Jonathan Wyner

Flexible Tools Enhance the Creative Process

Jonathan Wyner, right, with Tom Bates, one of the audio engineers on "Invention and Alchemy," in M Works Studios.

Fixing Imperfections

Wyner relied on Logic Pro for filtering, EQ, and dynamics processing. He ticks off his favorite features: "The plug-ins are great. We were able to recreate the distortion that was difficult to capture in the hall, using the tools in Logic to get this gutsy, bluesy quality of the harp."

He also likes Logic Pro's pitch correction tools. Wyner explains: "In a live performance, you want the musicians to feel free to really play. But when they let go, you get these little imperfections. In a concert those things go unnoticed. But you listen to a recording over and over, so they become noticeable. That's why pitch correction is very valuable."

With Logic Pro, says Wyner, "it's easy to go from two-channel to surround sound. You can adjust your stereo mix the way you want it, then call up a new set of panning tools and turn that mix into 5.1 surround sound. It's so easy — you don't need special equipment."

Logic Pro's phase linear equalizer is another favorite. "The EQ available in Logic sounds really good," says Wyner. "Logic addresses the quality issue — you don't have to spend $5K on some fancy outboard equalizer to get great, no-compromise results."

> **"Apple technology let us work and rework the music, video, and graphics at home, on our own time and budget, and at very high quality. It truly enhanced the creative process in a way that wasn't possible before."**

Macs In Sync

"Between Deborah and me, we have 15 to 20 Apple computers," says Wyner. "We use them for everything: accounting and budgeting (Excel and Filemaker), proposals and presentations (InDesign), composing and recording rough sketches of music (Digital Performer), storyboarding (Photoshop or InDesign), video editing (Final Cut Pro HD), audio mixing (Logic Pro) and final authoring (DVD Studio Pro)."

Seamless interoperability is high on his list of treasured features. "When we create an audio recording on tape, we have to figure out how to get it to someone else, so they can get it into their application," says Wyner. "With the

Pro/Music

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1. No Harping on Stereotypes
2. Flexible Tools Enhance the Creative Process

Tools of the Trade

- Power Mac G5 Dual (for audio mixing test concerts using Digital Performer and Logic Pro)
- Power Mac G5 Quad (for audio mixing HD concert in two-channel and 5.1 surround sound)
- Power Mac G5 Dual (for video editing with Pinnacle card and fiber channel RAID array)
- Power Mac G4 (administrative server)
- Four iMacs and two iBooks for PR, accounting (QuickBooks), and administration (Microsoft Office, Filemaker)
- PowerBook G4 (for audio recording test concerts)
- PowerBook G4 and Power Mac G4 DP 500 (for composing with Finale and website design with Dreamweaver)
- Apple Cinema Displays
- Panasonic plasma 42-inch display

Audio Recording Gear & Instruments

- Four Tascam MX-2424 digital audio recorders recording to two redundant hard disk arrays using ACARD SCSI bridges
- Microphone preamps by Grace Design
- Microphones by Schoeps, Sennheiser, EAD-Conneaut, Countryman, Oktava, Rode
- Electro-acoustic concert harp and "Baby Blue" solid body electric Celtic harp by Camac Harps (France)
- Shure wireless UHF wireless mic transmitter and in-ear monitor systems
- Monitor speakers by Lipinski Sound

Audio Mixing Gear

- Logic Pro
- Noise reduction using Sonic Studio HD NoNoise
- Lexicon Model 300 reverb and Sony 777 surround room simulator
- Dunlavy SC-5 and Lipinski 5.1 surround system monitor speakers with Grace m906 controller

Audio Post-Editing/Mastering

- Sonic Solutions editing system with NoNoise
- TC Electronic M6000
- Z-Sys CL-6 compressor
- Weiss EQ-1/DS-1 processors

Mac, I can easily import any kind of audio file into Logic, make my audio mix, and create an OMF file to hand off to the video editor. He imports it directly into Final Cut Pro and away we go — cutting audio and video.

"Half the magic with Apple is the ability to freely interchange files," adds Wyner. "It's not only easy to import and to maintain fidelity, but to maintain sync. Timecode info passes between audio and video very easily. That's a blessing, because even a little bit off is totally unacceptable — and it can be a nightmare when you have to constantly adjust sync. Once you have your assets locked in Logic, they stay locked — so it's easy to go back and forth between applications."

50 Different Ways

The Mac platform supports Wyner's creative instincts. "Apple gives us the combination of incredible flexibility and the ability to pass things back and forth," he says. "We used to have to work serially. You did one part of the process at a time, and once it was done, you couldn't go back to it."

Creative work, notes Wyner, is naturally iterative. "Sometimes you need to put things together 50 different ways before you decide that the first way was best. And if you cut that process short, you end up with something that's not satisfying." For "Invention and Alchemy," he kept going until he got the effects he wanted. "Logic and Final Cut Pro allowed us to take the project home, get it into roughly the shape we liked, then show it to someone to say, 'This is what we're talking about.' You cannot overestimate the value of that in the creative process."

Deborah Henson-Conant with Jonathan Wyner during rehearsal.

Adds Wyner, "What made this project work — apart from Deborah's incredible versatility, creativity, and perseverance — was that we were able to do many mock-ups. We began with MIDI recordings, moved into chamber ensemble versions, then recorded the real show. Apple technology let us work and rework the music, video, and graphics at home, on our own time and budget, and at very high quality. It truly enhanced the creative process in a way that wasn't possible before."

Beautiful Things

Wyner is delighted with the way his DVD turned out — and eager to share it. "I love seeing and hearing beautiful things and sending them out so others can experience them," he says. "I live in my ears and my heart, and if we made a video that follows the cues that come from those places, I'm fulfilled."

The producer and mastering engineer calls "Invention and Alchemy" a "stunningly beautiful show that shows off both the technical prowess and creative possibilities offered by Apple's desktop media solutions." Wyner continues, "I come from the world of high-end audio production, so I'm accustomed to working in large studios with big tape machines and consoles to produce material for world class artists. Now, the G5 and Logic Pro have changed my world."

Video Production

- CBC Radio Canada premier video truck
- Kalypso HD switcher
- Four Sony HDC-900 hard video cameras
- Five Sony HDC-950 hand-held video cameras
- Canon 86X9.3 and 75X9.3 lenses
- Seven Sony SRW5000 HD SR VTRs running at 1080i/59.94 with 4-4-4 color space
- Panasonic DVC Pro recording line switch

Video Editing and Authoring

- Dual 2.7GHz Power Mac G5
- Pinnacle Cinewave HD
- XServe RAID
- Fiber Channel card
- Final Cut Studio
- Adobe After Effects
- Panasonic 42-inch HD plasma display
- Panasonic AJ-1200a DVCPRO HD VTR
- Sony HDCAM-SR 5500 VTR

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