



Professional SOUND

**ANGEL
MOUNTAIN**
State-Of-The-
Art 5.1 Studio

**LE STUDIO
MOBILE**

**CONCERT
FOR
TORONTO**
2 Venues –
1 Concert

**ABBOTSFORD
PENTECOSTAL
ASSEMBLY**

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Printed in Canada

PRODUCTS TESTED

- BLUE Ball Mic
- dB Technologies Wireless System
- TC Helicon VoiceWorks

“A complete recording studio on wheels.”

That's how Le Studio Mobile's Web site describes one of Canada's most renowned location recording vehicles (www.studiomobile.com). Guillaume Bengle has owned the mobile recording unit for close to 25 years at the time of this article. Le Studio Mobile specializes in multitrack recording for radio, television and albums, as well as mixing live music shows or special events.

Bengle first started Le Studio Mobile in 1979 when he was studying Communications Arts at Montreal's Concordia University. Although he was never a musician himself, Bengle had plenty of musician friends who were more than willing to let him record and edit (“With a blade back then!”) their performances. “We did some shows at venues in Montréal, but we were always carrying the equipment in and out of the various venues,” recalls Bengle. “Back then, a 4-track was about four feet high, two feet wide and two feet deep. You can only imagine how difficult it was to carry that around. It came to the point where we decided that there was no sense in continuing to do things that way – it was time to put the equipment in a truck.” After the decision was made to acquire a vehicle, Bengle was doing some of the mobile recording himself, but most of his clients would bring their own engineers to their projects. “Their engineers were always very good, so I decided to simply be the organizer by getting the right people in place at the right time. Once the organization is completed, then it's up to me to provide them with a high-quality recording environment, which is how it is still running today.”

With the acquisition of his truck in 1979, Bengle still uses the same vehicle with some obvious changes over the years. “We still use the same truck, but parts of it have been modified. We lengthened the whole truck by 10 feet. The rear of the truck is not the same, which originally contained a console and a 16-track, 1” recorder. It was a Tascam recorder – I still remember it! We had that unit for three years before we decided to standardize and that's when we installed a 2” Studer with 24 tracks. We also installed a new 24-input console – our first Soundcraft console. Basically the whole truck has stayed fundamentally the same except that everything has been improved or redone. The biggest improvement, or the biggest change, in the studio was this year when we put in a new console. We also redid all of the wiring for the truck. Up to then it's always been improvements and equipment upgrades.” The most important change was the new Yamaha DM2000 console. “Our other console was starting to get old,” explains Bengle. “Because it only had 32 inputs – even if we had two of those – it wasn't big enough and I needed a console with total recall. We did have an auxiliary console to double the number of inputs to 64, but it still wasn't enough.”

With the large number of television shows that Le Studio Mobile records, it was essential to have the console equipped with

total recall. “In addition to television, many PA Front of House consoles are digital with total recall so I had to be equipped with total recall as well,” explains Bengle. “I wanted a console that was powerful and had lots of inputs. We need the large number of inputs for when we record shows like the Juno Awards and Canada Day shows. I didn't want the truck to have only a large number of inputs. It was critical that it sound good as well. I was very fussy about what type of console would be installed. It needed to be able to provide all the important nuances when recording albums. We needed all of those things in one console and I think we found it in the Yamaha. There are 96 inputs with total recall. Perfect for what we do. If you need 96 different compressors then you can have it. It's 24-bit, 96 kHz and it sounds *really* good.”

