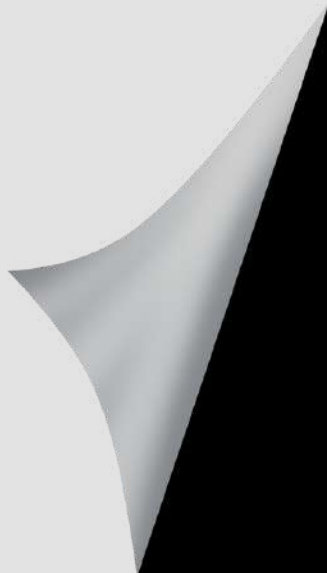




CROWN LANE
STUDIO

Recording
Technical Specification

July 2024 v3.0



Technical Specification

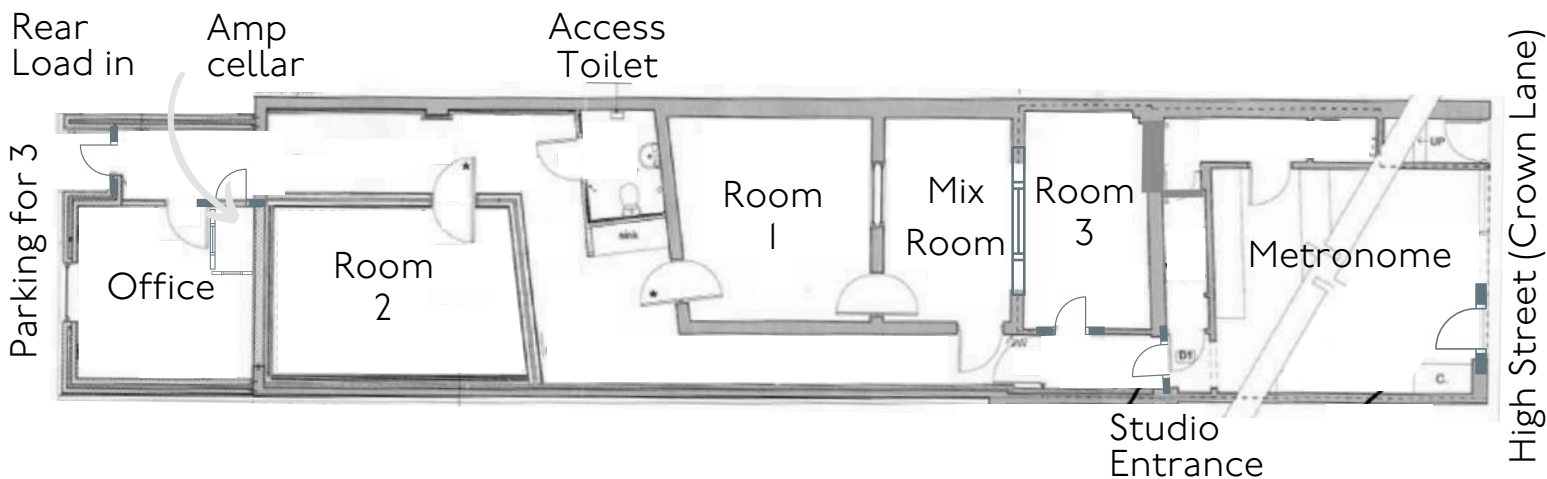
Working at Crown Lane

Over 90% of clients at Crown Lane work with one of our engineers - though we do have limited capacity for dry hire of the facilities - which requires a one off (paid) induction session.

We run most sessions using Pro Tools, though we also run Logic. We can record 24 channels simultaneously on-site - as well as capturing off site virtually.

We have a robust virtual rig which integrates fully into the rooms here. There is no standard set up for virtual sessions, so please discuss your requirements. We've run everything from a simple Zoom call into the session - to a multi-room setup with participants from around the globe, including BSL interpreter feed to and from select participants.

Metronome is the beautiful entrance to Crown Lane, a fully licensed coffee and events space. It's the perfect place for lunch, coffee, and evening wind-downs.



