

# **MATTHEW GRAY MASTERING**

## **Matthew Gray Mastering**

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## **Matthew Gray Mastering offers online mastering**

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**Brisbane, Australia:** Producers and artists across Australia and New Zealand can now access high-quality and affordable mastering through Matthew Gray Mastering's new online service.

Clients simply upload their music to a secure server at [www.matthewgraymastering.com](http://www.matthewgraymastering.com), have their songs mastered, and then download the finished product. As Brisbane's only dedicated mastering suite, and with a client list including producers/engineers Caleb James (Rhubarb and Alex Lloyd), Lachlan 'Magoo' Gould (Midnight Oil, Regurgitator, Spiderbait and Jebediah) and Powderfinger guitarist Ian Haug (Powderfinger, Pete Murray and The Grates), it is now easier than ever to have Matthew Gray Mastering take your final mix to the next level.

For head mastering engineer and business owner Matthew Gray, mastering is a specialised area of production that requires detailed full-range monitoring, an acoustically neutral space, specific mastering processors (rarely found in recording studios) and a trained set of ears detached from the recording and mixing process to make the overall mix sound better.

Gray started the business eight years ago and draws on his 15-year career as a professional musician and sound engineer — where he recorded artists including Jet, Eskimo Joe, Killing Heidi and Evermore, and played on various albums and EPs — to deliver a professional result at a reasonable price.

"There are many mastering engineers who have the technical knowledge but lack a music background. This makes it difficult for them to understand the most important aspect of mastering, which is to represent the band musically," said Gray.

Brisbane-based music producer, composer and arranger Caleb James has used Gray's services for the past five years and is impressed with Gray's professionalism, communication and musicality.

"I started getting Matthew involved in my projects about five years ago and he immediately impressed me with his musical approach and attention to detail," said James.

"It is always about the music."

Powderfinger guitarist and owner of Brisbane-based Airlock Studios Ian Haug used Gray to tweak pre-production demos for their current album *Dream Days at the Hotel Existence*.

"Matthew has touched up Powderfinger demos for us over the years and made them listenable when they previously weren't," said Haug.

"Furthermore, Airlock Studios recommends Matthew for mastering our clients' work. Its great that someone can run a successful and quality mastering studio at an affordable cost."

Affordability and convenience is seeing Caleb James take advantage of the online service.

"I can't attend every session these days and am using Matthew's online service increasingly more," said James.

"I give Matthew some notes on an email and send through the files to his server. It is an efficient way to work and I have found that the more we work together, the more efficient we become."

Gray's services also include a free mix evaluation prior to the mastering process. Clients can upload their music and Gray will identify any potential problems within the mix and offer suggestions for fixing or minimising these areas before the mastering session takes place. This helps to ensure the artist will end up with a superior result.

"I spend a lot of time making sure my projects sound great and it is comforting to know Matthew has that same quality approach," said James.

According to Gray, home recording enthusiasts can also benefit from mastering, particularly those recordings intended for radio play, as a CD demo, or to be placed on websites including Myspace or Facebook.

"Mastering can often take the project from being demo quality to release quality," said Gray.

The Matthew Gray Mastering facility boasts a hybrid of analogue (valve and solid state) processors with digital outboard and plug-in processors designed specifically for mastering. Most of the audio 'sweetening' is done using analogue processing including compressors and three specialised mastering EQs.

"Of particular note is the Sontec MES-432C EQ which is the 'Holy Grail' of analogue mastering EQs," said Gray. "It's sound is unmistakable on numerous hit records, the original units are quite rare and can be found only in the most elite mastering facilities around the world."

Two analogue tape machines are available including an ATR-102 half inch machine with mastering grade heads and class A electronics, and a more traditional quarter inch Studer machine for those looking for a 'retro/vintage' sound reminiscent of The Beatles or early blues-style recordings of the 1960s.

"I receive many requests to process digital recordings through analogue tape as it offers a very desirable sound that can be heard on all the classic albums from the pre-digital era," said Gray. "I've tried a number of digital tape emulators but nothing sounds as good as the real thing."

For Gray, digital processing still has an important role to play in mastering, and he uses a Weiss DS-1 MK3 compressor/limiter/de-esser and other digital processing equipment for making small precise changes and dissecting and correcting problems within a mix. The studio incorporates the best A/D and D/A conversion available to interface all the analogue equipment with a ProTools HD system to ensure every nuance of analogue processing is captured back into digital.

"I conduct a lot of research before buying gear for the studio and am always listening to and researching new gear and software. It has to sound fantastic, be versatile enough to suit all musical styles, integrate with the rest of the gear and work well musically.

"I also like to keep in tune with new equipment and the latest in mastering techniques."

Matthew Gray Mastering also offers a CD replication and duplication service as an extension of the mastering process. Part of this process involves sending the final masters for replication as a DDP image to ensure the data integrity is upheld right to the point of manufacturing the CDs and personally delivered without compromise.

Matthew Gray Mastering is a one-stop shop for all of your mastering needs encompassing high-quality affordable mastering; free mix evaluation prior to mastering; a quick turnaround; and a CD replication and duplication service. As Australia's fastest growing dedicated mastering suite with an ever-increasing international client list, Matthew Gray Mastering's online mastering service is now accessible to everyone.

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