

MUSIC HALL AND THE BEDROOM, KITCHEN, LOUNGE...

MULTI-ROOM INSTALLATIONS GIVE YOU A HOUSE FULL OF MUSIC, NOT A HOUSE FULL OF EQUIPMENT. WE TAKE A LOOK AT FOUR INSTALLATIONS AND TRY TO SPOT THE HI-FI



play instructions from the powerful remote control handset, which the owner carries from room to room. The D600 speakers also feature novel display panels which show what source you're listening to, tuner frequencies, CD track numbers and so on (but only for Meridian's own source equipment).

Owner's comments: 'I'd never heard of Meridian until I went to Graham's Hi-Fi. I said I wanted something that was aesthetically and aurally pleasing. Meridian's equipment is all of that. It's beautifully engineered and lives up to all my expectations. I knew I wanted to have the best possible sound I could afford and I wanted that in two rooms. I don't actually have one primary listening room so it's not a case of having a good system in one room and a mid system in another. If I had that and was listening to the mid system upstairs, I'd think, I wish I was downstairs listening to my really good system and getting the most out of my music.'

Our comments: the Meridian system presents a strong case for multi-room — superb sound quality all over the house from just one system. Meridian's is also the only system shown here which has display panels telling you exactly what you're listening to.

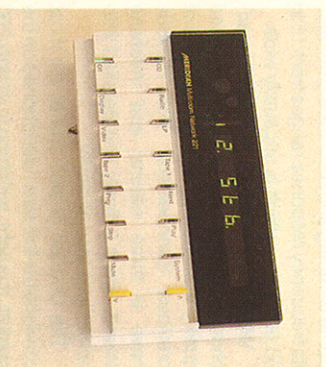
Cost of components: £7500

Cost of installation: £700

Installation time: 2½ days

Year of installation: 1990

Installed by: Graham's Hi-Fi, London.
(071) 226 5500



ARE YOU INTERESTED?
Often dismissed as a rich kid's toy or nothing more than piped music, multi-room installations really can offer the one thing guaranteed to satisfy the music-lover — music. And it's not just music in the room you happen to keep your hi-fi system in. It's a whole houseful of it and all of it controllable from any part of the house you choose.
And there's more. Multi-room can also offer the advantage of 'multi-zoning' — that's listening to different sources in different rooms at the same time. So while one person listens to a CD in the bathroom, you can catch up with *The Archers* in the living room.
Graham's Hi-Fi has been involved with multi-room work since 1989. Director David Graham says that the area has picked up over the last two years and in 1990 around 10 per cent of the shop's business was related to multi-room. But for most of us, equipment and installation costs are still the major drawbacks to having our own system put in.
QED MD Bob Abraham says: 'We're not saying all-singing, all-dancing multi-room is cheap — it isn't. But an increasing number of houses are now being pre-wired as more technology enters the homes — telephone points, automatic garage doors and so on. So why not wire your house for multi-room hi-fi at the same time?'
David Graham says installing a full-blown system with music in two or three rooms is a four day job once the wiring is in. At £25 per hour for the installers it could be the most expensive four days of your life.
It's certainly true to say that the idea of having controllable music around the house is getting cheaper, though. For just £100, QED's Roomlink can give you a taste of what multi-room control could be like. Roomlink is an easy to install infra-red sensor which allows you to remote control your video, satellite receiver or hi-fi system from any room. And last year, Bose launched its Lifestyle system (High Fidelity, August) which at £2500 is still quite pricey but is less than most multi-room installations.

David Graham of installers Graham's Hi-Fi, and the heart of the Meridian multi-room system, which lurks in the book-shelf below. A Linn LP12 turntable and Nakamichi deck complete the set-up

Meridian's optional wall-mount keypad has the advantage of a useful display