

# WHAT'S ON

**Text:** Brad Watts

There's been much ado in the audio world during the last month or so, with some 'Oz-Rock' royalty re-emerging, and plenty of newcomers to the What's On report.

Midway through 2011, Don Bartley's **Benchmark Mastering** celebrated its sixth year of independence. Don was recently entrusted with the task of remastering the entire back catalogue of Aussie legends, Cold Chisel. The original analogue masters were sourced for the project, revealing a plethora of never-before-heard B-sides and demos. All the original 'Chisel' studio albums are being re-released in physical and digital formats.

One of Australia's more recent favourite sons, Josh Pyke, enlisted Don to master his new album, *Only Sparrows*, produced by Wayne Connolly. The Wiggles also dropped in for a polish, as well as ARIA-award winning vocal group, The Idea of North.

Next door, Reece Tunbridge immersed himself in mastering a debut album for jazz artist, Sarah McKenzie, produced by Chong Lim. Reece also mastered the Australian release for Avalanche City's album, *Our New Life Above the Ground*, as well as an EP for Jodi Martin, tracks for Jebediah, Hannah Kirkpatrick, Still Scores, and The Former Love Pirates.

**Omegaman** has been busy with remixes for SEE-I (Fort Knox Recordings), Second Sky (Rhythm & Culture, ESL), Ursula 1000 (ESL), and Fretless (Mark Walton). He's also completed an original track featuring the late Ali Omar on vocals. The Omegaman Skankin' Riddim 12-inch vinyl and digital EP (Super Hi-Fi Recordings)

reached No. 1 on the Juno funk, break-beat and best sellers charts, and No. 2 on the vinyl chart.

**PavMusic Studios** has recently completed production for emerging artists, Benjamin James Eastwood, and TJ James. Both are being mastered at **Cutterhead Mastering**. A number of new projects are underway or about to start: developing tracks for Neil Wise (Curly Joe) out of Melbourne in conjunction with Jeremy Reid; pre-production for Credo (vocal quartet from Canberra), preparation for commencing with Jacqui Baldwin (big gospel CD, NZ/US-based, multi-location project), a new artist James Ebdon out of Sydney, and a fun project with a community group of disabled singers through Connections at Coolamon. The PavMusic weekly visit to Bimberi Youth Justice centre with the ACMF Music for Hope program continues to unearth some amazing writing and song production.

Perth-based production studio, **T.H.E 001 Music**, will be setting up the Philippines' first mastering studio in September. Proprietor, Rev. T. H. Eslam, will be shipping over a pair of Landmark LSX full-range monitors. The plans include some choice hardware such as Burl Audio converters and software such as Sadie, Sonnox, and Izotope plug-ins. Apart from mastering, the 30sqm studio space located in the heart of Manila's entertainment precinct, will also feature a vocal booth using BeesNeez, Rode, Blue, and CAD microphones, plus production and editing facilities for composers and film scoring.

**Megaphon Studios** hasn't rested, with visits from Mar Haze, George Palmer, Ross Nobel, Scattered



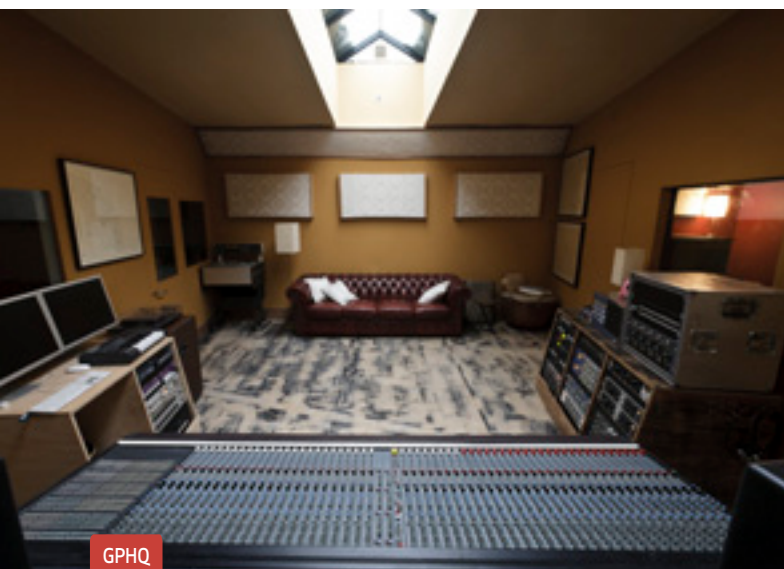
Got any news about the happenings in your studio or venue? Email Brad at [brad@alchemedia.com.au](mailto:brad@alchemedia.com.au) or go to the AT website and register online: [www.audiotechnology.com.au](http://www.audiotechnology.com.au)

Order, and Romano Crivici; all engineered by Shane Fahey. Jon Boy Rock tweaked up recordings for Hell City Glamours and Grand Fatal, while Chris Hancock engineered beats for Monk Fly and some experimental work with Spartak. Mr Tim Whitten also worked on material for indie act, Bear Hug.