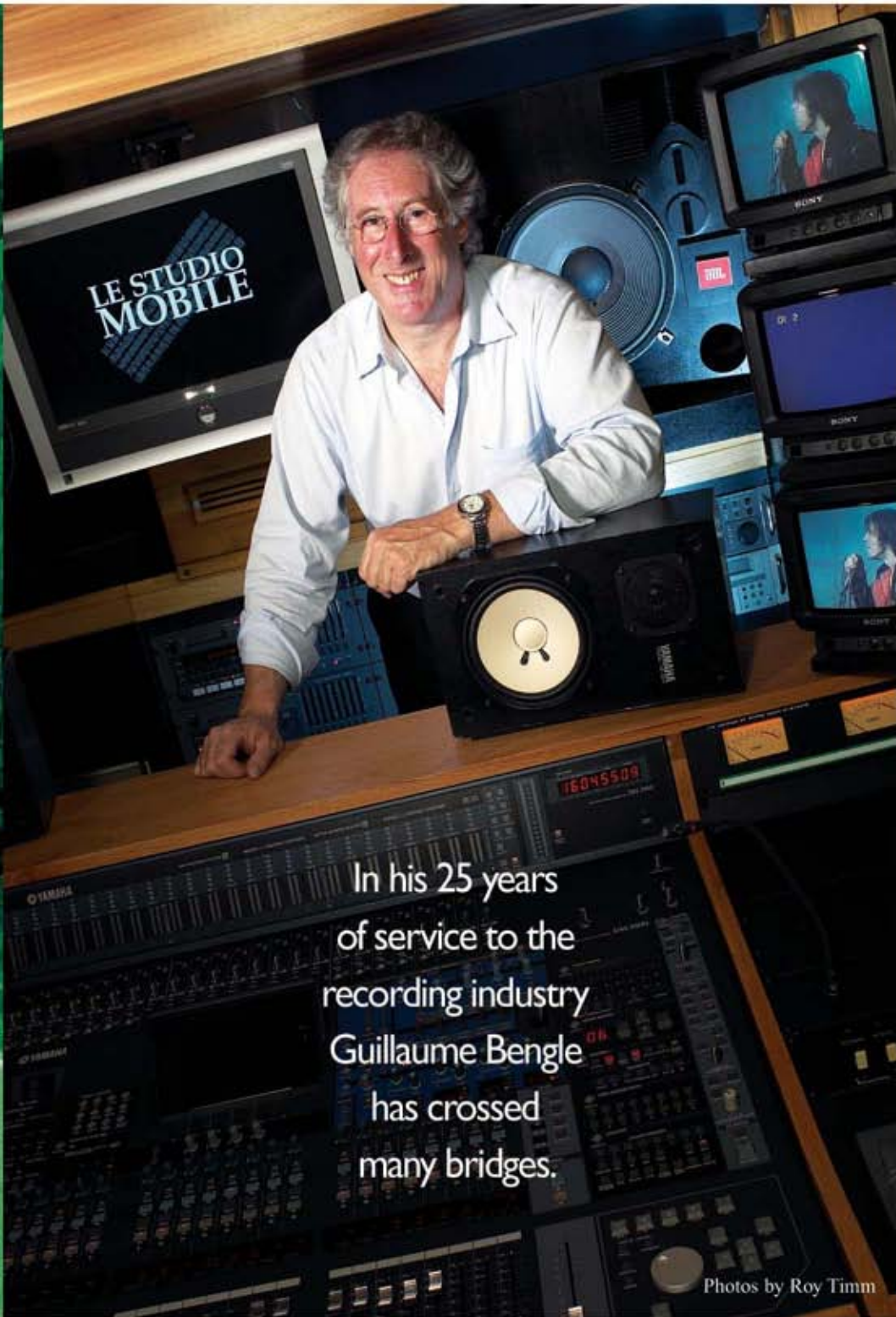
Guillaume also has another trick to help make the recordings from his truck sound superior: “The main difference for me for making it sound good is the fact that I have pre-amps on stage. That's the big difference: what you lose in warmth compared to an analog console, you gain because you don't have 200-400 feet of cable between the microphone and the console. The signal from the microphone is intercepted right away by the preamps so you get the clarity that won't cause you to lose anything. The signal is brought from the stage to the truck via fibre optics, which keeps it of course at its best quality possible. The console has to be powerful while sounding good at the same time. We recently did some festival recording in Quebec – we set up with a symphony orchestra using two Neumann U87 microphones. When we listened to that setup before we put out any other microphones, it sounded really great. I think I've made the right decisions in the equipment I selected.”

The truck design was completed by Jean-Luc Louradour, who by Guillaume's account is the best studio designer in Quebec. “He designs all major recording studios in Montreal and Quebec. It's so important for a good designer to be involved – especially when designing grounding. It's even more important in my case than in most studios because I have a link with the PA and monitor consoles that has been perfected. We haven't had one single little buzz since we've started.” The whole construction phase took approximately six months with an additional five weeks for equipment installation. “The actual realization took five weeks of downtime for the studio. Of course we finished on time! Our first show had been scheduled and it was very good. We did conduct some fine-tuning after that initial show, which was the National Aboriginal Achievement Awards in Ottawa. It was broadcast on CBC. Right after that we were involved in the Junos. I'm quite happy that everything has worked out for the best.”

