

## Alchemea

now has a reputation as one of the top Pro Tools training centres as they provide ICON training for freelancers, teachers and post-production studios that need access to a dedicated training environment. One of its latest students was Richard Collins from ITV Anglia Television. He spent three days with ICON trainer Justin Fraser exploring all aspects of the D-Control functionality, including the powerful custom fader facility and surround panning. Other clients include the BBC, Channel 4 and BSkyB. Alchemea director Mike Sinnott explains, "Due to workload pressures there are times when it is difficult for studio managers to book their own facility for training. Even when this is possible the distractions of day-to-day operations can get in the way of the learning process. This is where Alchemea comes in."

W >> [www.alchemea.com](http://www.alchemea.com)

rpm

RECORDING, POST AND MASTERING



# UA shifts operations to custom facility

**US:** Universal Audio has moved its worldwide headquarters from Santa Cruz to a new, considerably larger site in Scotts Valley, California. The development takes place amidst a period of sustained growth for the eight-year-old company, which manufactures vintage audio hardware and DSP software plug-ins for DAWs.

Included in the new 30,000sqft facility are Universal Audio's manufacturing operations and an in-house recording studio. There is also

room for considerable expansion by the 65-strong company, which has developed its product line to include 14 hardware products, ten UAD DSP Card offers and over 30 powered plug-ins during recent years.

Looking back on the period since Universal Audio was "restarted" in 1999, founder/CEO Bill Putnam Jr commented: "We can proudly say that by focusing on and understanding the needs and desires of recording musicians and building great products with awesome tone here in the USA, we have become a major worldwide audio player in little over five years."

Company president Matt Ward added: "As we continue to innovate with our digital product strategy and set the standard for audio DSP with our UAD products, we are already



The in-house recording studio at the new Universal Audio HQ

well into development for a slew of cutting-edge products that will be introduced in 2008." ■

**DAVID DAVIES**

CONTACT >> [UNIVERSAL AUDIO](http://UNIVERSALAUDIO.COM)

WEB >> [www.uaudio.com](http://www.uaudio.com)

The Monitors by PMC



'Passive'

[www.pmc-speakers.com](http://www.pmc-speakers.com)

## Cinecittà becomes latest member of Image Media Group

**ITALY:** Cinecittà Studios in Rome has become the latest European facility to join the Image Media Group consortium of film and television service providers. The group was formed in April this year by Gruppo Comunicazione Italia, Outside Broadcast of Belgium and Germany's Wellen+Nöthen and WIGE Media with the intention of offering OB trucks, studios and general production facilities as a complete package.

Cinecittà operates what is claimed to be the biggest film studios in Europe. In addition the company runs Dino Studios, formerly the Rome studio complex run by pro-

ducer Dino De Laurentiis, Papigno Studios in Terni, Umbria and CLA Studios in Quarzazate, Morocco.

Among Cinecittà's credits are Martin Scorsese's *Gangs of New York*, Stephen Soderbergh's *Ocean's Twelve* with Spike Lee's upcoming *Miracle at St Anna* currently in production. As well as sound stages the company offers laboratory and digital post-production facilities, including three 5.1 mixing suites featuring THX Diffusion, Pro Tools, Solid State Logic consoles and Pro Control, a television post-production television studio, also with Pro Tools and three digital dubbing studios, which screens for video and

film ADR.

The Image Media Group was formed with the aim of offering facilities on a pan-Europe basis, covering all aspects of technical production and post-production. Managing director Mirko Hansen commented, "Now we can provide our customers with an even more extensive service range at an international level. Furthermore, the decision by Cinecittà to join our group is proof that our concept pans out." ■

**KEVIN HILTON**

CONTACT >> [IMAGE MEDIA GROUP](http://IMAGE-MEDIAGROUP.COM)

TEL >> +49 221 7 88 77 0

WEB >> [www.image-mediagroup.com](http://www.image-mediagroup.com)

# Studiobox houses sound investment in Cumbernauld

**UK:** Students at Cumbernauld College got their first glimpse of the college's new Audio & Media Technology Unit when Fratellis' frontman Jon Lawler opened the new studios with an 'up front and personal' Q&A session.

The opening celebration followed a six-month, £250k project led by curriculum manager Ronnie Gilmour which has seen the college's old studios supplemented by a brand new studio control and live room plus three edit booths.

"We originally started looking at upgrading the facilities a couple of years ago," explains Gilmour. "But our original plans for building from the ground up were going to cost around a million pounds - which just wasn't practical."

Gilmour - along with technician Neil Martin - took the project back to the drawing board and came up with a £250k proposal which was agreed by the college board and also attracted a £50k contribution via European funding.

