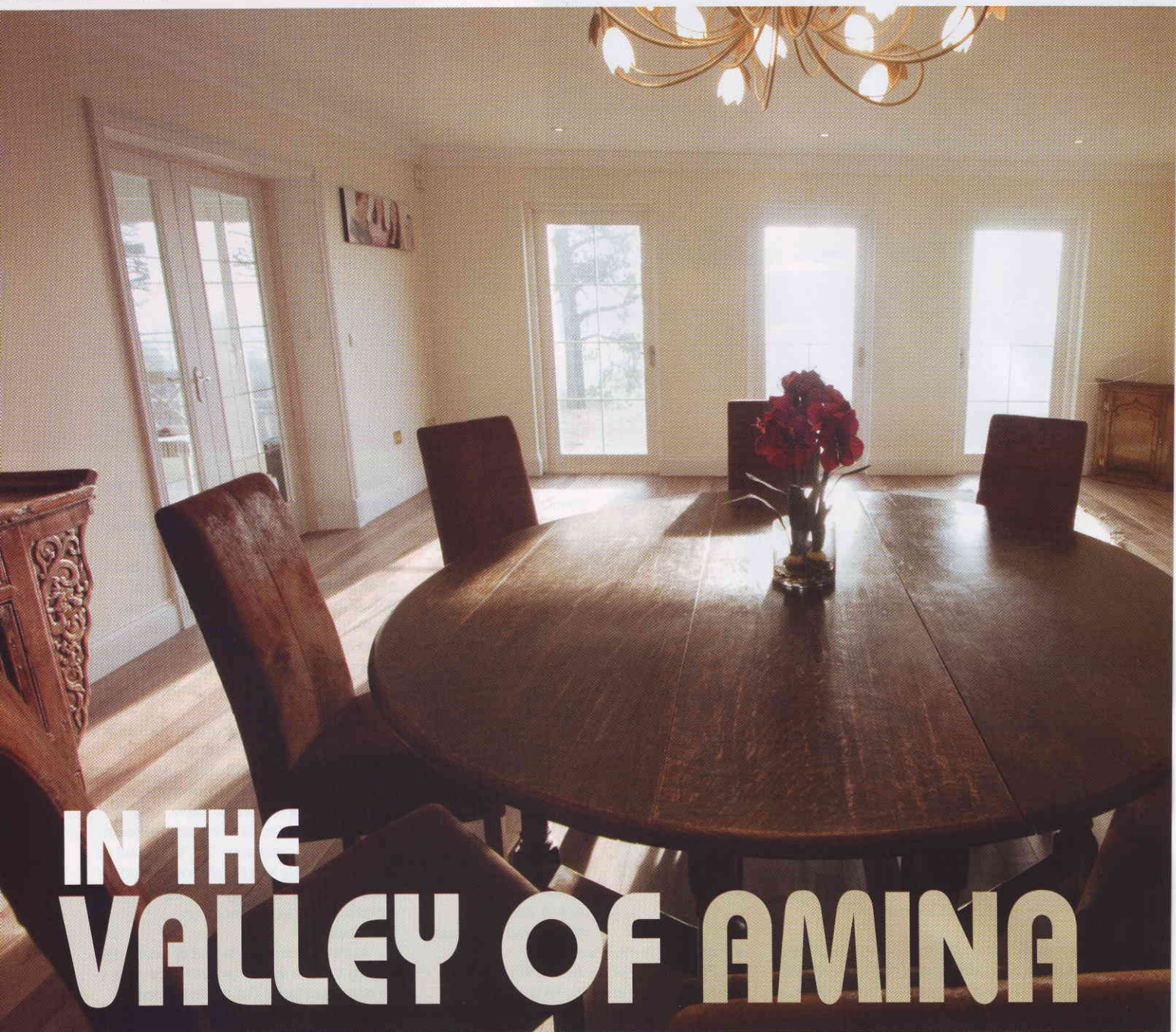
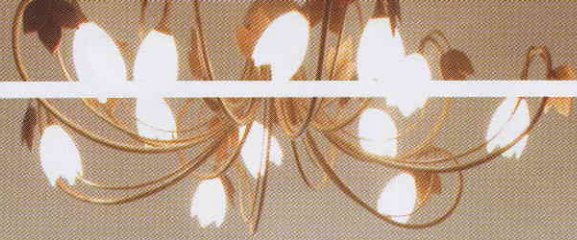
STAND AT EASE