The truck is not self-powered – it has to plug in at each location. Bengle considered this when designing the vehicle and concluded that there was no point in him being self-powered if he was trying to record artists who had no power. “Even if I had a generator ... it wouldn't be



Le Studio



In his 25 years
of service to the
recording industry
Guillaume Bengle
has crossed
many bridges.

Photos by Roy Timm

Mobile

by
Jeff MacKay

Le Studio Mobile

used very often. If we ever had an electrical problem, what would be the point of being powered? I wouldn't be able to feed power to the PA, monitors and musicians. We always plug into the source for the PA if possible. I do have a transformer as well as a voltage regulator that we use."

When the recent redesign was completed, it wasn't necessary for Bengle to do any work to improve the truck's acoustical treatments. "It hasn't changed much since the beginning. Why? Simply because it works," laughs Bengle. "It's still very reliable at the console position. I've been tempted to buy new speakers from time to time, but the trouble from my point of view is that I have to work with many different engineers who prefer different things. That's why I stick with those JBL speakers. In 25 years not one person has ever come to me telling me that the recording didn't work when they moved it to another studio for post-production. That's proof for me that it's the right way to do it. I have to please many people at the same time and those JBL speakers do the job fine."

The truck is equipped to record in either analog or digital formats, with the addition of digital being the biggest change in recent years. Bengle has had the ability to record 24-track analog for many years and still does so.

"The 24-track Studer is still in the truck for people who want to do albums and want the analog sound. I can feed the Studer and the 48-track Sony PCM 800 at the same time. That's what I wanted for the console – to be able to feed many different format at the same time."

In terms of what projects Le Studio Mobile works on regularly, Bengle is quick to point out that television is his most important client. He is hired regularly to record programs for CTV and CBC. "We have a bunch of television networks that we work for," explains Bengle. "We also record a lot of albums with the truck."

In his 25 years of service to the recording industry, Bengle has travelled clear across the country from Vancouver, BC to St. John's, NF. "I travel to the Maritimes a lot, in addition to regular trips to Quebec City, Ottawa and Toronto. I travel a lot – that's what I like about it. After all these years I still like it. The fact that it's not always in the same place, that it's always different, that's what keeps it interesting."

PS

Jeff MacKay is Editor of Professional Sound.



Equipment List

Consoles & Preamps

Yamaha DM2000 digital production console, 96 channels, 24-bit/96 kHz, fully automated, AES/EBU, optical and analog inputs and outputs.
Yamaha AD824 8-channel preamplifiers (6).
Soundcraft 200B auxiliary console, 32 inputs, 6 outputs.
For a total of 104 microphone inputs.
Ampex AM-10 VU.
Ward-Beck MP3 VU.
Sony 100 segment bar-graph.

Recorders

Sony PCM 800 48 digital tracks
Studer A-80 24 tracks, Dolby noise reduction
Studer B-62 2 tracks
Revox PR-99 2 tracks
Sony 7030 DAT Time Code
Panasonic SV-3700 DAT (2)
TEAC 122 MK III cassette
Tascam CDRW-2000 CD recorder
Tascam CD-401 CD player

Processing

Aphex 320 compressor-limiter (2 channels)
dbx 160 compressors-limiters (2)
dbx 165 A compressors-limiters (2)
Klark-Teknik noise gates (4 channels)
Lexicon 224 digital reverberator
TC Electronics 2000 reverb
Orban Parasound 622-B parametric equalizer
SAET-7 audio tuner
UREI 1176 compressors-limiters (2)
UREI LA-4 compressors-limiters (2)
Yamaha REV-7 reverberator/effects
Yamaha SPX-90 II reverberator/effects

Monitors & Amplifiers

JBL 4333
JBL 4311
Yamaha NS-10M

Auratone
Crown D-150 (3)
Crown D-75
UREI 533 graphic equalizer (2)

Synchronization

Fostex 4030, 4035 synchronizer and controller
Skotel TCR-80 time code reader and reshaper
Apogee "Big Ben" C777 192K master word clock

Video

Samsung LTM225W HD 16:9 monitor, video or PC source.
Sony video monitors (3) with camera.
Sony VO-5800 S-VHS editing recorder.
Sony VO-2610 VCR 3/4"
Sony TR-81 VCR HI-8
JVC HR S9400 S-VHS recorder

Microphones

Shoeps, AKG, Sennheiser, Electro-Voice, Crown-PZM, Shure, Beyerdynamic, Audio-Technica and Sony.
Active and passive DIs.

