



THE 301 PODCAST EPISODE 1 PART 2

April 4, 2017

Hi, welcome to part two of the Studio 301 podcast episode number one.

Speaker A: So you mentioned people from LA and that kind of thing, you were in LA pretty recently because you went over there for the Grammy's, right?

Speaker B: Yes, that's right

Speaker A: But you got to go and check out studios and meet people and just see what the vibe is over there. What was the Grammy's like and were things really different there compared to here?

Speaker B: Well, yes. Very, very lucky to have the opportunity to kind of go over there. Obviously that Justin song did very, very, very well, and it's definitely one of those like "Wow!" kind of moments when it kind of sinks in that you are actually getting to go and be a part of all of that. You spend sort of a whole week or the whole time that you are involved with it over there kind of feeling a little bit like an impostor being this guy from the other side of the world and being in consideration with all these people that do all of these massive records that you've kind of...

Speaker A: People you look up to I guess

Speaker B: And you know, and records that you are literally referencing when you are doing your own mixes and stuff like that. You're like, "Oh, apparently we're in some way on some sort of even..." It was very funny and very surreal. But yes, it was kind of an amazing experience, especially the getting to the whole ceremony thing. I had sort of done some of the award shows here for some of the Australian work, but it's just a whole other level over there, it's crazy. I mean the actual award thing kind of goes for nearly a whole week. By the time you've had various industry events and sort of label meet and greet and then there are some events put on, like there is a night specifically put on by the producers and engineers' wing where it is all of the producing and engineering community. And it's basically artists invited and it's just, you know, it's your peers and people from, reps from the various companies of all the products we will use

Speaker A: I really like that idea because especially, I'm sure it's the same over there as here, it's like we all sit in our little rooms and don't really get to talk to each other that much. So it would be really cool to get everyone in the same room, it should be a bit more common in Australia maybe, but I think that's awesome that everyone over there at least would get to talk to their peers especially if they just chat via email or internet or whatever

Speaker B: Absolutely. And especially over there, Australia probably has four or five main hubs where all the work is being done, but over there, there are massive records being made in every state in the whole country kind of thing and there is definitely people there from overseas as well, a lot of their London colleagues, a lot of people from the other coast and that kind of thing. And so I think they obviously all sort of look forward to it a bit as that once a year catch up with old friends that you maybe used to work together at a facility 19 years ago like, "What have you been working on" "Hey, I haven't seen you in ages." And it was fun to kind of see again, the sort of people you look up to in the engineering world, essentially on their off duty hours just kind of catching up with each other as friends, laughing and joking and sort of, "Oh, what are you using on this these days?" "Oh, you know I hate that. I would never be able to get anything out of that. How do you do it?" Or "Yeah, I love that thing too. The top end on that is awesome." And sitting in a corner by yourself and you're like, "I like the top end on that one too, amazing." So that's an amazing thing.

And then when you get to the actual sort of ceremony for the Grammy's it's on a giant scale, you know the red carpet for the event is genuinely like a whole city block long, which as I said for some guy from the other side of the world is a bit kind of like you are expecting at any moment for someone to sort of tap you on the shoulder and be like, "You know you are not allowed back here, right?" But instead I had a guy that tapped me and was just like, "Hey, I'm your minder for the walk here. I'll show



you how it works." which was very bizarre, I feel very lucky to be involved with that, but yeah. Then while we were over there we had the opportunity to go and sort of look in on some sessions, chat to a few of the guys that run studios over there as well, just get a little bit of a feel for sort of the contrast between what happens in record city essentially and the way that we developed kind of our sort of procedures over here as well. And it is interesting, there are obviously a lot of things that sort of stay consistent across there where we are all trying to achieve the same aim. I think the thing that really struck me as being very interesting was Australia has this huge sort of ability for everyone to be able to multitask essentially, or be across a whole lot of jobs. And it seems over there that maybe there is more demand for work or the budget is just a little bit higher, but there is a lot more ability for everyone to essentially specialize and be like "I'm a kick drum guy. I just sit in a room and make kick drum sounds." Kind of literally. Or "I just do this" or "I just do that" whereas Australia it seems that they are really talented out. And I think this why we do very well when we all kind of go overseas as well, that constant sort of fight that there is for the limited amount of budget or the limited amount of positions or anything like that in terms of our industry means that everyone becomes very good at everything

Speaker A: To be very proactive in all areas really

Speaker B: Yes. And I think that kind of takes everyone else off guard a little bit when we kind of go and say, "You're not just a triple threat, you're like a ten times threat." You know, I can do the tracking, I can do the editing, I can do the tuning and I am great at all of them kind of thing.

