



Inside a Recording Studio

2008
25 minutes

Teacher Notes:

Patrick Penfold

B. Ed. (Performing Arts); Grad. Dip (Music Therapy)

Program Synopsis

The program explores the process of sound recording in a studio. Students are shown how sound is made, how it is affected by different surfaces, room acoustics and the types of microphones used. The program outlines the layout of a recording studio, the equipment used to capture and process sound, and the practicalities involved in successfully completing a sound recording project.

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Introduction

This program provides an introduction to how a recording studio works. The program explores the nature of sound and how sound is processed to produce a quality product. The students will learn how to produce a quality recording, such as a demo song, which would be acceptable for music industry personnel, radio or use on line. The practical workings of a studio, including the various roles of the personnel, i.e. musicians, singers, engineers, and producers are demonstrated.

Program Rationale

Being a creative musician or dynamic performer is one thing, producing these qualities in a recording session is another. A successful recording requires an understanding of the sound recording process and the functions of a studio. This program shows the importance of understanding this process and demonstrates the various elements involved in a successful recording.

Program Timeline

00:00:00	Introduction
00:00:47	Chapter 1 – The sound of nature
00:05:50	Chapter 2 – Sound recording
00:10:30	Chapter 3 – The studio
00:15:33	Chapter 4 – A recording session
00:19:07	Chapter 5 – The mix down
00:24:00	Credits
00:25:21	End program

Useful Resources

Books and Other Print Resources

- Ausmusic, Sound and Acoustics, Melbourne 1998
- **Hurtig, B** (1988) *Multi-Track Recording for Musicians*. Alfred Publishing Co.: California.
- **Rachlin, H** *The Songwriters and Musicians Guide to Making Great Demos*. Omnibus Press: London.

Related Programs

- An Introduction to Composing
- Genres in Music - From Handel to Hip Hop

Program Worksheet

Before the Program

1. Discuss CDs/ albums of your favourite artist/bands and describe what you like about the sound. What is it about the sound quality that makes it a good recording?
2. Try playing an instrument in different rooms in your home (i.e. bathroom, backyard, garage, and bedroom). Make a note of any differences that you can observe.

During the Program

1. Describe how sounds are made.

2. How does sound behave in enclosed spaces?

3. Describe the structure of the human hearing system.

4. Draw and label the basic lay out of a recording studio (include the control room, mixing desk, digital work station, vocal and instrumental booths, microphone positions)



5. List some of the software programs mentioned in the program.

6. Describe the main steps in the recording process.

7. How can an artist/band best prepare for a session in a studio at the pre-production stage of the recording process?

8. What is a mix down?

9. How can special effects enhance the overall sound of the recording?

10. How can the finished product be used?

After the Program

1. Research local studios in your area or city. Find out what equipment they use, the styles of music they specialise in and their hourly rate. (If possible arrange a field trip/visit).
2. Depending on availability, try recording a song on a variety of recording devices (tape recorder, DAT tape, computer or laptop software) using a variety of microphones in different positions. Compare the quality of the end product.
3. Imagine you are a member of a band. Plan a session to record three original songs. Describe how you would go about this process including the instrumentation and tracks required, a discussion of the overall sound you wish to produce and factors that will help you obtain that end result.
4. Design a CD cover with a title and credits for an imaginary band or artist.