Computers

Macintosh Titanium PowerBook
Shuttle 2.4 GB PC
Canon, Brother printers

Communications

RME-Digital ADI-648, Alesis AI3; MADI standard 64 channels fibre-optic 2-way stage-truck transmission system. Military grade fibre-optic cable, 600' with automatic back-up through coaxial cable.
Clear-Com communication system, 2 channels, 6 stations. McCurdy distribution amplifier
Patch bays: Internal (analog and digital TT, 48-track AES/EBU, time code, video) and external.
Multi-cables: 84 pairs system with transformer isolated split, 1000'.
19, 11 and 9 pairs, 50 to 150'.
External speaker and headphone system.

A Selection Of Le Studio Mobile's Customers

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Toronto

All major live shows involving live music (Genie Awards, Juno Awards, CASBY Awards, ACTRA Awards, Canada Day specials), as well as recorded live performances (specials with Celine Dion, Anne Murray, Bryan Adams, Rita MacNeil, George Fox, Michelle Wright and others).

Radio-Canada, Montreal

Major live special events (including ADISQ and other awards presentations), many live and recorded rock music shows, recordings of l'Opera de Montreal and the Montreal Symphony Orchestra.

CARAS with CBC, now CTV: The Juno Awards. 2003 was our 14th Juno Awards, always as the main audio truck and centre of audio production.

CTV, TVA, TQS, TV Ontario, Tele-Quebec and all Canadian networks, the **NFB** (music recording for many **IMAX** movies), **PBS, CBS** and **TNN** in the United States, **NHK** in Japan (HDTV special with the Montreal Symphony Orchestra).

Independent producers from Canada (including Cirque du Soleil, Insight Productions, the NAAF), the United States (including Smith-Hemion Productions, "The Anne Murray Christmas Special", broadcast on CBS) and Europe

(including a BBC special with Rita MacNeil).

Major **music festivals**, including The Montreal International Jazz Festival, The Just for Laughs Festival, The Festival de Lanaudière and The Quebec Summer Festival.

Many **record companies** in Canada, the United States and Europe (some international recordings: Blur, Sting, Bryan Adams, The Fixx, Celine Dion, Miles Davis, Daniel Lanois, Charles Aznavour and Gino Vanelli).

...And a few other artists they have had the pleasure to record: Alanis Morissette, Amanda Marshall, Anne Murray, Antonio Carlos, Jobim, Art Blakey, Arthur Blythe, Ashley McIsaac, Avril Lavigne, Barenaked Ladies, Blue Rodeo, Blur, Bobby Vinton, Branford Marsalis, Bryan Adams, Buddy Rich, Buffy Sainte-Marie, Burton Cummings, Celine Dion, Charles Aznavour, Charles Trenet, Chick Corea, Cleo Laine, Colin James, Corey Hart, Crosby, Stills & Nash, Crowded House, Daniel Lanois, Diana Krall, Dizzy Gillespie, Gary Burton, George Fox, Gino Vanelli, Glass Tiger, Gordon Lightfoot, Great Big Sea, Ian Thomas, Jaco Pastorius, Jann Arden, Jean-Luc Ponty, Jeff Healey, kd lang, Kate and Anna McGarrigle, Killing Joke, Le Cirque du Soleil,



Leahy, Leonard Cohen, Maynard Ferguson, Michelle Wright, Miles Davis, Milt Jackson, Mingus Dynasty, Montreal Symphony Orchestra, Natalie MacMaster, Nickelback, Oliver Jones, Ornette Coleman, Oscar Peterson, Our Lady Peace, Pat Metheny, Plastic Bertrand, Pointer Sisters, Prairie Oyster, Ralph Towner, Rita MacNeil, Ronnie Hawkins, Rough Trade, Sarah McLachlan, Shania Twain, Shawn Phillips, Sir George Martin, Sonny Rollins, Sting, System of a Down, Teaze, The Fixx, The King's Singers, The Tragically Hip, Tina Turner, Tom Cochrane, Tom Jackson, Willie Dixon, Wynton Marsalis, Zamphir.