The revised proposal was based round a modular approach designed in conjunction with German isolation booth and room manufacturers Studiobox who's UK installs include Guildford's

Academy of Contemporary Music, Aberdeen College, Ayr College and the prestigious Lewes Castle College in Stornoway.

Studiobox supplied and installed the main studio control and live rooms plus the college's three new edit booths.

The unit's main studio centres round a 24-channel Pro Tools HD2 system running on an Intel Mac and an Audient 24-channel ASP8024 console with Command 8 control surface chosen for it's state of the art analogue technology and features.

"There's a lot of digital technology round the unit, and we feel it's really important for the students to get hands-on experience with a big analogue desk," said Gilmour.

Dynamic processing is via an enviable selection of Neve, Avalon, TL Audio and Empirical Labs gear, TC XL.

The three edit suites, housed in Soundbox booths, are each equipped with Intel Mac/Pro Tools HD1 systems supplemented with Avid and Reason packages, Yamaha 01V96 consoles, Bluesky Mediadesk 5.1 monitors and M-Audio keyboard controllers.

The unit's three old studios have also been upgraded within the spend and are now running Pro Tools HD2 and HD3 systems with Yamaha,



Ronnie Gilmour, left, and Neil Martin in the main studio control room at Cumbernauld College's new Audio & Media Technology Unit

Soundcraft and Mackie consoles. These, in conjunction with the new facilities give the students a good broad-based understanding of different systems and environments.

The majority of the studio and edit suites hardware and software was supplied by Mediaspec, who's Billy Law also played a part in specifying the college's equipment list.

As well as providing facilities for over 100 students on seven courses including HNC/HND Sound

Production, NQ Music Technology and a brand new Film, TV and Radio Production course Cumbernauld College is also a Digidesign-sponsored school.

"We achieved Digidesign accreditation back in January, so this will be our first academic year running the 101 and 110 courses under Digidesign's education programme alongside the NQ/HNC/HND courses," said Gilmour. ■

DAVE ARCARI

## ThinkSpace plugs holes with new course

**UK:** Digital Music is a new course in music and technology intended to help musicians of all levels "to get the most from their work". It is the brainchild of music distance learning specialist ThinkSpace, developer of the long-established Music for the Media course.

The new course - which allows students to study at home in their own time with back-up from a team of professional musicians, composers and creative professionals - is centred around creating music with a computer. Topics range from structuring music to digital audio, plugins and studio design.

"Digital Music was created to help musicians reach their full potential. In a world of largely self-taught musicians, we all have holes in our knowledge that are holding us back," notes Guy Michelmore, founder of ThinkSpace and one of the course tutors alongside the likes of mixer/producer Phil Larsen, producer Steve Hillier and composer/orchestrator Chuck Fernandez. ■

DAVID DAVIES

CONTACT ■ THINKSPACE

WEB ■ www.thinkspaceonline.com

## Fleetwood Mobile's

Tim Summerhayes' reputation for live concert mixes earned the company the contract to mix the *Live Earth* CD and DVD in 5.1 surround sound. Having jointly recorded the concert at Wembley Stadium with the BBC, Fleetwood were commissioned by Warner Brothers Entertainment in the USA to mix many of the Wembley tracks along with some of the acts recorded at other venues around the world. Mixing for the project was carried out at Fleetwood's Denham mixing studio which specialises in mixing live concert recording to visuals. Working alongside Summerhayes on the three-week project was Fleetwood sound engineer Dave O'Carroll.

W >> [www.fleetwoodmobiles.com](http://www.fleetwoodmobiles.com)

# A birthday present for Far Heath Studios



A £145k refurbishment project in the Northamptonshire countryside

**UK:** Far Heath Recording Studios has celebrated its twentieth anniversary by undertaking a total refurbishment. Located deep in the Northamptonshire countryside, the studio has been rebuilt from the foundations up, increasing the size and quality of the rooms, and adding more windows to make the most of natural light to provide a creative environment to write and record in.

To complement the new design, the studio has been equipped with a state-of-the-art interior and equipment, with Whitemark designing both the control and live rooms. At the heart of the studio is a Solid State

Logic AWS 900+ console running with Pro Tools HD3 with main monitors by Mat Dobson of Exigy. "The flexibility of the desk is fantastic and you get that beautiful SSL sound," says owner of Far Heath Angus Wallace. "The main reason for the refurb was to get the monitoring spot on – the guys at White Mark have done a fantastic job with this. We have also invested in the Aviom headphone system which has been a huge success," says Wallace.

Other pieces of equipment that made the £145,000 refurb are two Neve 1081 mic/line preamps, an SSL K Series channel strip, a Urei 1176 compressor and an Avalon AD2044 Pure Class A Opto-Compressor.

