

INTERIOR

# RHAPSODY in blue

A Linn Knekt multi-room audio system, Spectral Series 2 amplifiers and Wilson Audio Watt 51 speakers add musical harmony to this exquisite New York penthouse



# RHAPSODY in blue

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If music is the food of love then every day holds a feast in this 37th floor penthouse on Manhattan's West Side. Located an echo away from New York's Lincoln Center, the glass-walled 2-story apartment is frequently host to celebrated musicians who entertain informally amid the star-studded backdrop of the city skyline. Two Steinway Grand pianos fit comfortably in the 10,000-square-foot performance/living

space, which can create both an open, airy environment for a virtuoso performance or the more intimate atmosphere of a piano bar at an elegant cocktail party. Commissioned art pieces and dramatic lighting sculptures punctuate the dazzling high-rise haven.

Imagine Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue as the soundtrack for this glamorous New York set and the picture is complete.

In fact, you don't have to imagine Gershwin at all. The American composer's music is among the homeowner's most valued works of art and

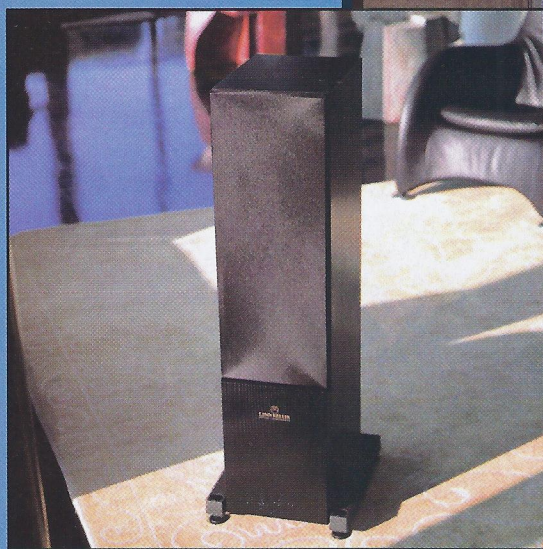
they're only a button push away in almost every room in the home. "The owner has listened to more music in the two years he's owned the system than most people do in 10 years," says Elliott Fishkin, president of Innovative Audio, the Manhattan-based custom audio/video firm that designed and installed the system.

"His goal was to have a music system that mesmerized him," says Fishkin. Semi-retired and an accomplished pianist in his own right, the owner spends four to six hours a day in this bedroom alcove listening





*A multi-room  
Linn Knekt audio  
system delivers  
Gershwin, Mozart,  
Strauss and Chopin  
through Linn Keltik  
speakers (below).*



to music. It's leisure time well spent for a patron of the arts. "He has knowledge of music of all types," Fishkin says, "from ancient to renaissance to classical to operas."

Serious audio is spoken here.

That explains the massive enclosure in the alcove, which isn't the refrigerator it looks to be, but a Wilson XS subwoofer. In full view nearby is a pair of Wilson Audio Watt Puppy 5.1 speakers. The speakers connect via garden hose-size MIT cables to an MIT speaker interface, which equalizes time alignment of the low, mid and upper frequencies and protects the system against interference that could degrade the sound. All the equipment is exposed and the speakers are positioned in the room for optimum sound staging.

In a home exquisitely tailored and toned for entertaining, this sanctuary is hands-off to interior design. "The fact that he would accept this stereo as an artifact means that he views it as a means to the art," Fishkin says of the homeowner. "That's the only way in a home like this that one would accept an overt stereo over flush-mount speakers. You acknowledge it in the way that you acknowledge a piano as an instrument."

Impressive sound is difficult to achieve when room borders comprise of one standard sheetrock wall and three glass walls around it. Fishkin used speaker positioning as the means for controlling the highly reflective sound. "We put the chair in the first reflection wave and that eliminates issues that could arise if you are sitting outside the envelope formed by the reflections," he says. "If the chair is outside the envelope, you're going to get mostly reflected sound. If you're inside, a lot of the things that



## RECAPSODY in blue

could be bad about the room don't affect you."

When musicians aren't tickling the ivories during parties, the multi-room music system is filling the expansive space with tunes. The owner has selected numerous play lists, which Innovative Audio specialists have programmed into the system using the Song Servant CD management software program from Gig-O-Byte Music Inc. "It's like using a Microsoft Word document," Fishkin says of the program. "You select all of the document—either a given CD or part of one—and then drag it into the play list." Each play list can be virtually unlimited in length, and you can organize music according to artist, genre, or title. Images of album cover art can also be scanned into

the system for later recall on a Power Book.