Speaker A: That makes a whole lot more sense to me at least in that when I am on sessions and I have someone from overseas and they're like, "Oh, what kind of music do you work on?" And you end up going, like at 301 they will say "Orchestral, jazz, hip-hop, rock, pop, reggae." You start listing...

Speaker B: And that was this month

Speaker A: Yes, you're like "That was just this week; I did all those things in one week." And they are like, "Oh", to them its like, "But which one do you do?" And I'm like; "I do all of them, that's kind of what we have to do here." And then there is this look of disbelief on their faces where they are like, "What? You don't just do Indie? That's not your thing?" So yes, it's refreshing to kind of hear that. At least here we have to... like people are quite talented and can actually compete with those guys over there because we can do a lot of stuff

Speaker B: And I think that knowledge of knowing intimately so many of the steps of the process means that when you are working on any one of them you've got so much of a better idea of how it is going to fit in to the big picture because you being the next guy in the chain kind of thing as well, because if you are all links in the chain you know that, "Yeah, last time when I did this and I thought it was fine and then I got to the next step and I realized I have really tied my hands on something that..." Whereas if you weren't that next person in the chain you wouldn't necessarily know for next time that actually maybe that wasn't a great idea.

Speaker A: You know the best way to deliver what you need

Speaker B: Absolutely. And I think it is going to become increasingly specialized here especially as we... the last few years we have always had quite a few people do quite well on the international stage and I think that there is a little bit more kind of interest in being able to sort of incorporate whatever that x factor thing is that we bring to things, being able to have that as part of production teams and things like that, and especially collaborating every inch and it's obviously so quick and easy these days. Even in Australia I know there is definitely a certain percentage of my mix clients that I never meet. Files just arrive in your email and all of the back and forth is done kind of over email with referencing and revisions and kind of things like that, so there is not really any reason why that can't happen on a much bigger international scale as well. But, yes, I think that appreciation of that kind of level of skill is definitely what's going to be kind of next happening around here. There is definitely going to need to be a little bit of a pace increase, I think there is definitely an urgency that seems to happen to record making over there where it's not uncommon to get a phone call at 2 o'clock in the afternoon for a session that starts at 4 o'clock over there with the assumption



that we will just be able to pull someone in, and it's go time now, you're ready or you're not.

Speaker A: Well I only get those phone calls really when it's an international act. So say like Stevie Nicks turns up and they literally need the studio now, so you get this phone call going, "Hey, we need you to be at studio kind of now because Stevie Nicks is coming in."

Speaker B: Can you beat the artist in?

Speaker A: Yeah. Can you get a mike set up before they arrive? Go, that's your task for the day. So, yes, it's interesting to see... we are on par at least skill-wise with what they are, but there are a few areas in which we are quite different to them as well.

Speaker B: Yes. And I'd look and I'd think everyone kind of talks about this sort of the slightly more laid back Australian lifestyle. It's definitely an expectation over there, for example, if you send an email that you'll get a response in five minutes, and if not, there will be a follow-up email kind of thing. Whereas I know there is definitely stuff where you sort of send it and maybe you get something back a day or two later. And part of it is having staffing for it, but there is that culture of like no time to waste kind of thing, and I am interested to see whether that kind of migrates over here a little bit more as we start to get kind of absorbed into the international market.

Speaker A: Okay. So what sort of stuff have you been working on recently? Like obviously the Bieber thing has been a big focus, but what is sort of happening locally now for you?

Speaker B: So the end of last year was sort of a finish of a couple of really nice big records which had taken up quite a lot of the year. There was Horrorshows record that just came out this week, Bardot State, Illy's album which came out the end of last year, the most recent Fundamentals one as well and Spit Syndicate one and so each of those were probably records that I worked on for probably a minimum of kind of four or five months, and a couple of them definitely a little bit longer than that as well. And so it was kind of nice to sort of close out the year, or the beginning of this year with that and put a little full stop. And so it's kind of fun getting to... as much as I love all of those guys, it's lovely to kind of jump into new fresh things and be able to just kind of throw ideas at things. So recently I have been doing sessions with a cool band called Movement, and then this week I did a fun day with Ta-ku who is kind of doing a collaboration with this K-pop star Milsee which is very interesting for his record, so very interesting to kind of see where that goes, and I think they are kind of friends from way back so it's quite interesting days, gaining an insight into the K-pop world as well from someone who has definitely been there and done it all. And on top of that I guess just kind of setting up for the year and just doing a couple of tracks with Ford who is a cool kind of young producer working on his debut EP at the moment getting some nice vocal collaborations with that as well. And basically just kind of picking off singles at the moment tends to be the main thing and waiting for the next big, long album project to come up.