Over the years, Far Heath has played host to numerous bands such as The Prodigy, Spiritualized, Love and Rockets and The Fall. The studio has also been a regular fixture for labels such as Creation, Polydor, Beggars Banquet, and Fierce Panda. **■**

**ANTHONY LORD**

CONTACT >> [FAR HEATH RECORDING STUDIOS](http://www.farheath.com)

WEB >> [www.farheath.com](http://www.farheath.com)



A far heath, yesterday



**BULGARIA:** UK-based producer and engineer Matt Howe has been using DPA's new D3/S5 surround mount to record an orchestra in Sofia for the soundtrack of *Ace Combat 6* for the Sony Playstation 3 and Xbox games platforms. The system – provided by UK distributor Sound Network – was used in conjunction with five DPA 4006 omnidirectional mics, three of which belonged to the studio and were used at the front of the mount, and two 4006-TL transformless versions brought from the UK. "Some members of the production team commented that we'd achieved a well-balanced recording, which was very pleasing," said Howe. **■**

W >> [www.dpamicrophones.com](http://www.dpamicrophones.com)

# Padgham's Sofa Sound goes commercial

Famous producer opens his doors to business as Miloco takes over management

**UK:** As reported in September's *PSNE*, the Miloco studio group has added yet another top of the range facility to the portfolio of London recording studios that it operates and manages. Producer Hugh Padgham has enlisted Miloco's services to hire out his Sofa Sound Studios on a commercial basis when he doesn't require it for his own projects.

Padgham says that this move makes sense on a number of counts. "I was a bit reluctant at first to 'go commercial' at first," says the producer who has won a string of



The control room at Sofa Sound, based in the old Stanley House building in West London

awards, including four Grammys. "After all, it's my personal studio and I'm wary of letting other people use the facilities and equipment. But on the other hand, it's empty a lot of the time – especially when I'm working in the States – and it seems daft to let such a great facility lie idle. Now, whereas it was more of a hobby before, it is now being run on a sensible business basis.

"I'm not the first to do this," he continues. "Miloco is already looking after a number of other studios and other artist/producer owners like David Gilmour and Mark Knopfler let out their facilities to selected clients. It's a bit of a trend and benefits all concerned.

Padgham started out as a tape-operator at Advision Studios, working in recording sessions for Yes and Emerson, Lake and Palmer. From there he went to Landsowne Studios and moved from tape-operator/assistant engineer to head engineer. In 1978, Padgham got a job at The Townhouse, where he engineered and/or produced acts including XTC, Peter Gabriel, and Phil Collins. And he's retained an affinity with London recording studios. "With Sofa Sound I want to promote the benefits of good top class recording studios. While others may be crashing out of the sky all around us, we're continuing to fly the flag."

Padgham and co-owner Chris Porter are gradually refurbishing the whole Stanley House complex which alongside the main studio also features a number of programming suites that are let out to individuals on a commercial basis.

Formerly the home of Stanley House Studios, Sofa Sound is based on the first floor of an Edwardian Warehouse, owned by Padgham, in Chiswick, West London. It consists of a large daylit control room and a good sized live room with two adjoining booths. The control room is light and airy, and features Quested monitoring. In the heart of the room is a SSL G+ series console with 62 mono, four stereo channels and 'E' EQs.

"We are hugely proud to announce that we have been asked to represent Hugh Padgham's first-class SSL room, taking our total number of studios to nine," says Miloco's operations manager Nick Young. "With the sad demise of West London's Eden studios, we have seized the opportunity to end our barren existence in the west of the city, and are honoured to be representing the area's leading SSL room. Sofa Sound's equipment further includes a vast amount of plug-ins and a large range of out-board gear including rare vintage EQs."

The first client to book Sofa under the new arrangement was Mark Ronson. "We're officially open for business," adds Young. "The studio has a lot to offer and we are confident it will attract a high calibre of artists."

Miloco also represents Musikbox, located in London's Kentish Town. Owned by the producer/engineer/artist Pete Heller, a key attraction to the studio is the vast collection of analogue keyboards. It boasts a Recording Architecture room, and in February this year was enhanced by a Neve VR60 console.

"We now offer fourteen rooms of varying size and specification, from basic long-let suites to an all-singing, all-dancing mix rooms," says Young. "While it's sad to see long established studios going out of business, we believe that the way we operate at Miloco is the way forward. There is business to be had out there in the commercial studio world, but you've got to get your sums right – and keep your costs and overheads down. Having a central administration helps us to achieve this."

Hugh Padgham agrees with these sentiments, but adds, "One thing we will certainly not be doing is discounting studio rates, letting the place out at silly prices. I'd rather it was empty than do that." ■

JIM EVANS

WEB >> [www.miloco.co.uk](http://www.miloco.co.uk)

# Lofty guest at Ganho do Som

**PORTUGAL:** "I'm alive and well working in Lisbon at the best sounding mix facility in the world!" Strong words indeed. But when they come from James Lock, you can't help but sit-up and listen.

