

# WHAT HI FI?

## SOUND AND VISION

January 2019 ₹100

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# The projection SPECIALIST...

Beginning a new innings in India through Pune-based Sound & Vision, Sim2 is bringing Italian flair and engineering to home-theatre enthusiasts who value picture quality over tech specs.

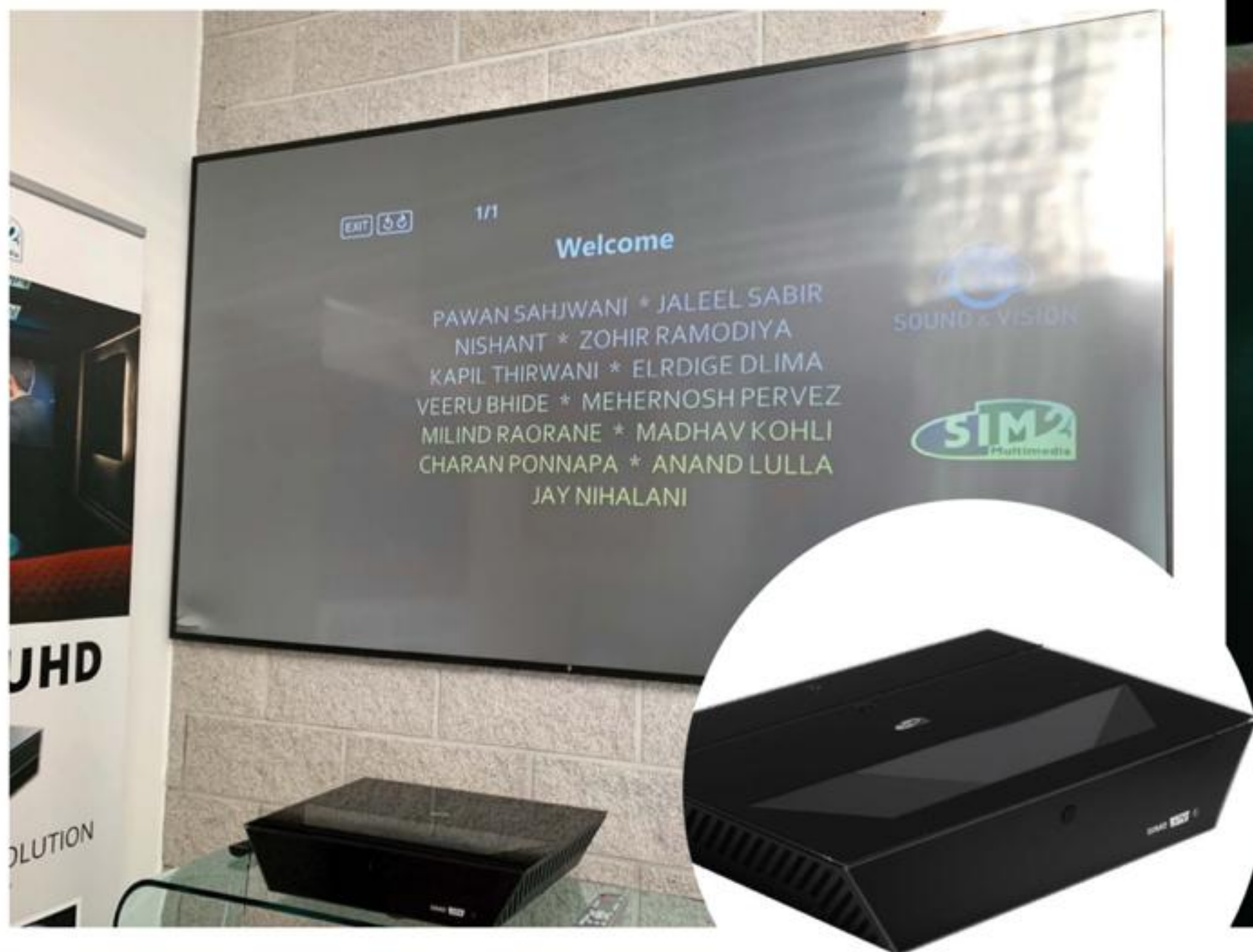
In a brand new building that hasn't even seen its first winter yet, a group of Indian AV integrators, dealers and myself huddle into the small reception area of Sim2's new headquarters near Venice, Italy. The small but historically enriched gateway to the office is home to an original Brionvega music console from the 60's on one side and the brand new Sim2 XTV UST projector on the other side of the staircase. The dichotomy highlights Sim2's passion for good engineering, design and things that are proudly Italian.

After a brief hiatus in the early part of the decade, Sim2 is now back and stronger than ever, both internationally and locally, in the hands of Jay Nihalani, Director of Pune-based Sound & Vision who also distribute brands like Screen Research, RBH and CAT amongst others. Although dabbling with rejuvenating Brionvega into a modern interpretation of a classic design icon, Sim2's focus is very much on projectors. The line-up may not be as extensive as their Asian competitors, but SIM2

claim to be the artisanal projector brand and by usage of that term, they have bought themselves the license to build only a few, but highly specialised and virtually hand-built projectors that have optimised components.