**Mr Bobby 'Le Dodge' Scott** has been mixing Kate Leahy, Album of the Songs of Jesse Younan, tracks for both Coda and DIG, and Taikoz pre-mixes for DVD. He's also been producing and recording a Christa Hughes album at 227 ABC, a Church Organ recording for Ralph Lane at ABC Studios, a sax quartet, and a Bobby Singh tabla CD. Bob's absorbing some film and TV mixing lessons from friend and genius sound designer, David White. Bob picked up a couple of nice tricks to apply to his music mixing: in particular, workflows for line-by-line, word-by-word vocal equalisation. Bob's also rapt with his new speakers – Klein + Hummel O300s no less. Apparently he's hearing more detail without having to crank the volume – far more exciting than his "comparatively clinical ATCs".

After celebrating 26 years of continual studio operation in regional eastern Victoria, **Wombat Road Recording Studio** soldiers on recording, mixing, and mastering a number of demo CDs. Recent clients include Harry Hookey and the Family Band. Harry recently won the 2010 'Telstra Road to Tamworth' with his song, *Don't You Ever Treat Me Like a Fool*. The prize includes a 12-month mentorship with Mushroom Records and a trip to Nashville. Nice!

**Hospital Hill Recordings** finished recording an



GPHQ

**GPHQ** is the in-house studio owned by Giggiglet Recordings: the record label offshoot of Gareth Stuckey's Giggiglet Productions. While the Waterloo headquarters has been home for some seven years now, 2011 saw the company's 10th anniversary, and a major refit to both the studio and offices.

The Studio is designed as a 'producer's facility' rather than a studio for hire. It's the part time home of Brendan Gallagher (Karma County, Jimmy Little), Sean Carey (Thirsty Merc), Kramer (Ween, Butthole Surfers, Low, Galaxy 500) and Ben Holman-Richards (Porcelain), along with Gareth himself (currently recording Alex Lloyd). Studio manager, Steffan Johnson, also works on his own projects when there's time.

The control room is huge, with plenty of room for the 56-channel (112 input) DDA console, generous outboard rack, giant

vintage chesterfield couch, and room for the band to hang out. When it comes to outboard, all the colours you could want are present: five Neve pre/comp/EQ channel strips, four frighteningly boutique Peach Audio 196 preamps, three Empirical Labs Distressors, a Focusrite Producer Pack, two Universal Audio 6176s and an LA-610. There's a Drawmer 1960, an Amek Pure Path, plus DBX, TLA, and BSS gear. The signal path is as clean as possible, with the input plates from each recording area going directly to a preamp patchbay, and from there to the ProTools HD system. Returns to the console are then mixed down to a second ProTools HD system via a mix bus of Avalon 747 and Apogee conversion.

▶▶ Giggiglet HQ: (02) 9698 9292 or [www.giggiglet.com.au](http://www.giggiglet.com.au)

album of Australian violin works with Victoria Jacono-Gilmovich, and mastered a track by experimental/folk artist Bud Petal. The team is in pre-production with a new band from Newcastle called Bigger Cages, and Ollie McGill from The Cat Empire has also been in rehearsing – the gang figured they may as well record it for posterity (let's hope Hospital Hill has a lawyer or two on its books). Gear-wise, the studio added a Neumann U87 and two DW snare drums: one maple and one bronze. The studio has also caught the synth bug and been searching for something special.

**Lush Recording Studios** in Brisbane is currently putting the finishing touches on their 'B' Studio. The studio consists of a 48-channel SSL room with an extensive collection of original issue classic gear. Proprietor, Dominic Dodemont, expects to be finished in August. More news next issue!

**Rancom St** in Botany is firing on all cylinders, with the current mob of musos being a four-piece rock band from Mackay called Offshore. Ted Howard tracked, overdubbed, and will be finishing the album mixes. A couple of weeks beforehand, Stue French and Camille Te Nahu tracked their solo album live, with double bass, drums, two guitars, Dobro, mandolin, accordion, fiddle and two vocalists. The whole shebang was being filmed by the team of multi-award winning director, Duncan Toombs. A special session, by all accounts – where music was king! On the gear front, the Vertigo VSC-2 stereo compressor has been an eye opener for Ted – the smoothest VCA compressor he's heard, apparently.

**Studio 52** has splashed out on some Adam S3-X monitors in Studio C, and two more TLA VP-1s for Studio A. They're so impressed that they've sold off a pair of EMES Blue HR monitors and two TLA 5052 mic preamps. Music-wise, 52 is working with Natasha Duarte: her album nearing completion – produced by TC Carter and Marc Collis. Natasha was discovered through the Kool Skools Project and the JB HiFi

Prize at the age of 13. Now about to turn 16, she has a new debut album and several videos completed for release through Empire. Kool Skools is now in its 15th Year, with 36 albums currently in production, some in its sister studio Megaphon in St Peters, Sydney.