Lock is the former Decca chief engineer and two-time Grammy award winner (with ten nominations), and is legendary in the recording industry having worked with names such as Pavarotti, Sir Georg Solti and Karajan amongst others.

Lock is currently spending a few seasons in Portugal's flagship studio O Ganho do Som as resident sound chief engineer and international business consultant. "Lisbon is such a warm and sunny capital and the introductory post-production costs at this studio are way below anything you can get anywhere in the world for the same high-end quality," he says. "Besides, if I had a dream for the ultimate listening experience, this facility would be it. I had never heard my recordings sounding so damn good!"

Housed inside a residential loft in Lisbon, O Ganho do Som recently went through a state-of-the-art acoustic facelift by a Portuguese firm calle Audiodesigner. The major concern of the studio was to make sure the sound engineer could listen to everything exactly as recorded, with no negative influence from the room or the monitoring chain.

The studio is based around six B&W 801D Nautilus speakers, powered by six audiophile Electrocompaniet Nemo monoblock amplifiers, capable of delivering 1,200 watts/4 ohms each.

Recording, editing and mixing is supported by a Pro Tools system, with 196 tracks and 24 physical faders on a D-Command mixing desk. Audio resolution is up to 24 bits and 192kHz, with Apogee A-D/D-A 16X digital converters and Apogee Big Ben digital clock. A HD Dreamvision 1080p DLP video projector supports film and opera mixes.

Lock is planning some 5.1 remasterings of late '70s recordings, as this facility is up to any form of analogue transfers and multi-channel remastering. There are also plans for O Ganho do Som and Lock to go on the road recording international classical music events with a set up of several Schoeps

omni microphones and the Decca Tree technique. "The industry's craft lost this delicate balance between the performance space and the performers. Now everything is so up close and dry, or boomy. With this amazing technology we have nowadays and the right craft, we can recreate the performance and venue in peoples' homes like never before. At O Ganho do Som we will fight for that. We have the tools and the human factor," Lock concludes. **□**

**ANTHONY LORD**

CONTACT ✦ O GANHO DO SOM STUDIO

WEB ✦ [www.oganhodosom.com](http://www.oganhodosom.com)



James Lock, contemplating his next master(ing) stroke

## Reproduced Sound 23

will take place at The Sage in Gateshead on November 29th and 30th. In addition to the usual format of papers, more demonstrations and interactive sessions have been added to the conference, which are expected to inform and challenge even the most experienced audio professional, while being easy to understand by newcomers. A voting system will bring audience interactivity to many sessions, and will provide an immediate indication of audience opinion during listening tests and demonstrations. Papers will cover a wide range of topics, with an emphasis on issues relating to live music.

W ✦ [www.reproducedsound.co.uk](http://www.reproducedsound.co.uk)



O Ganho do Som main room

# Merry Christmas, Mr Brewer

Audio Warehouse hosts party-cum-trade event in Ireland's mid-west, with great expectations



David Browne of Enhanced Audio



SSL's Jim Motley demos the AWS 900 controller for visitors to the Loft, Clara, Ireland

**IRELAND:** "There are a lot of studios in Ireland, but we thought we could make them better."

Paul Brewer's simple philosophy underpins more than the *raison d'être* for Audio Warehouse, the reseller/broadcast installation business he co-runs with John Byrne ("he made the first electronic *Blankety Blank* scoreboard for the BBC!"). It also led Brewer to drum up support for and organise the 'Audio Warehouse Christmas Party', held, with suitable tongue-in-cheek obtuseness, in the middle of last summer.

And so it was that representatives of UK/Ireland distributors Unity Audio, HHB, and Sable Marketing, plus, among others, experts from Digidesign and SSL and a party from SEA Vertrieb/Vovox Cables in Germany/Switzerland, descended on The Loft studio in Clara, a village 60 miles west of Dublin, in July. David Browne of Enhanced Audio, based in Dublin, journeyed over to show off his unique take on the mic spider issue. Over a long weekend, studio managers and engineers from all over the republic dropped in on Joe Egan's two-room facility for product demos, advice, a little education and some

all-important social networking.

"There's the Music Ireland Live show, we've exhibited there for a couple for years, but it's going more in an MI direction," says the affable Brewer, a former studio engineer and one-time customer of AW, who joined the operation in 2003. "And the pros don't go to those shows. So we thought we'd get as many people over here as possible."

AW has a showroom and storage space in Dublin, but Brewer reckons 90% of the business is done over the phone, email or on customer visits. "We're very pro active that way," he says. "I see it as the only way to generate business. Give the [customer] the units, get them excited. It focuses them on the fact that they can raise their game."