The idea of the two-day visit behind the doors of the SIM2 HQ was to get better acquainted with their elite line-up and in the process, understand the science of colour a little bit better. SIM2 has a bit of an edge compared to its peers when it comes to HDR since they were working on the very standards that shaped the industry back in 2007. Along with Dolby, SIM2 collaborated on a professional 47in monitor in 2009 that was HDR-capable with 2000 nit brightness. While this wasn't sold in the consumer market, it became an instant hit with professionals and was used by some of the biggest brands in the world as a

**"SIM2 has a bit of an edge compared to its peers when it comes to HDR"**



The unique SIM2 implementation of a dual Nero 4S projection system is optimised for 4K HDR playback.





custom solution, SIM2 provides versions where the XTV can be mounted flush to the ceiling or in a cabinet that has a scratch-resistant glass and can be used to keep daily household objects. Internally, a hybrid laser light source and a single-chip DLP engine ensure that you get Full HD images up to 120in in size on any given wall! During our demo, it was evident that the XTV loses little of the contrast or colour fidelity of its more expensive siblings and the SIM2 DNA can be viewed here in plain sight.

Another unique offering is the Crystal/Cube line which is an architect's dream come true. Wrapped in a crystal glass cabinet, this 4K/HDR projector line uses the renowned SIM2 picture quality and takes into account various metadata parameters to ensure that peak luminance, colour gamut, etc are maintained within tight tolerances. The crystal finish is designed by Giorgio Revoldini and emphasises on its 'Made in Italy' roots.

During the course of the two days, I learnt that dynamic range is a lot more important than just sheer pixels. Depending on your viewing distance, you may not even be able to tell between a 4K and a Full HD signal but accuracy of colours can be deciphered from any distance, big or small. SIM2 prides itself in doing it right and not doing it just because everyone else is. That explains the existence of so many Full HD projectors in their line-up. But each of their projectors is tuned for maximum colour efficiency and along with their high-grade optics, the difference is pretty evident.



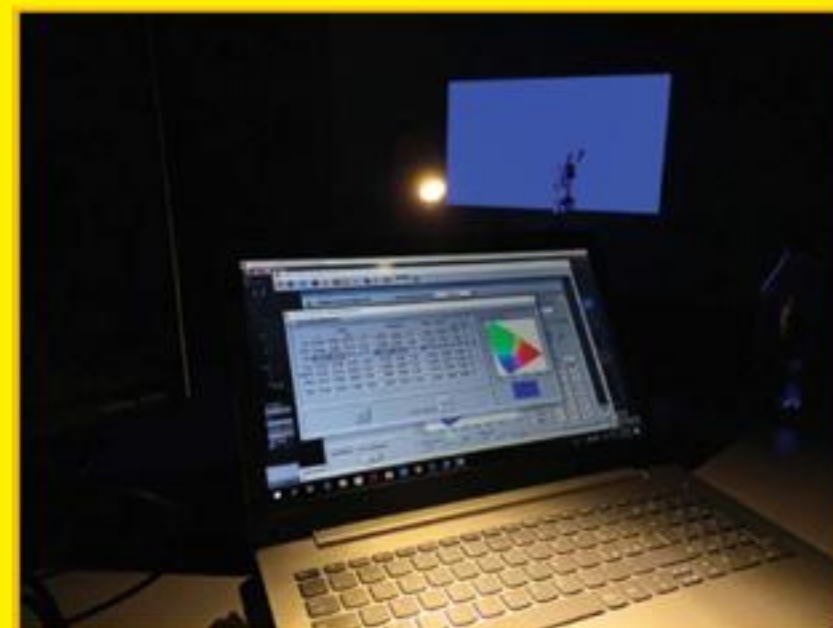
simulation monitor to virtualise car dashboards. Cut to 2018 and the Nero 4S is SIM2's latest offering that boasts of a 10000 ANSI lumens lamp, full 4K resolution and HDR 10+ support. Dolby Vision isn't on the cards yet as SIM2 believes that a lot of mainstream content that's out there on streaming media and Blu-rays is still in the open format and during our demo of *Lucy*, it was very clear that we weren't missing anything. The chapter where the doctors are baffled at Lucy's transformation into a supercomputer, their white coats in the barren white room are perfectly distinctive from each other, a feat not easy even for the most accomplished of display sources. To up the ante even further, SIM2 has developed a dual-projection system based on the flagship Nero 4S and in this unique configuration, each projector is optimised for a different role, sort of like a 2-way loudspeaker. While one Nero 4S is tuned for maximum brightness, the other is massaged to coax the best colours and contrast from the 4K 0.67in UHD DLP chipset from Texas Instruments.

In terms of flexibility, the Nero 4S is again full of interesting tricks and surprises. It can store zoom and focus settings for different aspect ratios like 16:9 or 2.40:1, making it redundant to use an external lens. Its 75% vertical and 30% horizontal shift also allows it

to placed in tricky rooms.

But it's not just the Nero 4S that impresses. For cases where extreme performance is perhaps less critical to aesthetic or convenience and practicality, the XTV serves the purpose with its ultra short throw projection which is available in a number of configurations. The tabletop version allows you to simply put the XTV on a chest and project on to a wall from as close as a few inches, but if you need a more

## What is Live Color Calibration (LCC)



Passionate about colours and contrast, SIM2 has developed its own colour calibration software that is designed specifically for the Nero 4S and a few other models. It allows professional calibration of all projection parameters such as complete adjustment of the primary, secondary and white point colour coordinates. Live Colour Calibration allows accurate adjustment of the colour volume.