

Larry Crane's Guided Tour of Jackpot! Studios

By Bruce Borgerson

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Larry Crane is best known as the editor of Tape Op, the upstart recording publication that has attracted a fast-growing legion of readers by emphasizing creativity and daring to tell it like it is. Around the Northwest, Larry is also known as one of the hottest engineers on the indie rock scene. His credits include Sleater-Kinney, Elliott Smith, the Go-Betweens and Quasi, among others.



Crane occasionally works at more upscale facilities, but he keeps his main base of operations at his own Jackpot! Studio in southeast Portland, Oregon. Though, shall we say, "modest" in appearance on the outside (and far from posh on the inside), Jackpot! has nevertheless gained a reputation as the recording hot spot in the Northwest for alternative/indie rock bands.

PSW Recording Section editor Bruce Borgerson took Crane's guided tour late in August.

What was in here before you built Jackpot?

It had been an office for a communications company, then somebody moved in and tried to make it a studio. They ran out of money. When we came in, we found a bed in the office and personal belongings. They had stopped paying rent, and got re-keyed. In what is now the control room they had put up a couple of rinky-dink walls, which we had to tear down and throw away. We put in this one new wall and the window.

So it's still nothing fancy. Cinder block walls on each side, solid drywall front and back, a pretty basic room.

Yeah, though it's deadened down a bit, using eggcrate foam and 1/4" plywood covered by burlap. It's trial and error acoustically in here.



Working class hero, working class neighborhood.

It still needs some more bass trapping, because it's too close to being a square room. I need to build some more traps, maybe some more diffusion behind the couch there. But I'm so used to it that it doesn't really faze [phase?] me—appropriate expression I guess! I'm so used to it that I don't notice it. I find it really easy for me to mix in here. After five years I've finally figured it out. And I've finally found speakers I like, the **Dynaudio** BM6as, and that really helps, too.

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