He's a canny chap, this Mr Brewer. He selected The Loft – a relatively new operation, which has played host to the Irish chart-topping Blizzards in recent months – for several reasons. "It's an ideal space for what we thought we could do. And it's residential. And two hours from Clara will cover 75% of the country. [Fourth], it's outside of Dublin, [so] if the Dublin guys come down, they are definitely interested."

Loft owner Egan has been using a Digi 002 with an Apogee front-end, so playing host enabled him to see the different technologies and punters' reactions to it – and then purchase from AW, with any luck.

Not only that. Brewer started up a MySpace page, and sent out numerous emails, in order to build up anticipation for the event. It worked.

"Thirty percent of visitors here I'd never seen before," says Brewer the day after the party. Guests included one studio representation that drove for 4.5 hours to get there.

Audio Warehouse, as a reselling operation, has picked up SSL, PMC

and Vovox this year. "We've been doing a bit with Brauner for a year or so, and we saw Vovox at Frankfurt. We were convinced that this is the future for connecting things! A/B testing with cables and mics – the difference was night and day. That's the sort of thing where the demo was the only way – and that's what we did at the Christmas party."

(Shortly before *PSNE* went to press in November, Brewer reported the sale of a Manley Slam Compressor Limiter to Wav Mastering of Limerick, as a direct result of the event.)

Is the studio and recording business healthy in Ireland?

"It's actually pretty good," says Brewer. "Ireland was never full of top-notch studio – sure, there was Windmill and Westland in Dublin, for example – so it hasn't had the sea-change that the UK has had. Now it's the smaller one-man show that is doing the business. There's a lot of niche-ing going on: one guy who specialises in jazz; another who does a lot of traditional music; Joe [Egan] here, who does a lot of indie rock stuff, his clients are Dublin bands that come down to get out of the city."

"In Ireland, it's finding something that there is a market for, and that you are good at, instead of trying to be all things to all people."

Brewer is all set to do it again next year.

"Yes – bigger, better! And I think we'll get in a live band and do sessions. And there'll be the banter and the slugging that we saw yesterday..."

Brewer refers to a late night 'debate' between Digi and SSL representatives over who was better. (*PSNE* can diplomatically report that there was no clear winner.)

Brewer closes with a last thought on what Audio Warehouse, as a reseller, can do, and is doing.

"There's a whole new confidence in the youth, because of developments in Ireland in the last ten years, so it's OK for those guys to say, I don't know, which is not what people in my generation did. We would just keep our mouths shut. That change has contributed to the likes of Joe Egan's situation. And there's a lot of guys like that around, so, you know, we can help. And they help us as a business. Everyone wins!"

DAVE ROBINSON

WEB >> <http://www.myspace.com/audiowarehouse>



Loft studio owner Joe Egan



Audio Warehouse's Paul Brewer

## Studio de la Grande Armée installs Sony Oxford console

**FRANCE:** A couple of months ago saw the installation of a 160-input Sony Oxford OXF-R3 console in Studio C at Studio de la Grande Armée. It replaced a Solid State Logic board.

Zach Hanoun, managing director of Studio de la Grande Armée and co-owner along with Jean-Claude Dubois, explains, "Studio C was designed by Tom Hidley in 1992. It was one of the first control rooms dedicated to 5.1 mixing. At that time, there was an SSL 4000 E/G and it stayed like this for a long time. Two years ago we moved the SSL in to Studio B because we decided that studio would be vintage-oriented. At this point, and with the growing needs of the market for music-to-picture, having a full digital room came naturally."

He adds, "We installed a Digidesign Pro Control system which has been very useful for the last two years, but it's become too small for our clients. So we looked for a big-

ger digital desk and finally chose the Sony Oxford."

It was Jean-Luc Denis who took over the technical direction of the studio and started talking about the Oxford, which he knew very well because he had installed the very first one in the world some ten years ago. In France, this desk has a good reputation, so it meant it was easier for us to promote the room." Denis had been officiating as technical director at Studios Guillaume Tell, a member of the World Studio Group, for fifteen years before he joined the team of Studio de la Grande Armée five months ago.

When asked about the choice of the discontinued Sony Oxford board, Denis said: "The studio in which the console was installed had to support stereo and 5.1 monitoring for DVD and music-for-film. Music-for-film is quite an important market in France. Also, today with computers, filmmakers generally

make changes in pictures right until the last minute. So the console needs instant recall. Then, the console had to support a great number of channels for music-to-picture. And finally, the panning system in a digital console is more flexible."

Located at Porte Maillot, westernmost of Paris, and five minutes away from the Champs-Élysées, Studio de la Grande Armée is a four-studio complex founded by Jean-Claude Dubois some 35 years ago. Hanoun says, "We have all the industry standards: a 60-input Neve VR60 mixing board with Encore Plus Automation in Studio A, a 56-input SSL 4000 E/G console in Studio B and now a Sony OXF-R3 in Studio C." There's also a Digidesign Pro Control system in the Studio E editing room. The monitoring system in Studio C is based around the original TAD TSM1 main monitors with Bryston amplifiers.