Step up to the next level
with Alphason Designs and
the sexiest AV furniture around



CHELSEA SWAGGER

Ejector seats, Daleks and cutting edge kit:
we visit the London smartpad that's got the lot



IN THE VALLEY OF AMINA

IF YOU PRIDE PURE SONOROUS PERFECTION AND AESTHETIC DISCRETION IN EQUAL MEASURE, THEN MATT WHEELER HAS JUST THE THING FOR YOU: THE AMINA SOUNDUNSEEN PLASTER-IN-WALL SPEAKER...

When building their dream house in West Wales, Ron and Gail Mountsey wanted to use the most innovative home technology to produce an interior and ambience to match the stunning views that surround them. So, for this hugely impressive building the couple used some of the most innovative house building techniques available, using polystyrene bricks, first positioned and then filled with concrete to create the main structure, whilst an underground thermal exchange system was fitted to drive the heating throughout the house and supply warmth through the latest under-floor climate control system.

At the heart of their grand home is a commanding entrance hall-cum-dining room offering stunning views across the Carmarthen

Hills and Irish Sea. 'First impressions last' as the saying goes and this double level area, melding into a huge dining area certainly creates a good one.

However, with such an impressive space to deal with, it was decided that the couple needed something different and innovative to provide the beautiful, full sound that was required to fill it, whilst not detracting from the crafted design. The solution, fortunately, was obvious: Amina invisible Plaster In-wall speakers positioned in the ceiling.

Unlike traditional speakers, Amina speakers generate a diffuse sound wave. This means that the sound is not directional, as it evolves in all directions. So in a big room the sound sweeps through the space and into the corners to give a more even, ambient coverage. The hot and cold

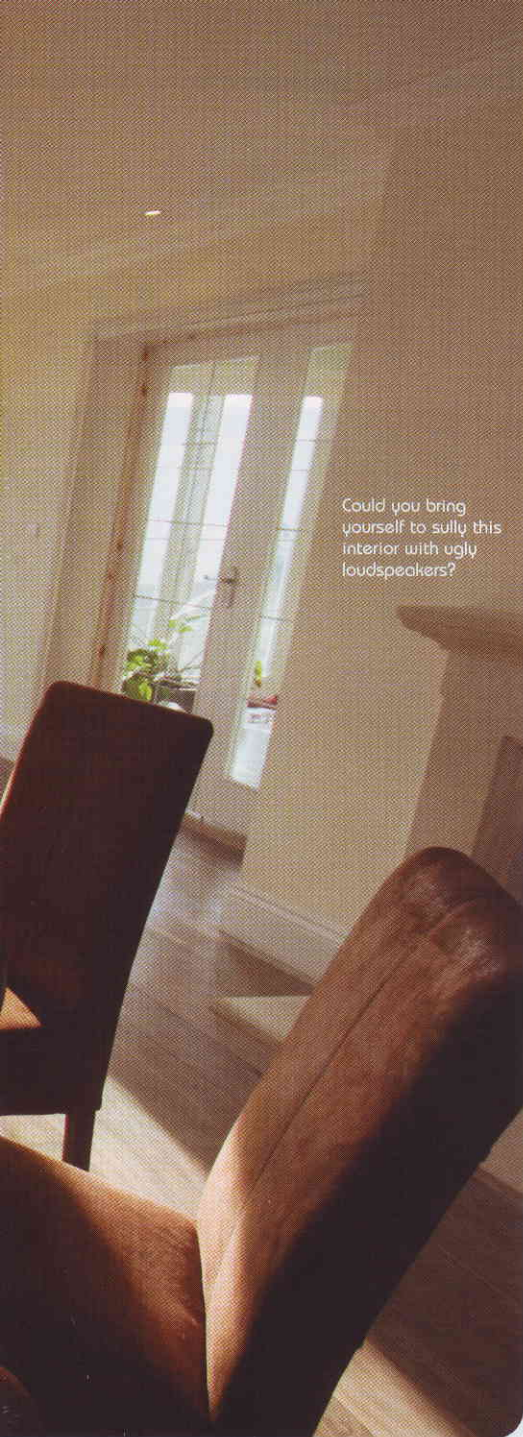
spots are much reduced and the detail of higher frequencies is retained. How? Brace yourself...