The Spaces

If a clinically low noise floor is required (- for example audiobooks) - it is recommended to book out unused spaces as well - as there might be spill from subsequent online bookings that we have no control over. However sound isolation is very good - with all walls double lined; vacuum sealing doors; inline ventilation for fresh air; air conditioning and adaptable lighting.

Room 2 remains almost entirely isolated from the rest of the building.

Room 1 is the best isolated and is cocooned in the middle of the building.

Room 3 has a single-acoustic door and is in the busiest part of the studio.

Amp Cellar is tie-lined to the Control/Mix room and can be used to track amps.

Metronome is setup to broadcast live studio sessions and project launches.

Technical Specification

Mix / Control Room

Summary

- Monitors: Genelec 8040
- Console: Oram 24 channel custom analogue desk
- A/D: Universal Audio 24 channels
- DAW: Pro Tools, Logic
- Outboard: Neve, Warm, Safesound
- Space: room for one engineer, and additional engineer/producer chair with flexible seating for 2-3 others behind. camera link to room 2 screen, direct vision to rooms 1 and 3. A pleasantly dead space for accurate monitoring
- 3.9m x 2.5m

Acoustic Information

Carpeted, underlay on wood/floating concrete floor, plasterboard with acoustic treatment, medium sized glass window on left and large on right, absorbent blinds, acoustic ceiling tiles, regulatable inaudible air ventilation system, air-conditioning - internally controlled - near silent - (but switch off if recording in the control room)

When mixing in Control Room - a drum kit on either side registers a peak of 67dB and therefore not possible to mix in here with drums on either side. The solution is that we've removed drums from Room 3 altogether - and made Room 1 not online bookable during the day so we've full control over the space

Technical Specification

Room 1

Summary

Main recording space. All equipment can be used for sessions with no additional charge. A medium sized window connects this room to the control room and another door out to the kitchen area.

4m x 3.8m

Acoustic Information

Carpeted, underlay on wood/floating concrete floor, plasterboard with acoustic treatment, small glass windows, absorbent blinds, acoustic ceiling tiles, regulatable inaudible air ventilation system, air-conditioning - internally controlled - near silent - but switch off for takes.

A well controlled space, with enough room acoustic for instruments to freely resonate. Musicians enjoy performing in here. Acoustic panels are introduced for voice over work. A large 2m high and 3m wide flexible panel is used behind the artist and an absorbent panel beneath the window facing the artist as there are some reflections from the wall under the window.

A band at full volume in Room 2 measures 32.5db in Room 1 - predominantly the lower frequencies, but may be distracting to low noise-floor recording such as audiobook recording artists. All background noise can be removed easily using iZotope or the like if budgets don't allow for also booking out Room 2 to ensure silence.

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Room 2

Summary

Tertiary recording space. All equipment can be used for sessions with no additional charge. No direct sightlines - though a latency free screen is provided. Analogue connectivity to control room XLR & TRS.

5m x 3.3m

Acoustic Information

Carpeted, underlay on wood/floating concrete floor, plasterboard with adaptable acoustic treatment, absorbent blinds, plasterboard ceiling with acoustic treatment, inaudible regulatable air ventilation system, air-conditioning - internally controlled - near silent - but switch off for takes.

A well controlled space, which is nice to perform in due to having a few more reflective surfaces than room 1. Musicians enjoy performing in here, though the room does add a character to non-close-miked sources. Acoustic panels are introduced for voice over work. A large 2m high and 3m wide flexible panel is used to further reduce the reverb time if required.

With acoustic curtains (along the longest wall) open, the room is too live for most recording purposes, although string quartets work well with some degree of curtains open. We leave them shut 99% of the time.

Technical Specification

Room 3

Summary

Secondary recording space. Smaller than room 1, this newest room has a large vision panel so is the most visually connected with the control room.