Zach Hanoun continues, "I took

the studio management position when the market was crashing out, everybody was telling that it was the end of that kind of big recording complex. After five years, I can tell you that it's all wrong! We've had a growth of more than 20% per year. You just have to accept the evolution of this business and make it an advantage."

Since Studio de la Grande Armée was established under the Palais des Congrès, international artists that

have mixed here include Herbie Hancock, Stevie Wonder, Prince and more recently Kanye West and many French artists such as Johnny Hallyday. The first session that took place in the refurbished Studio C was a 20-day mix of the Emir Kusturica's opera, *Time of the Gypsies*. ■

GUILLAUME SCHOUKER

CONTACT >> STUDIO DE LA GRANDE ARMÉE

TEL >> +33 1 40 68 24 11



The Grande Armée team with the Oxford: a renaissance for the discontinued desk?

## Abbey Road

has started making films about the things the studio gets up to and the products it makes. Highlights so far include a video diary of all four days of the recent AES show in New York, as well as a look at mastering at the famous Abbey Road Studios.

W ♦♦ [www.abbeyroad.com](http://www.abbeyroad.com)

## Dreamtek

in partnership with Apple, recently hosted the initial launch of the most significant upgrade to Apple Logic Pro in three years – Apple Logic Studio. Logic Studio comprises Logic Pro 8, a major upgrade; Mainstage, for Live performance; Soundtrack Pro 2, Music to picture; WaveBurner 1.5 CD authoring and other audio utilities. The launch event allowed users to see the new features first-hand and speak to experts from Apple and Dreamtek.

W ♦♦ [www.dreamtek.tv](http://www.dreamtek.tv)

## Sonalksis

has announced a strategic and operative collaboration with Toontrack Music during the ongoing development of its next professional sample engine for drums, Superior Drummer 2.0. Toontrack Music chose Sonalksis as the responsible development partner for the development of the built in FX section provided in Superior Drummer 2.0. The FX section will consist of a 5-band EQ, high and low pass filter, gate, compression and a transient designer, all based on technology from the Sonalksis award-winning plug-ins.

W ♦♦ [www.sonalksis.com](http://www.sonalksis.com)

## TIM OLIVER'S STUDIO

# The Great Music Giveaway

It's been hailed as a revolutionary act, a challenge to the existing music industry mould, and according to Radiohead's Jonny Greenwood, "It's fun to make people stop for a few seconds and think about what music is worth." All of which is fine for a band who've had the benefit of a six-album deal and all the investment that goes with that to elevate their profile to global proportions. Let's not forget that their first record, *Creep* bombed when it first came out in 1992 and had to be re-released a year later by Parlophone as the band were flown around the globe chasing its championing radio DJs – Israel first, followed by the USA, finally getting to No7 in the UK chart a year and a couple of other singles later.

It's fine for Ian Brown and other established artists to laud the move in a 'right on' way, but how constructive is this 'experiment'? And what about the plight of unknowns looking to break? Am I wrong in thinking it might be impossible for any of the millions of aspiring bands on MySpace to sell their music for next to nothing and then promote it globally for a year or more in the hope that something takes off? I think not. Radiohead are one of the

few bands that have been lucky enough to go into the black on the back of heavy investment, and much of the money made on them by the record company will have gone into the failed development of the six or eight signed acts that don't make it for the one that does. This isn't to get record companies off the hook here. They've been equally culpable in their own downfall by the recent slow withdrawal of long-term development and myopic exploitation of back catalogues: An inevitable result of majors being run by accountants rather than music fans with its inevitable consequence.

But back to the giveaway, The Charlatans with their 'canny' manager Alan McLaren [*Er...shouldn't that be Malcolm McGee? Ed*] go one step further and announce that their next album is free. A canny move on their part certainly, not for the free publicity it received or the increased gig attendance, but for the embarrassment it saved from no-one actually buying it.

Most agree that while people help themselves to music from the internet, they're still happy to shell out for live gigs, and with the sad demise of record shops, this is one of the few remain-

ing points of emotional resonance where people get excited enough to want to buy into records and merchandise. It is perhaps the only way up-coming acts have a chance of sustaining themselves independently if they can get enough of a web buzz happening to draw a crowd.

The balance of power has swung from record labels to promoters, a swing so great that in a strange and ironic twist of fate, whereas until recently, singles were treated as loss-leading 'jingles' for the album, the likes of Prince are treating the album as a jingle for their live shows. But ever the enigma, not only does he give away the album, there's no merchandise on offer either. But that probably doesn't matter too much if you're selling out the Dome for 21 days.

