

TONELUX HELPS FUSE PRODUCTION AND PERFORMANCE AT MANIFEST MUSIC

Engineer, Multi-Instrumentalist and Composer Adam Berg relies on the TX5C and EQ5P to help finalize mixes and add that special touch

Santa Monica, California

January 8, 2013- At first glance, Manifest Music in Santa Monica looks like the usual small studio



setup – the glass separates the musicians from the engineers.

All the rooms are equipped to the hilt with drool-worthy gear. But what makes Manifest Music special is that its occupants excel in both realms – production and playing music. Led by producer/composer Adam Berg, the founder and owner of the facility that also employs producer/musician Itai Shapira, Manifest Music contributes musically to each track that leaves its doors.

Trusted engineer Adam Berg takes a multifaceted approach to helping clients. Not only can he plan the session and set up the gear for capture, but he also performs as a solid keyboardist, along with the rest of



Manifest Music Productions staff and Decoders members Itai Shapira and Adam Berg

The Decoders (Berg and Shapira along with horn player Todd Simon and drummer Blake Colie), a band that was created almost by accident. “We play on everybody’s records at this studio, but it was never meant to be a band. Among other things, we were involved with making original music for film and TV, and it evolved into a band with its own identity,” says Berg. “And regardless of what we are working on, the Tonelux stuff is babysitting our mixes constantly.”

The proof, as they say, is in the pudding, and for a taste of The Decoders’ most recent concoction, a remake of the Rotary Connection’s “I Am Black Gold of the Sun,” listen here. The band works regularly with Dick Rudolph, reimagining classics by Minnie Riperton and other artists from Music Sales’ extensive catalogue. “Black Gold”, recorded at Manifest Music, features musical performances from Berg and Shapira as well as all the

engineering; from tracking through mastering. Itai explains further, “We want to have a vintage sound, but be modern, if you can understand that. We are always researching old recording techniques and instrumentation and figuring out ways to implement them. There is no programmed stuff on the Decoders. It’s just us playing. We play music here everyday, and know how to get the most out of what we have. In some ways, Manifest Music is more of a composer’s studio. We want to have fun and make great sounding music, without the gear getting in the way.”

During a studio visit, Adam lets me A-B the mix with and without the TX5C on the master bus. He points out the untouched tracks in Pro Tools, and then lets me hear the difference on the final mix. “You can see on the session itself, it’s mostly live performance, there’s not a lot of running around and fixing things. When we turn on the



The Tonelux TX5C and the EQ5P (above), part of the Tonelux 500 series



Adam Berg “touching up” the mix in Studio A



Setup for Gamelan Cudamani

TX5C, it just puts this warmth and gushyness on everything. When you turn it off it sounds smaller. We aren't about slamming the life out of stuff, and the TX5C just seems to give it depth; the music just comes alive.”

On a session recording Gamelan Cudamani, Berg explains the beauty of the TX5C. “As a gamelan player myself, I have always been looking for different gear to



Itai Shapira in studio B

help replicate the true sound of the performance. This is the only compressor I found that is fast enough to handle the vast dynamic range of gamelan. The gong breathes on the low end and the flutteryness stays there. The top end really comes out. I'd used some different equipment previously, and the recordings were really murky. If you use the wrong piece of gear, you lose the shimmer effect, and with TX5C the track keeps its dimensionality.”

Manifest Music also utilizes the the EQ5P in its signal chain. Berg explains, “The EQ5P is the ultimate tool for cleaning things up at the same time as bringing vibrancy to a track. I use it on my stereo bus; the second I touched it I felt like I was plugged into the music. Such natural, precise control. Love it!” Berg and Shapira also appreciate the transportable nature of the 500 series units. “Regardless of where we go, we take our 500 rack with us. It doesn't matter what high end studio, or what it's equipped with. We have used the Tonelux gear enough to know what it sounds good on, and what to pair it with,” says Berg.

It appears Manifest Music will be quite busy in the foreseeable future. Besides working on a Minnie Riperton tribute album (Adventures from Paradise), The Decoders are starting to line up tour dates and have just been hired to work with Concord Records to re-imagine some of the Stax catalog.

The final word from Berg: “We rock the TX5C along with the EQ5P, and it saves our ass on a daily basis.”

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