Speaker A: Well it sounds like you've just finished what, like... you just said four or five albums. It's funny how they all just kind of come out at once really.

Speaker B: Yes. 2016 definitely seemed to be the year where, particularly in the Australian community, definitely seem to be the year of 'it's time for the follow-up' kind of thing. All of those artists had definitely had a couple of years off before these records came out, and this was not only the kind of... I won't say 'comeback', but this was definitely the... we want to try something a little bit new and different and, you know, we have done... our old material is our old material that we want to push a slightly different direction, so it was quite fun with all of those guys to really be able to kind of push into new avenues and so expand the palette a little bit more in terms of the way that we tracked vocals or the way that we laid them or affected them or just in terms of a mindset, you know the Horrorshow one for example is a lot 'singier' in terms of the vocal delivery than any of their stuff used to be. It always used to be just a little straighter even though there was obviously a bit of a melodic kind of underlay. It's a lot more almost kind of R & B-ish almost, which I think seems to be sitting really well with the fans which is quite fun, nice for them to come along on the journey kind of with them. And all the records, thankfully, seemed to be really well received which is nice. It's nice when you take a little step off the path that everyone is happy to kind of come with you, and it speaks well to all of their fan bases as well. And what about yourself, what does 2017 hold for you?

Speaker A: Well, at the moment 2017 has mostly been essentially building a new studio. For those people that are listening that don't know, we are moving to a brand new facility. So we have moved out of the one, that involved literally pulling all the cables



out of the walls, packing up all the consoles, the gear. If it was something you could pick up or remove, we picked it up and removed it

Speaker B: Sounds like a marathon

Speaker A: Yes, it was a heck of a job. I think we had 16 rooms at the old building that we had to pack up, including two 72 channel consoles, we had the Custom Series console as well, all the cabling, our giant machine room, all the tape machines, everything.

Speaker B: And so where is it up to now?

Speaker A: Well at the moment we have got, I think we are 30% of the way through the new building I think, so there are walls going up quicker than I can... like you turn around and there is another wall

Speaker B: There's a new room

Speaker A: Yes, there is literally a new room in front of you. So every week there is a concrete truck backing in, laying concrete slab, putting in concrete for walls; it's just flying along. So I have been helping with all of that kind of stuff, even just assembling rooms for the studio that we are sitting in right now. So we are sitting in a place that we are calling Wharf Studios, down at Jones Bay Wharf. We have set up this studio, we have set up another room at the old Castlereagh 301 that I was mixing in yesterday. And then we have got the actual new building on Ellis Street in Alexandria that has digitization rooms and a few other things going in there as well. So most of 2017 for me has been setting all that up so that we can sort of keep doing our work. So now that I have finished doing that I am actually able to start to twiddle on the mixes and recordings and things. I was doing some vocal recording for a choir the other week, last week I was working on hip-hop stuff from a friend of mine called Sean, and this week was working on this collaboration between Youngblood from Canada and Letters To Lions from Cronulla working on a track that we recorded at Australian music week. That's actually has been a pretty fun process because, like you were talking about before with the internet and everyone throwing things back and forth and sometimes you don't even have to meet the people to work on the track. In this case I met them quite literally for one day, but the rest of the track and building it has been back and forth over email where I'll do some stems, send it off to them, they do some stuff and send it back to me, I get the guys in, we try and record something else on top, send it back. It's just a back and forth process a lot. But that has been a really fun process especially because... it's interesting when you meet one band from Canada, it's literally the only band that I know that I have met from Canada. And people that are in that band have been in other bands that I happen to like who are from Canada like Hot Hot Heat and that kind of thing, and so you can sort of go "Oh, wow. These people that I randomly met happen to be in bands that I have grown up listening to." But then you get to work with them via the internet on this collaboration of a song, and you know that people in Australia and Canada are definitely going to be listening to this track and it's really kind of fun to work on that. So yes, that's been sort of what I have been focusing on recently.

Speaker B: Exciting times

Speaker A: Yes, it has been pretty good. Obviously building a brand new studio presents a whole lot of challenges but it has been a really fun process for me at least, and it's been a big learning curve too because you have got lots of people who basically they have all got what their needs are for the new studios and we've got all our mastering guys and other engineers and stuff who all want certain things. And so it's making sure that you have got a collaborative effort amongst everyone to build the best studio that you can possibly build. Yes, it's been a really amazing sort of experience.

Speaker B: Very cool. Well I think we will probably wrap it up there. So I want to thank everyone for listening, this has been the first of our attempt at this whole podcast and thing, and hopefully we will have a few more kind of coming towards to you very soon. We'll catch you soon. Thanks guys, bye.