The promoters can enjoy this power shift and go after a much bigger slice of the cake but that cake is now becoming way too small to sustain all its suppliers. Enter Madonna. Now she is a canny lass, always one step ahead of the game with her choice of producers and now pioneering the so-called 360° deal to cover record and DVD releases, publishing, touring and merchandise in cohort with live promoters One Nation. In a shrinking market this model makes a lot of sense: the all-in-one deal that is, not the fact that it's

necessarily a promotion company heading it up. If the record labels were quick off the mark they could have re-branded themselves along these lines long ago. That said, promoters are well set to absorb a major cost of developing new talent by controlling tour supports and the accompanying marketing, supposing, that is, they take on the responsibility and ultimate reward of developing new talent rather than just cherry picking established artists, or worse, lifting participants from reality TV talent shows.

Certainly the Radiohead approach won't have the infrastructure to develop new acts and beside Madonna's constructive response their experiment looks more like the irresponsible and petulant act of spoilt, over-privileged teenagers rebelling against their parents, flicking Vs and stomping off with echoes of "You treat this house like a hotel" ringing in their ears. A shrink would tell you it's only natural as rock'n'roll passes through adolescence into adulthood and with recent talk of Radiohead wanting to sign a new deal in 2008 it sounds like they're already running out of clean clothes and want to come back and use the washing machine. ❑

■ *Tim Oliver is a freelance producer living in Bath.*

# Keeping Kodály

Digital Pro captures Hungarian composer

**HUNGARY:** Back in September, the people of Budapest paid tribute to the great Hungarian composer Zoltán Kodály, by staging two of his symphonic works, the *Háry János Suite* and *Dance of Galánta*, along with symphonic song *Közenít E tél* and the *Sonata for Solo Cello (Op.8)*. Digital Pro took the opportunity to record the two concerts in parallel to two high-res formats: PCM and Super Audio CD (DSD) surround.

The recordings took place on the 1st and 5th of the month at the Béla Bartók Concert Hall in the Palace of Arts, Budapest. Soloists were Adam Horvath (voice), Balazs Kantor (cello) and the Cantemus Choir lead by Denes Szabo. György Györyvanyi-Rath conducted the Budapest Philharmonic Orchestra.

Istvan Matok, MD of Digital Pro believes that the choice of the venue makes up 60% of the quality of the final recorded sound. The new 1,800-seat concert hall, which opened in 2005, was designed by Russel Johnson, and allows the acoustics to be modified in many different ways.

"The remaining 40% of the sound quality is down to the technology, primarily the choice and placement of the microphones," Matok told

*PSNE*. "Our credo is to use the least amount of microphones possible. Therefore the main pickup was our trusty Decca-Tree set-up, three Schoeps MK2H omnis with two MK2 outriggers. Since Kodály composed his music with clever arrangements, not many spot mics are needed to make the solo instruments more prominent. Therefore we only used two AKG C414 EB: one for the famous Hungarian string instruments, called Cimbalom, and one for the wind instruments. A C12 (an AKG mic from the '50s) was used for the baritone soloist, an AKG C451 for the harp and a Shure KSM44 for the horns. The mic preamps were the two-channel Antony DeMaria's ADL-600 (PreSonus) and eight-channel Millennia Media HV-3D."

From the stage the preamp outputs went by a Sommer snake to the venue's guest mixing room, where Digital Pro recorded parallel to PCM 192kHz/24-bit multitrack using Pro Tools HD, and to stereo DSD via Korg MR-1000. For the DSD mix a Studer 296 was used as a line-mixer. Monitoring was PMC/Digidesign MR2 and Dynaudio BX30 subs through the Bryston 10B-LR crossover.

About the recordings, Matok comments: "Comparing both the high-res formats was an extraordi-

nary experience because of the never-before-heard details and dynamics, along with the natural timbre of the acoustic instruments, the natural bends of the instrument sections and soloists. And comparing the live sound in the Bartók Hall and the recordings also was very interesting experience. Everyone who heard our recordings said that the recording's acoustics are a lot more pleasant sounding than that of the Bartók Hall." ❑

**ANTHONY LORD**

CONTACT ❖❖ DIGITAL PRO

WEB ❖❖ [www.digitalpro.hu](http://www.digitalpro.hu)



The trusty Decca-tree set-up



The impressive Béla Bartók Concert Hall in the Palace of Arts in Budapest

## Dean Street Studios

has become the first commercial recording studio to auction time on eBay. As reported in the October issue of *PSNE*, the studio recently reopened after a major refurbishment. The first auction took place in September and was so successful it plans to run this as a regular event. The offer includes the use of all the equipment in the studio, plus back-up from in-house engineers to help with the tricky technical stuff. The first auction resulted in The Draytones, signed to indie label 1965 Records, picking up a day of studio time for less than £200.