Here comes the science...

Putting a Space Age spin on a millennia-old sound generation technique, the technology used by Amina, whilst innovatively applied, actually goes all the way back to first principles – recreating the way natural musical instruments produce sound - using an updated form of soundboard technology.

Mimicking the ancient technique of using vibrating surfaces (large areas of complex movement which excite the air particles on the surface that in turn transfer the sound energy through other air particles until it reaches our ears), Amina speakers employ the latest composite technology as opposed to the wooden soundboards of old, resulting in panels that are much more versatile than wood that will not warp or split.

But it's not just the soundboard technology that's joined the Space Age either. The 'vibrating strings' part of the set-up has been advanced too, replacing said strings with Neodymium



Could you bring yourself to sully this interior with ugly loudspeakers?



Thankfully, there's absolutely no sign of Amina's high-tech wares...



...Only superb audio, supplied on demand

electro-mechanical actuators (*everyone's favourite actuators!* – Ed.) which setup the vibrations at the right frequencies to produce the exact sounds needed.

Fortunately, though, the vibrations produced are minute and, therefore, the movement on the surface so minimal, you can skim directly onto the panel with 1-2mm of plaster, safe in the knowledge that it'll never crack. Plus, the flexibility the composite technology design offers in surface technology means that the specialist final finish enables the plaster to directly adhere to the surface without any preparation!

As a result, with Amina Invisible Plaster In-wall Speakers you not only have a sound source that disappears seamlessly into a wall or ceiling, but also a compact, thin speaker with some extraordinary capabilities! Bonus enough, you might have thought. But in the case of this home, there was another benefit...

Sound structure

As mentioned, the house was built using polystyrene bricks filled with concrete. This

provides a strong, fast-to-build and thermally excellent structure. However, an unexpected result is that all wiring within the building that comes into contact with the polystyrene requires specialist shielding. The composition of the standard PVC sheathing for domestic wiring reacts with polystyrene, which would have seriously affected the integrity and strength of the structure over the long term. Installing just two speakers that could do the job of many, therefore, reduced the amount of wiring required and the extra cost of the specialist wiring now needed.

Once this was addressed, and with the science very firmly on-side, the installation of the Amina speakers began... a surprisingly easy process too. Once the location was selected, the speakers were offered and scribed around to mark the position. Next the plasterboard was cut with a sharp knife and the plaster removed, leaving the hole for the speakers. Lugs were attached to the inner surface of the plasterboard, the speakers screwed to the lugs, joint tape applied to the edge, a final skim and... all done, all ready to decorate!

So, ancient principles, innovative thinking and an installation that not only safe-guards the structural integrity and aesthetics of this stunning home, but also fill it with rich, natural, perfectly balanced music – they'll be singing in the valleys from now on!

Speaker Spec

The SoundUnseen™ Plaster-In-Wall loudspeakers are available in three different power ratings to match the budgets and volume requirements of individuals and their environments: AIW1 20W per speaker, AIW3 40W per speaker and the AIW5 80W per speaker.

Contact

For further information contact:

www.amina.co.uk