

SOUND ADVICE



EACH ISSUE JMC ACADEMY WEIGHS IN WITH SOME HELPFUL TIPS FOR PLAYERS AND MUSIC PROFESSIONALS LOOKING TO TAKE THEIR CRAFT TO THE NEXT LEVEL.

SOUND BEHAVIOUR


It doesn't matter whether you are listening to music in a bedroom, lounge room, recording studio, live venue or even an outdoor festival, one of the most important things that needs to be considered is the way that sound is behaving in the given space. It is the sound engineers' primary focus to incorporate the best sound mix possible to distribute to the audience, but this cannot be achieved solely by assuming that every location has the same sound response. Let's explore some of these.

Depending on the size of the room, and also the shape and its acoustic properties, this will have an impact on the actual sound behaviour. For example, a location that has a polished concrete floor, with lots of windows and mirrored sections, is going to have a lot of reflected sound energy that will most likely cause excess reverberation or "bounce". The opposite of this would be

a location that has multiple heavy carpeted areas, with lots of thick drapes over the windows without any mirrors or glassed areas. This type of environment would contain lots of absorption and soaking up of sound, and would not offer very much reflection or natural reverberation (insert angry vocalist here).

A similar thought process would also need to occur when looking at an empty room, and a room that is full of patrons. Each person in the room would also act as an absorber, based on their body mass and the clothing that they are wearing. The sound behaviour would also change largely from when the room is empty, to when the venue is packed to the rafters.

The actual size and space of the room plays a factor on the sound behaviour also. A long and narrow room is going to have a different sound response to that of a space that has quite a large open area. Nearly all rooms and locations contain parallel surfaces. These are also not ideal for optimum sound behaviour, as the sound energy can possibly get trapped and built up between any two parallel surfaces. This is called a flutter echo (stand in the middle of your bedroom and clap loudly).

In the recording studio environment, flutter echo is eliminated by either constructing the room with dimensions that eliminate parallel walls, or by using frequency absorbers (acoustic treatment) to help capture the excess sound energy. The ideal location for sound playback would have a combination of reflective characteristics, as well as some controlled and absorptive qualities, to provide an equal and even dispersion of sound for the audience. 

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A NEW AUSSIE HOME FOR ENGL

Drump Partner/Music Partner Australia have just announced they'll be handling the exclusive Australian distribution of much sought after ENGL German Amplification.

Today, ENGL is one of the world's most successful guitar amplifier manufacturers celebrating 30 years of innovation, success and quality. Over the years, their artist roster has expanded with world renowned guitar players such as Richie Blackmore, Paul Stanley (KISS), Victor Smolski, Gretchen Menn and Jeff Loomis now part of the ENGL family. Throughout the years, ENGL has created a wide range of popular model amplifiers including the Powerball, the Invader, Gig Master 15w and 30w and Retrotube series along with guitar cabs and accessories. If you're a retailer and have an expression of interest in selling ENGL, please contact **Anthony Scaffidi** on 0488 260 693 or anthony@drumpartner.com.au

GUITARIST TO WATCH



KARL S. WILLIAMS

CURRENTLY PLAYING WITH:

Solo as Karl S. Williams (and on occasion in band format, which for now I'm calling 'Friends') and a psychedelic band called Tsun.

USUALLY FOUND PLAYING:

Ida Belle (I named my instruments after ladies from Robert Johnson tunes).

YEARS ON THE FRETBOARD:

About 11 years. The guitar is my first instrument but I didn't have one until somewhat later in life.

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR PLAYING STYLE?

I'm a pretty rudimentary guitar player, but my style is rooted very much in the delta blues and the more hypnotic blues of the Mississippi hill country. It can be quite percussive and I generally keep a bass line going with my thumb on the low string. I hardly ever use a pick because I like to feel the strings.

FIRST AXE:

A Yamaha FB103, meranti back and sides, and I think the top was laminated spruce. She really sang and I wore the frets down to nothing.

CURRENT AXE:

My girls, a real pretty Epiphone Elite J45 and my Reverend Buckshot, both named Ida Belle. I also have a box guitar that my friend made for me, I call it my six shooter because he stuck some house numbers on the front like a playing card.

RIG/PEDALS:

Acoustic I keep it simple, just the Fishman Aura and sometimes an MXR 6-band EQ. When I'm playing dirty I like my little Epiphone Valve Jr., 5 watts of Class A that I tinkered with a bit through a 1x12 cab with a Greenback in it. I use the same EQ as a boost and also an MXR Classic 108 Fuzz, which is pretty much a Hendrix fuzz face in a different case.

SECRET WEAPON:

Fishman Aura. I mostly play acoustic guitar and this really livens up the direct signal to make it sound more like there's a mic in front of the guitar.

FAVOURITE GUITARIST OF ALL TIME:

Neil Young - It's a tough call but I think Neil Young has one of the most diverse catalogues with both beautiful acoustic playing and interesting electric, both virtuosic and just solid rhythm playing.

FAVOURITE CURRENT LOCAL PLAYER:

Marcus Blacke - His first album was cool fingerpicking acoustic playing in the vein of Nick Drake with many tunings of his own invention but his new album takes that into different places with more electric guitar and interesting effects. Hypnotic when combined with his clever lyricism.

CURRENT RELEASE:

My debut album, *Heartwood*, was released in August 2014.