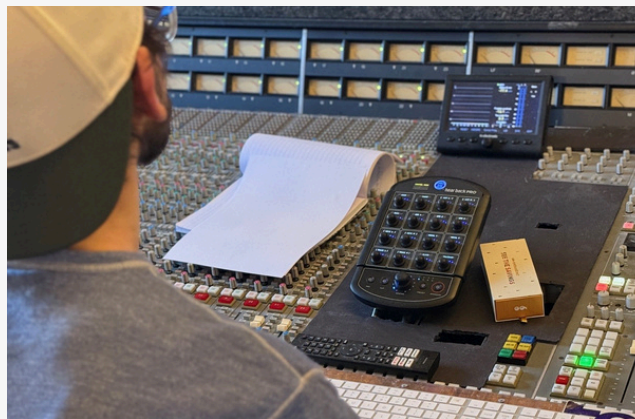
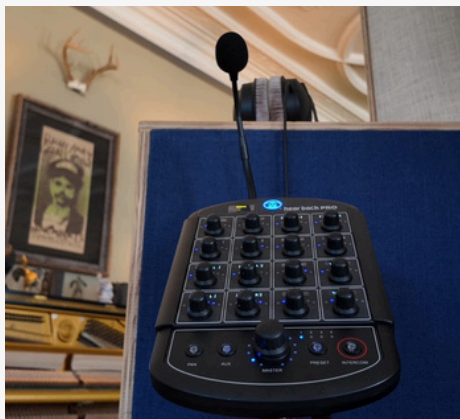


IVY MANOR STUDIOS



A storied space for creation

Just minutes from the storied studios in Muscle Shoals, AL, a large century-old house is finding a new life as a state-of-the-art recording facility. Ivy Manor Studios opened in 2019 and highlights both history and technology. Ivy Manor is the brainchild of Michael Wright, who walked into the vintage space and envisioned exactly how he'd arrange the studio: The main floor includes a spacious recording area, with the control room in the former dining room and a dedicated mixing space in the basement. Artists can take up residence upstairs.

Studio setup

The control room features a 1981 SSL console. The studio uses their standard configuration inside Pro Tools that assigns outputs: kick, snare, other drums on the first few channels; bass and guitars after that; a stereo keys feed; a feed combines tracks; click on 15; and talkback on 16. The labeling in the Hear Back PRO Hub matches it. They use Sends inside Pro Tools to send out all those feeds to the Hear Back PRO Hub using the ADAT input option. After that, the Hub sends the channels on one Cat 6 cable to a PRO Distro distribution box, and it sends channels over a cable to each Hear Back PRO Mixer.

IVY MANOR STUDIOS

How Hear Back PRO helps

After deciding they needed more inputs and flexibility than other personal monitoring systems offered, they chose the Hear Back PRO system with PRO Digital Overlays installed on the PRO Mixers.

“Having the pro system now makes a huge difference in the quality of our sessions,” Michael said. “[...] The sound quality, we noticed an immediate difference. We have phenomenal-sounding headphones. When you take [the Hear Back PRO] system and combine it with what we’ve done with the electrical and grounding in this facility, we think we have the best-sounding headphones in town. Also, [they like] the flexibility of the system, being able to assign inputs and outputs easily on the fly, we have the overlays, (...) being able to put people’s names on things, the intercom function, you name it.”

Ivy Manor production partner Gary Nichols also writes music and performs. “There are a lot of great monitoring systems out there, but none that I’ve found that suits my hearing as well as Hear Back,” he said. “Until we got the [Hear Back] PRO, anytime I stacked vocals or stack a guitar part, I was having the engineer do the panning for me or set the mix exactly how I want it. Now, I can dial this in with panning and volume controls that are perfect for my recording needs. This is the only one for me.”

Gary’s favorite feature is the built-in intercom feature, where with the press of a button anyone with a mixer can talk to everyone else with a mixer, including the control room. It’s especially handy since sometimes performers record in isolation rooms on a different floor.

Michael also said the whole team appreciates the new PRO Connect app that allows control and configuration from any desktop, tablet, or phone. In setup, “headphones are the thing that now goes the fastest,” he said. “It’s been a great addition to the studio.”