3.9m x 2.4m

Acoustic Information

Carpeted, underlay on concrete floor, plasterboard with acoustic treatment, absorbent blind, acoustic ceiling tiles, inaudible air ventilation system, air-conditioning - internally controlled - near silent - but switch off for takes.

The large acoustically padded blind which covers the huge picture window does deaden the sound further, though the room sounds lovely with it open, and works best for most uses.

There is an increase in the external ambient noise when anyone enters the studio from the coffee house as the room is located between the two acoustic doors which create the full seal. We use signage to ensure people are quiet. The ambient noise peaked at 40dB over a period of 20 minutes (mainly the ambient sound of the coffee house during its busy period but nothing that Izotope won't be able to remove).

Technical Specification

Metronome

Summary

Metronome is our coffee and events space at the front of the studio. Metronome and Crown Lane run many events in here. The acoustics are good - though the ambient noise floor is relatively high as its a working cafe.

Acoustic Information

Concrete floor, acoustic discs on ceiling; some fitted soft seating, other standard coffee house/event space furniture.

The space can be used in evenings and weekends and is particularly popular for film-work due to its neutral background of black white and grey.

There is a small sound system and a Genelec endorsed speaker rig - their the Ones series - including sub.

Technical Specification

Console

Custom Built Oram T Series 24

The console at the centre of the Crown Lane sound is the handbuilt Oram T series 24.

This is a British made sound console by John Oram, known as the 'father of British EQ'. Many people track their material here because of the wonderful sound of the rooms through the Oram, and as a result, this unique sound is featured on thousands of recordings over the past 15 or so years.

How to describe the sound? Rich, warm and expensive sounding (!) Analogue is favoured by purists and digital by progressives, so we've combined the two by having the absolute best analogue console, immediately converted to digital by the Universal Audio 8xp and 16 (24 total). It's also possible to patch straight to the interface without the desk if required.

It has an accurate metre bridge, so we can monitor all rooms, and all sends at all times without being distracted from your music.

We can't wait to hear your music take shape through the desk.

Technical Specification

Microphones [1 of 2 pages]

Because every project is unique – so are our microphones. We have a complete and growing selection of microphones that add the characteristics artists have come to love from Crown Lane. We have microphones that are standard across the industry, and others that are charmingly unique.

Sontronics Sigma

Warm Motown inspired sound. Vintage ribbon microphone – regularly used on strings and woodwind – Upper strings sound incredible through this microphone.

Neumann TLM 49

Inspired by the classic 1950s Neumann microphones. Silky and just bright enough for most applications. This is used on most solo instruments as a reference mic before trying alternatives if required.

AKG C414 (matched pair)

An open, honest sounding workhorse microphone for multiple applications. As a stereo pair this is commonly found on our drum overheads, but also on piano, and many solo instruments.

Shure SM7

An immediate close and bold microphone. We regularly use this on high SPL instruments, and are fond of it on hi hat. We have a cloudlifter if required.

Sontronics STC-80

This is our choice microphone on snare drums. It is brighter than the SM57 most famously used on snares, and gives a warmth that enables the snare to sit perfectly in the mix with little EQ'ing.

Shure SM57 x5

The classic go-to instrument microphone, used on guitar amps, snares and countless instruments for the past 50 years. We have 5 of these at the studio.

Sontronics Aria x2

A rich overhead microphone and silky smooth on acoustic guitar and strings.

Sontronics STC IS x2

Flattering microphones for spot miking choirs; ensembles; pianos and overheads. We have a pair of these.

Technical Specification

Microphones [2 of 2 pages]

Sontronics DM-IT x3

Tom microphones (3), that capture everything you want, and nothing unwanted from the toms. Rich warm lows that don't clutter the mix, with an attack that cuts where required.

AKG C1000s x2

Stereo Mic pair for versatility in instrumental recording sessions. Often used as overhead or room mics, we often use them in strange places like: close miked cymbals; around 30cm from an accordion or as alternative room mics.