The Power Book that tops the stack of Linn components in the living room stores a variety of lists the homeowner has selected for entertaining. They could be Mozart operas, blues tunes or jazz ballads, depending on the flavor of the party and the owner's mood. The Power Book in the bedroom performs a more sedate nightly ritual. "The owner likes to go to sleep with the music playing," Fishkin says. The music from the CD changer—along with the other sources in the multi-room Linn system—is fed into the Spectral system on an auxiliary input and is controllable via a wall-mounted keypad. In addition to the changer, FM radio stations and

*Inside the bedroom's listening space is a no-compromise audio system combining the Wilson Audio Watt 5.1 speakers and MIT cables.*





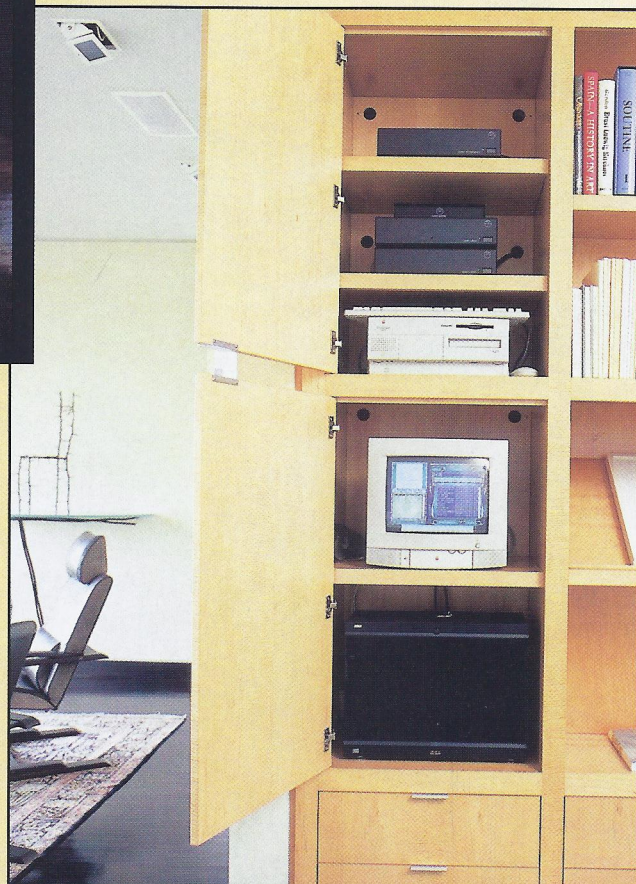




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*In the living room,  
a Power Book crowns a stack  
of Linn components and stores a variety  
of the homeowner's favorite tunes.  
Below: An NSM CD changer stores  
100 discs in the library and is controlled  
by a Macintosh Power PC.*



*Installation by Innovative Audio, 150 East 58th Street, New York, NY 10155; (212) 634-4444. Architect and Interior Design by Charles Cuniffe Architects, 610 East Hyman, Aspen CO 81611.*

## EQUIPMENT

Linn Kremlin tuner  
Sony DSS satellite receivers (2)  
Linn Karik CD players (2)  
Linn Numerik D/A converters (2)  
NSM CD changer  
Linn Kairn-Pro preamplifiers (2)  
Linn LK100 amplifier  
Linn Centrik bookshelf speakers  
Linn Klout amplifiers (4)  
Linn Keltik speakers  
Linn Sekrit speakers (3 pairs)  
Linn Intersekt multi-room system  
controller  
Linn Knekt keypads (6)  
Linn Knekt local line receivers (2)  
Linn Knekt sneaky line receivers (3)

Linn Majik-I integrated amplifiers (2)  
Wilson Audio Watt 5.1/Puppy 5.1  
speakers  
Wilson XS subwoofer  
Spectral SDR 2000 Pro D/A processor  
Spectral SDR 3000 CD transport  
Spectral DMC 20 Series 2 preamplifier  
Spectral DMA 180 Series 2 amplifier  
MIT Reference speaker interface  
MIT Reference component interfaces (2)  
MIT Z Center  
Sony SLVR 770 HiFi VCR  
Sony KV 27XBR37 27-inch TV  
Pioneer CLD.53 laserdisc player