



by Kyle Swenson

Studio Name: Black Rock Studios
Location: Santorini, Greece
Contact: www.blackrock-studios.com
Key Crew: Kostas Kalimeris (owner, pictured above), Nick Riris (engineer)
Latest Projects: Joe Bonamassa, Lauren Harris, Kevin Shirley
Console: Solid State Logic 9080 J Series with Ultimatum & Total Recall
Converters: Digidesign 192 I/O (4)
DAW: Pro Tools|HD 2 Accel; Apple Logic Studio 9, Mac Pro 8-Core with (2) 2.26GHz Quad-Core Intel Xeon "Nehalem" Processors and 6GB RAM
Mics: AKG C 12 VR, C 451 (3), D 112; Cascade Fat Head II (2), Vin-Jet Long Ribbon; DPA 4011 (2); Electro-Voice RE20 (2); Microtech Gefell 711; Neumann U 87 (2), KM 184 (2); Oktava MK-012 (2); Peluso 2247; Royer R-121; Sennheiser e602, e609, MD 421 (2), MD 441; Shure KSM44, SM57 (3), SM58 (4), SM7B
Preamps/DIs: Amek System 9098 DMA; Chandler TG2 EMI Edition; Neve 1073 (6), 1081 (2), 1083 (2)
Dynamics Processors: Anthony Demaria Labs ADL S/C/L 1500, Avalon AD2044, Empirical Labs EL-8X (2), Focusrite RED 3, Manley ELOP
EQ: Manley Massive Passive Stereo Tube EQ; Neve 1073 (6), 1081 (2), 1084 (2)
Effects: Eventide H8000FW, Orville; Lexicon 960L, PCM 81; Yamaha SPX990
Plug-Ins/Software: AAS Modeling Collection; Antares Auto-Tune 4; Arturia V Collection; Audio Damage EFX Collection; Cakewalk Rapture, Dimension Pro; Celemony Melodyne; Cycling '74 Max 5; D16 Group; Focusrite d2, d3; GForce; IK Multimedia; iZotope; Koblo; LennarDigital; Line 6 Amp Farm; Luxonix Purity; McDSP Emerald Pack; Native Instruments Komplete 6; Novation; Ohm Force; PSP Audioware; Propellerhead Reason 4; reFX; Rob Papen; Sonalksis; Spectrasonics; Sugar Bytes; Toontrack; U-HE; Wave Arts; Waves Gold Bundle; XLN Audio
Instruments/Amps: Fender Telecaster Custom Shop '62 Reissue; Gallien-Krueger Backline 600; Gibson Les Paul Custom Black Beauty, Les Paul Standard, '82 SG Standard; Marshall Plexi; Mesa/Boogie Stiletto Trident; Pearl Master Series Trap Kit
Monitoring: Dynaudio BM 5A, Furman HDS-16 Headphone Monitor System, Genelec 1035B, KRK VXT6, Yamaha NS-10
Control Room: Damped front baffle wall; main monitors independently mounted on high mass, decoupled, vibration isolated plinths. Low frequency control as per membrane absorption balanced with mid frequency diffusion and strategically located high frequency absorption. Geometrically

designed to minimize early reflections at mix position.
Isolation Booths: Balanced response—even mixture of absorption and diffusion.
Power Conditioning: The studio is powered by a large-scale uninterrupted power supply (UPS), and there's a backup generator.
What were the inspiration and goals for building Black Rock as a residential recording studio?
 Kostas: I first had the idea over a decade ago and while I realized that the basic idea had the potential to be really unique, it actually took years of thought, investigating possible locations, and checking out the international and the Greek recording scenes before it evolved into what we have today. About three years ago I was still investigating possible locations on various Greek islands until I finally settled on Santorini as the perfect location. Great poets have sung the praises of Santorini for much of its 4,000-year history.
 Our goal was to develop an environment that embodies everything that an artist could desire to enhance their creativity and hopefully produce the best results when recording their music.
What kind of business plan was involved in putting it all together?
 However much thought and planning has gone into a project of this magnitude, and no matter how well prepared you think you are, with a venture of this scale and scope, there are always unforeseeable problems. We tried to take things one step at a time in an attempt to make sure that we had considered even the minutest details.
 We decided to adopt the very traditional architecture of the region, and architect Roger D'Arcy of Recording Architecture designed the studio space with that in mind.
What was the process of choosing the gear you wanted to feature in the studio? How did you make those decisions?
 Choosing gear is obviously difficult, especially when a budget is in place, so we drew on our own years of working experience and also visited various world-class studios in Europe. We chose equipment that we believe to be standard in the industry while also offering the kind of versatility that enables various types of recording and production.
Is there a particular piece of gear in the studio that you couldn't do without?
 Neve Pre/EQs, Manley Massive Passive EQ, SSL Stereo Bus Compressor, and the couches on the terrace where we watch the sunset while drinking Black Rock house wine after an awesome recording session! 🍷

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