



IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT WORKING AT EASTERN BLOC

BOOKINGS: A deposit is required to hold booked time. For smaller bookings, this is typically 50%. For longer bookings, a varying deposit amount can be arranged.

DEPOSIT REFUND POLICY: A minimum of three days notice is required to have the full deposit refunded. Within three days notice, we refund deposits if the cancelled time can be rebooked with another client. If this isn't possible, the deposit will not be refunded

DELIVERY OF MIXES, FILES AND/OR TAPES: All balances owed must be paid in full before any of the 24 bit mix files, 16 bit listening copies or session files will be released.

PAYMENT METHODS: Payment methods are Electronic Funds Transfers or cash.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT RECORDING AT EASTERN BLOC

OPTION 1: Recording can be done "direct-to-digital" through our high-resolution Lynx analogue-to-digital converters. This is the fastest and most cost-effective way to record.

OPTION 2: Recording can be done to two-inch analogue tape and afterwards transferred in real-time into digital through the Lynx converters. This can give the instruments (drums especially) a slightly rounder and fatter sound due to the analogue tape compression and artefacts. This method takes longer as each take must be transferred from tape into the DAW in real-time. After transfer, the takes can easily be edited if necessary. Set-up for this method takes longer as the tape machine must be calibrated and patched into the signal chain.

OPTION 3: Recording can be done directly to tape and archived on tape. This is seldom done because the number of tracks on an analogue tape is limited to 24, tape is expensive and the power and timesaving of using the DAW's editing and automation cannot be used.

SUMMARY:

All of the above methods sound great. Options one and two are by far the most practical, powerful and cost-efficient. Because of the quality of our converters, the difference between using "tape-to-digital" or "direct-to-digital" is more "apples or oranges" than inferior or superior.

An important thing to note is that we record using new and vintage ribbon and tube condenser microphones into vintage preamps and compressors. Because of this, the recordings are always warm, full and analogue sounding using any of the above options.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT MIXING AT EASTERN BLOC

We mix in the analogue domain through a large mixing desk, not digitally “in-the-box” (i.e., combining tracks, eq-ing, processing and automating completely in the computer without the use of a mixing desk or much outboard gear).

Mixing analogue helps mixes sound big and warm with great depth-of-field but it makes it more difficult and time-consuming to recall mixes (to change something in the mix at a later date after the mixing session has been completed).

We run the 32 separate analogue outputs from our converters into 32 channels of our vintage mixing desk. We use analogue desk EQs and outboard analogue EQs, compressors and effects. Panning and levels are set on the mixing desk although the DAW’s automation is used as well. We believe this process brings a sonic magic to the mixes that digital “in-the-box” mixes do not have.

To our ears, analogue mixing sounds superior but is much more-time consuming to recall if changes to a mix are desired at a later date. If you would like us to write down all settings of all channels and outboard devices on recall sheets, we are happy to do so but this does take additional time. If a mix is to be changed, resetting the desk, patches and all the outboard devices during the subsequent mix session also takes significant time.

Is mixing on our analogue desk through all our wonderful analogue outboard gear worth this inconvenience? YES!!! We certainly hear the results as being well worth the lack of total recall that “in-the-box” mixing offers.

Our advise is to use your ears and judgement during the initial mix session and make sure that anyone who might insist on having a say is there to hear it before it is finalised as a mix.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT BACKING UP FILES

By the end of a recording, many digital files have been created: the 24 bit stereo mix files which are to be taken to mastering, 16 bit reference copies of these mixes for listening to prior to mastering and all the raw DAW data of the separate takes and out-takes from every song and overdub recorded. Obviously we give you the 16 bit mix references on an audio CD. The 24 bit mixes for mastering usually also fit on to a CD or two. That leaves all the DAW sessions and audio files. If you record just a few songs with minimal overdubs, they might fit onto a DVD or two. But if you’ve recorded more than this, it is much more cost-effective to buy a fire-wire drive than to pay us to make a stack of backup DVD’s, which is a really boring thing to do. We are happy to backup all your files to your fire-wire drive for free. We are also happy to supply you with an appropriate-sized drive at a reasonable price.

We also suggest that if you are extremely attached to your raw DAW data, you back it up to a second drive at some point. Drives sometimes crash and data recovery can be expensive.

Conversely, if you’re as happy with your mixes as we hope you’ll be and you know there will never be a need to revisit the DAW’s raw data, backing up after completion may not be necessary for you.