Audio Technica U85IR x2

Boundary microphone Often used inside a bass drum to capture some of the HF click elements to the kick that are often lost on an external kick mic, but also used in its traditional form as a boundary microphone.

AKG D112 x2

Bass drum, and double bass microphone. We use this regularly just outside the bass drum, off axis to the soundhole to capture the weight of the kick drum, without the air or HF features – making for a wide range of mixing options later.

Shure Beta 52

Bass drum microphone. Characterful bright and tailored to kick drums with character. Also used on double bass, and other bass instruments.

Sontronics DM1B

Although this microphone is designed for the kick drum- you can often find this mic on the double bass.

Sontronics Apollo

A stunning ribbon Blumlein stereo microphone. Often on the piano or above the drums.

Sontronics Orpheus x4

Similar workhorse to the C414 but with a warmer sound quality which when blind tested, most producers prefer.

Sontronics Podcast Pro x4

Great workhorse for any podcast or direct spoken word projects

Technical Specification

Keyboards

To give you the ultimate flexibility during your time at the studio, we have the full range of keyboards.

Korg SV-1

A high-end stage piano designed both aesthetically, and in use, to represent the classic electric pianos of the 1970's. There are 6 groups, each with 6 sounds. The instrument looks, feels and sounds amazing, and is very popular with all users here.

Roland FP-2

A simple to use piano with a handful of carefully selected classic Roland sounds. It has a slightly heavier feel than the SV-1.

Akai MPK-49

An adaptable controller keyboard. Having no sounds of its own but fully programmable to operate with the multiple software instruments we have in the control room. This is always available for recording sessions but not for rehearsals.

Yamaha U3 Acoustic Piano with MIDI

Without a doubt one of the nicest upright pianos to play. Use acoustically, or switch to silent mode, and connect to any MIDI compatible device or our recording rig and the world of sound is at your fingertips.

Technical Specification

Drums

Being a drummer, getting a perfect kit sound is something I've always strived for at Crown Lane. Now, I believe, we are able to consistently do that, using the full range of kits we uniquely have on site.

18' Walnut Stain over Birch Liberty Richmond series 12' 15'

This rich warm bodied kit was chosen for its distinctive classic sound.

20' Birch Pearl Masters 10' 12' 14'

The 'go to' kit for a good clean kit sound. This powerful and musical 'Masters Studio' kit has featured on countless recordings – and the distinctive chest punching kick makes it very popular.

22' Maple Pearl Masters 10' 12' 14'

This, the oldest and the biggest of the kits on site, is a 1990's Maple Pearl Masters Custom kit. Again, with 10' 12' 14' toms, but with a tighter sound (due to the maple shells).

Cymbals

We have a good range but, due to the nature of cymbals, and their short shelf life, the selection of cymbals changes on a regular basis.

Snares

Pearl Steve Ferrone Signature Snare 14"

A brass shelled beautiful drum – akin to the black Beauty, but with a resonance of its own. The drum continues to sound fantastic down to the quietest sounds

Yamaha Maple Custom Absolute Snare 14"

A Japanese handcrafted maple shelled snare with a hint of the wooden shell holding the tone together.

Ludwig 401 All metal shell 14"

This lovely 5" drum from c1959 is a classic that was heard on countless Motown albums. Our drum is in excellent condition with PureSound snares and whatever head is required of the session.

Technical Specification

Bass

A firm foundation is essential to a good mix. We love crafting the mix on the Genelec monitors; through the Oram desk; from a couple of compressors; fed from the best source possible. Here we look at some of the physical sources of 'bottom end' here at Crown Lane:

Ashdown 300EVO

With 325watts of bass power, the ABM 300 EVO features a front-panel mounted balanced DI out with pre or post EQ switching, a sub-bass output, a tuner output, an FX loop and a line input for the connection of an external sampler or sound source. Also footswitchable is the mighty Ashdown sub-harmonic generator which precisely tracks the main signal and reproduces it an octave lower. A sub-harmonic level control enables the player to add just the right amount of low-end reinforcement – everything from a subtle, thickening of the sound to unbridled, bone crushing tone.