W ❖❖ [www.deanst.com](http://www.deanst.com)

## DACS Audio

designed and installed the new recording facility that recently opened at Highfields School in Matlock, Derbyshire. Two years after it achieved special status as a Performing Arts college, the school now has a recording facility that will enable pupils studying for music technology qualifications to gain essential hands-on experience in recording techniques. DACS supplied much of the equipment, which includes a custom-built computer system, Magix Samplitude 9, a Yamaha O1V96 version 2 digital mixer, Genelec and Pyramid speakers, Shure and Pearl microphones, a DACS Mic Amp and DACS HeadLite headphone amplifier. The new studio cost approximately £70,000 to build and equip. Funding was provided from the £100,000 the school received from the a government grant.

W ❖❖ [www.dacs-audio.com](http://www.dacs-audio.com)

# New composing talent discovered by Sibelius

**UK:** The winners of the inaugural Young Sibelius Film Composers competition are William Church and Luke Richards. "Listening to the soundtracks produced by the budding composers provided an incredibly inspirational experience for me and my co-judges," said Michael Price, composer and music editor for film, whose recent credits include *The Lord Of The Rings Trilogy*. "The standard, imagination and innovation surprised us and inspired us in equal measure and we are sure this new scheme will provide a real pathway for the next generation of top flight composers for film."

Sibelius launched the competition in November 2006 and gave students four months to complete a one-minute composition. There were two age categories, under-16 and under-18. Over 500 entries were received from a broad range of schools across the country, and Sibelius has already confirmed their intention to turn the scheme into an annual event.

"We have been amazed and delighted by the high standard of entries to this competition," says Jeremy Silver, managing director of

Sibelius Software. "It shows what a rich pool of talent there is out there in UK schools, and we really think we may have unearthed some of the David Arnolds and Patrick Doyles of the future!"

And while Sibelius hands out awards of its own, the founders and developers of the software received an award themselves. Twins

Jonathan and Ben Finn were awarded an OBE for services to software technology. The twins co-founded Sibelius in 1993, with Jonathan specialising in the technical side of the business and Ben handling the sales and marketing side. **□**

**ANTHONY LORD**

**CONTACT** ♦♦ SIBELIUS SOFTWARE

**WEB** ♦♦ [www.sibelius.com](http://www.sibelius.com)



Jeremy Silver, Sibelius MD; William Church; Andy Mayell, Church's music teacher at Shenfield School, Brentwood, Essex; Daniel Spreadbury, Sibelius product manager

## The most powerful PowerCore yet

**DENMARK:** TC Electronic has introduced the PowerCore X8.

This latest addition to the PowerCore family features eight DSP engines, which offers twice the processing power of PowerCore FireWire, and allows even more plug-ins to be used simultaneously with native digital audio workstations. The X8 includes 14 plug-ins as well as PowerCore 3.0 system

software, which adds new UIs and features to the PowerCore platform.

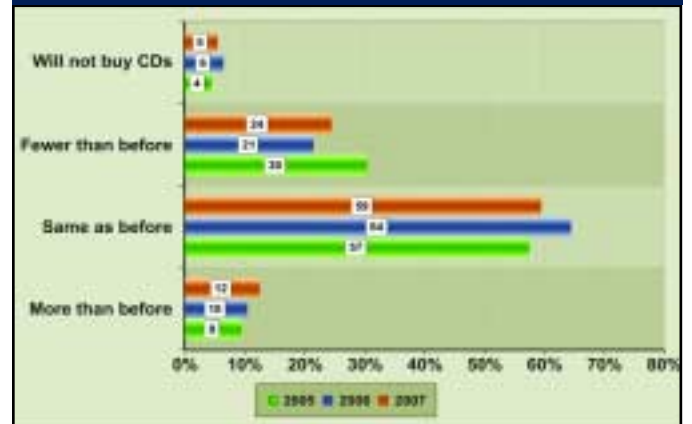
The X8 combines a floating-point Power PC with eight Motorola DSPs. This ensures tight integration into the native world while at the same time maintaining all of the advantages that DSPs offer for signal processing. **□**

**ANTHONY LORD**

**CONTACT** ♦♦ TC ELECTRONIC

**WEB** ♦♦ [www.tc-now.com](http://www.tc-now.com)

### PSN data



According to research by the IFPI, the overall trade revenues from recorded music totalled \$19.6 billion, with digital sales of 11% of that figure. While that is up 2% from 2004, showing the rapid growth in digital sales, there is still another 89% of the recorded music pie for physical media. In 2004, global digital sales accounted for \$1,131 million, while physical sales amounted to \$19,578 million. Last year that shifted to \$2,089 million in digital sales and \$17,498 – a decline but still a large market. **□**