**Coloursound Recording Studio** is playing host to Melbourne band, My Left Boot, as they record their debut album with engineer, Mick Summerton. Callum Barter is back to track more Tessa and the Type Cast, and Mat Robins has been working with instrumental five-piece, The Nest Itself.

Phil Threlfall of **The Base** continues to avoid sleep, mixing Simple Man from Diafrix, which is enjoying radio play, as well as a feature length film, *Johnny Ghost* from indie filmmaker, Donna McRae. Compliments of Gus added some new tunes to a compilation spanning their 12-year career, while The Speedtippers recorded new tunes, completing their first full-length album. Phil also added another bit of kit from Giles Audio; a hand built valve preamp that is sounding killer with the freshly serviced U67, and Ross from Giles Audio and Phil are trying some mods to the Amek G2520 console. Stay tuned for details and results!

At Greg Dixon's **Aphek Studio**, engineer Ross A'Hern is taking advantage of the Tassie Oak rooms to capture the Rilke Project for composer/musician, Spike Mason. Ross brought along some tasty mics, including Neumann, DPA and Schoeps morsels, to capture the unusual combination of bassoon, trombone, sax, double-bass, piano and vocals. Aphek has also been busy completing mixes for an album started four years ago by multi-instrumentalist Rob Brown.

**Deluxe Mastering's** Tony 'Jack the Bear' Mantz has been tweaking The Fuzzbirds, Blind Munkee, Cave of the Swallows, Dirty Radio, Jonesez, Brackets, Thrall, Larry K (mixed by James Frew), Bitter Sweet Kicks, The Irresponsibles, Radio Ink, Rainshadow, Burgworth, The Sunny Days, The Hired Guns, a Jessica Mauboy single (remixed

by US producer, Rac), a live album for Autumn Gray (Canada) complete with 40 piece symphony orchestra and mixed by Jimi Maroudas, and new album for Jeff Lang.

Projects mastered by **Adam Dempsey** include Fish Boast of Fishing (Peter Knight), Vague Cuts (mixed by Jez Giddings at Hothouse), Butcher Blades, Pony Face, Lanrae, The Audient, Zac Brennan, a debut EP for Broadway Sounds, the latest Going Down Swinging compilation, singles for The Fearless Vampire Killers and Sons of Messengers, and a CD single and 10-inch vinyl for Heirs (Melbourne). The gang also sends props to Sloth for recapping the PSUs in the mastering-modded Chandler LTD-2s.

At **Studios 301** in Sydney, the crew are mastering The Jezabels, Ryan Meeking, Phrase, Jon Stevens, The Grates, Art vs Science, Sneaky Sound System, Shannon Noll, Faker, Tijuana Cartel, Purple Sneakers DJs, Ernest Ellis, Triple J, and Kids of 88. On the recording front, 'Chisel (formally known as Cold Chisel) are working on new material, as are Guineafowl, Tim Freedman, X-Factor, Ricky Ho, Daniel Spencer, and Canyons. The Logic 101 courses have been popular, as was the successful Mark Opitz masterclass; look out for the next one in November! 301 has also started construction on six new production studios to be available for lease by the end of the year. Contact Studios 301 if you're interested in a suite.

**Damien Gerard Studio** in Balmain has had a swarm of regional bands coming through, and the locals keep on popping in to utilise the mighty MCI JH24 two-inch machine with the new RMG 900 tape. Recent session highlights include Andrew Beck and Pete Holzworking with Hamish Gordon, Swarfgrinder, The Grand Lethals, John Kennedy, and Michael Peter. Mr Russell Pilling took a well earned break in his home state of Tassy, but managed a wave of projects before leaving. ■



SHANGHAI TWANG STUDIOS

As a musician first and foremost, Pete Grandison built **Shanghai Twang Studios** to be an extension of himself, and a place where he could play music and invite his friends over to share in it. The facility has a bohemian, loungeroom feel with 'chinoiserie and bedouin chic' styling. The studio is hidden within a warehouse, but is purpose-built with state-of-the-art acoustic design by John Sayers.

Despite the boutique style, the studio offers four spacious, independently wired, air-conditioned and isolated recording rooms, all with line-of-sight via glass doors and windows. This allows Pete to record musicians playing live together but still affords him the opportunity to isolate sound sources for editing and sound shaping later. Pete's recorded everything from choirs to rock bands, string quartets and bluegrass, all

the way through to voiceovers (amongst other things he tells us).

The control room is designed for critical listening – both mixing and mastering – but is large enough to house a band. Shanghai Twang utilises ProTools HD3 on Mac computers (two systems), Logic Pro and an MCI JH-16 one-inch eight-track recorder. There are kitchen, courtyard and bathroom facilities, as well as an upstairs lounge with four three-seater couches and a viewing window into the live room below. The lounge is wired for use as another recording space, and can operate as a second control room. The studio is centrally located in the inner southern suburbs of Perth, just minutes from the port of Fremantle.

► Shanghai Twang Studios:  
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