Hartke VX2515 Bass Combo Amplifier

The VX2515 features a single 15 in. Speaker matched with a horn-loaded titanium high frequency driver. The 2500 amp section supplies the combo with 250-Watts of headroom, more than enough to cover a variety of playing situations. The 2500 with variable compression, tube and solid-state pre-amps, and 10-band graphic EQ give you all the tone control you could ever need.

DBX dBI2

The dbx is a very clean DI box – Great for sending your instrument straight to the desk with minimal tone shaping.

Sansamp RB-1

Our favourite preamp for recording bass. It has fantastic tone shaping and in addition to Drive, Presence, and active Bass and Treble controls, the SansAmp RBI has a dedicated Mid control and an XLR Output Level control for optimum performance with our Protocols system. We have recorded many different bands of all styles through this with fantastic results.

Technical Specification

Amplifiers (Combis)

From rockers to jazzers, we have every amp combo you could possibly need. When recording you're also able to use any of our range of impressive amp simulators.

Orange Rocker 30

If you prefer a citrus flavour to your tone, this 30watt combo powered by 2 EL34 output valves gives a slightly different flavour to the Marshall or Laney amps. Clean or dirty, this amp has tone in spades.

Vox AC30VR- 2 x 12 Combo

Classic British tone from The Beatles to Queen. It has a full range clean sound right through to heavy saturation with everything in between.

Cornford Harlequin

This hand wired, Class A EL84 powered, 6 Watt combo sports all that's necessary to deliver your sound, without all the bells and whistles which are superfluous in the studio. Everything you need and nothing you don't. No reverb or FX loops here, but the sweetest route from guitar to those killer tracks you have in your head. Be it rock, blues, funk, jazz – clean, dirty, or somewhere in between – it's all a flick-of-the-switch away.

Laney LC30

The LC30-112 is the epitome of class A tone. An EL84 driven 1 x 12 combo that packs 30 watts RMS of real tube punch to cut through. The Laney LC30-112 offers independent GAIN and DRIVE controls on each channel – giving you maximum tonal flexibility and has a particularly great slightly mid scooped clean tone [with a Fender flavour] but also excellent crunch and higher gain tones. This amp also has a great spring reverb.

Fender Blues Deluxe Reissue

This classic combo is a firm favourite with our rehearsal bands. The concept: What if a great old collectible 1950s Deluxe or Bassman was customised with channel switching and reverb? Behold the Reissue Blues Deluxe – a vintage-style tube amp with boutique tone that many a pro rock, country and blues player has used to superb effect. The Reissue Blues Deluxe sends 40 watts of juice into a single 12" Special Design Eminence speaker, fuelled by two 6L6 output tubes and three 12AX7 preamp tubes. Its two channels, normal (with bright switch) and drive, are voiced for classic blues, country and rock; other features include Fender spring reverb, an effects loop and two-button channel foot switch.

Plus others mainly used for rehearsals – including a couple of Marshalls. We look forward to hearing you playing one of these soon.

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Company Information

Crown Lane Productions Limited is registered company in England and Wales No. 6452555

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How our three Values may benefit you

Community

We are committed to ensuring people have access to the industry who wouldn't otherwise. You may therefore be asked if someone can sit in on a session. It will mean the world to them if your answer is yes - as it gives such essential experience. As well as recording high profile artists and projects, we are also committed to ensuring local talent also has opportunities.

Accessibility

Please submit your access rider to Crown Lane prior to your session and we'll do all we can to meet your requirements so that the art remains the only thing you have to think about. We take accessibility very seriously, and have smashed down as many barriers as we can - and we will continue to do so as they are brought to our attention.

Sustainability

Our awards have highlighted our commitment to the environment over the past 15 years, including a trip to Downing Street to work with other small businesses to improve sustainability in small businesses. We've also worked closely with Julie's Bicycle (Arts Council) regarding improving our environmental impact.



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