



By Steve La Cerra

## Hi-Fi Music

From tragedy comes a new approach

**STUDIO NAME:** Hi-Fi Music  
**LOCATION:** New York, NY  
**KEY CREW:** Joel Goodman, David Bramfitt  
**CREDITS:** In addition to the 2002 Academy Award-nominated film *Children Underground*, Joel Goodman's credits include *American Standoff*, *Interstate 84*, and *The Follow*, as well as feature films, television, and documentaries for Disney, Good Machine Productions, Anonymous Content, Trigger Street Films, Greenstreet Films, Double A Films, Maysles Films, PBS, Hybrid Films, Working Pictures, and Cypress Films.  
**MIXER:** Mackie 1402VLZ Pro (for monitoring only)  
**RECORDERS:** TASCAM DA-88, DA-40  
**MONITORS:** Genelec 1029A, 1091A; Yamaha NS10M, Sennheiser HD580 headphones  
**AMPLIFIER:** Hafler P3000  
**OUTBOARD GEAR:** Lexicon PCM80  
**EFFECTS:** various TDM Plug-Ins, Waves Gold 3.0, Line 6 POD  
**MICROPHONES:** Neumann TLM103, Sennheiser MD421  
**KEYBOARDS/SAMPLERS/MIDI:** Kurzweil K2600, Roland S-760 [3] with 1 GB drives for sample storage [2], JV-1080; Digidesign SampleCell II [5]; Soft SampleCell; Native Instruments Absynth, B4; Korg Wavestation SR, M3R; Yamaha RMX1, MOTU MIDI

Timepiece AV  
**DAW:** Digidesign Pro Tools Mix+, 1622, 862i20  
**COMPUTER:** Macintosh G4/733 MHz with 1 GB RAM, internal 60 GB hard drives [2], external 60 and 80 GB FireWire drives, external 18 GB Seagate Cheetah drives [2], Hitachi MC7515 19-inch video monitor, and SBS Technologies 13-slot PCI Expansion Unit  
**SOFTWARE:** MOTU Digital Performer 3.01, Digidesign Pro Tools 5.1  
**INSTRUMENTS:** Fender Stratocaster, G&L bass, Marc Campellone 6-string fretted and 5-string fretless basses.  
**STUDIO NOTES:** "Like all Americans," reveals Joel Goodman, "I have been deeply affected by the events of September 11th. My studio is located just 12 blocks north of the World Trade Center, and I happened to be there early that day, around 8:30 AM — so I was an eyewitness. I watched with horror what I thought was impossible.  
 "At the time, I was in the middle of composing music for a documentary called *American Standoff* directed by Kristi Jacobson and produced by two-time Oscar winner Barbara Kopple. After spending the next four days at home, I was anxious to get back to work, but Tribeca (the area where my studio is located) was closed off by the police, state troopers, and



The gear Joel Goodman grabbed when he was forced from his studio due to 9-11 made him look at his studio setup in a new way.

the Army. The only 'gear' I had at home was a grand piano, manuscript paper, and pencils. While this is sometimes a preferred method for creating, it wouldn't be sufficient if I wanted to make any serious headway on my current writing assignments. I needed to get my computer and some other gear from my studio and set it up at home.

"Prior to setting off for downtown Manhattan, I determined exactly what I would need. The bare essentials were my Mac G4, expansion chassis with Pro Tools and SampleCell cards, hard drives,

but I needed an interface with at least eight analog inputs, preferably more. On my way back from the studio — with all the gear in the car — I stopped at a Sam Ash Music store and purchased a Digidesign 1622 interface. (I had a friend stay in my car to watch the gear!) This interface has 16 analog inputs plus digital I/O, so I knew I'd be covered.

"For the next week, I composed at home, surprised at how much I could accomplish with such a streamlined setup: no mixer other than the one in Digital Performer, and no outboard effects other

two Roland S-760's, Roland JV-1080, and Korg Wavestation SR.

"My goal was to get all of the gear to fit into a 16-space rack but I was missing the key component: I needed a mixing console. My answer to this problem was to bring everything into the computer and use Digital Performer to route all the audio, thereby eliminating the need for my Yamaha 02R. At the time I had an ADAT Bridge as my Pro Tools interface,

than my TDM plug-ins. I suppose if I was mixing more I wouldn't have liked it as much, but for composing it was great. I was always working with picture, and it was a pleasure to be able to effortlessly switch between the four films I had on the internal 60 GB hard drives. Finally, I was now sending my demos straight to the editor's Avid [video editing system] via my home cable modem.

"Later in the week, as I was packing up to bring everything back to my studio, it finally dawned on me that this minimalist setup I assembled was actually the way I should be working from now on. After some careful planning and conferencing with a few friends, I decided to take the 'virtual' plunge. My next stop was eBay, where I posted and sold my 02R, ADAT Bridge, a spare DAT machine, a DA-88, and my TC Finalizer — all great products that had been replaced by software or computer-related hardware.

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"I then commissioned Paul Vazquez (who had built my 02R workstation) to build three racks for me. One would be an 'iso' rack to hold the computer chassis, hard drives, and anything else that was noisy. The 'iso' rack is really just a standard wood-construction rack. In the front there is a glass door that really works well at reducing noise. The rear panel of the enclosure has an exhaust fan at the top and an intake fan at the bottom. I decided to start working without foam inside the rack, and so far I haven't felt the need to add the foam. Originally I thought I might mount the G4 using rack ears, but I ended up standing it upright with the various hard drives stacked alongside the computer. The other two racks hold my samplers and synths, DA-88, DAT, CD player, etc."

**EQUIPMENT NOTES:** "I wired the system using a Whirlwind 48-point, 1/4-inch analog patchbay, and a digital S/PDIF patchbay. I did a very thorough job on both patchbays so that I could route any signal anywhere I needed. Since I did

the wiring myself, it would be easy to troubleshoot in the event of a problem. That said, I haven't used the digital patchbay once since creating this setup, and I rarely use the analog bay. With good planning, you can set things up so you don't have to do a lot of patching. I don't have other clients coming in, and 90 percent of the time I'm writing music, not doing recording sessions. One of the nice things about the 1622 is that inputs 15 and 16 are on the front panel, providing very easy access.

"In addition to the three racks, I have a large desk that holds the Genelecs, computer and TV monitors, Kensington trackball, and the Mackie mixer. There's still room on the desk for writing music (a novel idea!), and mounted on a sliding draw below the desk is a Kurzweil 2600."



Some of the tools that Goodman describes as "the bare essentials."