

LAYIN' DOWN TRACKS

Local recording studios push and polish a growing music community. By Vanessa Salvia



Jason Moss at Gung Ho Studios



Bill Barnett at Gung Ho Studios



Nate Wooley at Gung Ho Studios

In a business based on word of mouth, a name you'll hear frequently in Eugene's growing recording industry is **Ed Cole**.

Bands trust him. The engineer doesn't show up drunk and turn your hard rock nu-metal song into a teenie-bopper rave anthem. Working with Cole is cost-effective.

And the results? Well, one song is worth a thousand words.



Ed Cole

The Cole Mine

Cole has been recording himself since 1982 and began recording others with his four-track in '88. He understands the struggles new bands face in getting their music out there. "I only charge bands \$15 an hour because I know there's a class of bands out there that want to record their first CD but can't even afford \$25 an hour because they're working near minimum-wage jobs," he says. "As I work mainly with punk bands and young teenage bands and garage bands, I get a good direct recording but I don't break the bank."

Cole recorded local band The Pass Out Kings' first demo in 1997 and went on to record The Conmen, The Ovulators and Asthma Hounds, among others. The Rock & Roll Soldiers, a band that formed in Eugene when the members were in middle school, turned to Cole for their first two recording sessions. The Soldiers recently signed a contract with Atlantic Records.

"I've recorded lots of bands that went on to do better things and better recordings," Cole says, "but somehow they all made their way into my garage."

This past summer Cole recorded two more local projects, Busholini and Outspent. He has since moved into a new rental without adequate space for recording, so it will be a few months before he's accepting new clients. But one of his goals is to find a separate space where he can permanently set up his equipment, rent practice space and provide recording services.

Barnett's Finesse

We have several top-of-the-line professional studios right here in Eugene, and many bands ready to invest some serious cash turn to Bill Barnett at **Gung Ho Studios**. No need to travel to L.A. for an über-professional, experienced sound engineer.

Barnett can fill that order with ease.

He recorded The Cherry Poppin' Daddies' album *The Swingin' Hits of...*, which unleashed "Zoot Suit Riot" upon the world and earned gold, then double platinum sales. His experience also includes classical music — he has spent 11 seasons as sound engineer with the Eugene Symphony Orchestra and nine with the Oregon Bach Festival. When the Bach Festival premiered Krzysztof Penderecki's "Credo" in 1998 at the Hult Center's Silva Hall, Barnett recorded the performance, which ultimately won a Grammy. One recently finished project was White Hot Odyssey's debut CD, which features The Daddies' front-man Steve Perry and, interestingly, Ed Cole on bass.

Barnett's sprawling studio in a spacious building housing 24-tracks of analog and 64-tracks of digital recording equipment is a stark contrast to Cole's garage and simple eight-track digital technology. Barnett bubbles with enthusiasm, waxing nostalgic about the (lack of) technology used on songs from the past.

"I would challenge anybody to show me a modern rock song that sounds more alive than Miles Davis's *Kind of Blue*. That was a three-track recording completely live done in two afternoons," he says.

Though they're on opposite ends of the recording-industry food chain, Cole shares Barnett's love of recording technology lore. "Beck recorded his biggest hit, 'Loser,' on an eight-track that's the same machine I have!" he gushes.

Sense of Community

Another thing that local sound engineers have in common is the sense of community and partnership they feel here in Eugene. They say with straight faces that they're not in competition with one other.