

Jukasa Media - A Crossroads for Six Nations

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support for the arts.

"I've got a couple of talented sons," he explains. "I know they have a future in the music business. Rather than having to travel to Toronto or all over the world to record, I decided to build a world class studio here."

He makes it clear that even if his own sons are what prompted his move, it is not only for them he decided to invest the \$4 million it took to build the facility.

"I know there is a lot of musical talent here. A lot of people I know who work for some of my various businesses are writing and recording music in their garages and basements. I just want to bring that out in people."

Although the studio boasts some of the best equipment money can buy, Hill is determined to keep the price of using it as affordable as possible, especially for Aboriginal artists.

"It's a shame when money has to hold people back from a career in music," he says.

The new studio engineer Sean Gugula feels like he has died and gone to heaven.

"I was working at a studio in Whitby when my name came up, I guess," he says. "Apparently some people I had worked with liked what I did and suggested me for the job. This is a great opportunity for me to work with such great gear," he says.

The studio was designed and built by Rec-Tech, a professional studio construction and consultation company which specializes in custom building top flight recording studios.

"This place has everything you could want," says Gugula.

Along with the main studio and control room, Jukasa also boasts a studio B for smaller budget projects and demos, as well as a few songwriter's rooms with some basic recording equipment.

While not working, artists can lounge about in the large rec room equipped with a huge plasma TV and theatre sound system.

There are also apartments that artists can call home while



Six Nations rocker Derek Miller was strutting like a peacock at the official opening of Jukasa Studios. He, along with principal owner Kenny Hill, Arbor Records founder Brandon Freisen, and world famous guitarist Stevie Salas have been working on this vision for quite some time. Four-million dollars and months of work later, the dream has become a reality. (Photo by Jim Windle)



Arbor Record representative Shannon Martin and studio manager Rich Hunter welcome guests and potential clients at Friday evenings grand opening of Jukasa Media. (Jim Windle)

The name of the studio itself is especially dear to Hill.

"This family has been through a lot of tragedy over the past year," says Hill. "I lost three of my nieces in car accidents and to honour them, we called the studio 'Jukasa' Media. That represents the first two letters in each of their names. Ju is for Justine, Ka - is for Karen, and Sa - is for Sarah."

The parents of the three young women were present and helped in the ribbon cutting.

"It really touches our hearts that they are here tonight," said Hill. "Their memory is still with us and will live on through the studio."

recording there.

Studio manager Rich Hunter brings a lot of tools to the table as well having managed the Ottawa Jazz Festival and managed the ImagiNative Film and Media Arts Festival in Toronto for the past four years.

"When they first brought me in here I was totally blown away," he says. "There will also be a video and television center coming online in a few weeks as well. The message today is, we are open for business."

Arbor Records marketing and distribution Director is Shannon Martin.

"Arbor Records started about 12 years ago in Winnipeg," says Martin. "This is

actually an expansion. This is very exciting for an independent label."

Arbor presently has 160 releases, a distribution agreement through EMI, and dozens of signed artists which they hope to build on with more Six Nations and area artists.

Among the local Chiefs and politicians, other notables on hand for the official launch of Jukasa was Stevie Salas, one of the top guitarists in the world today who has played live or recorded with the likes of Mick Jagger, Rod Stewart, Boatsy Collins, George Clinton, Justin Timberlake, and many others.

Salas has been instrumental in turning Hill's dream into a

reality.

"I am here today to support the launch of this studio, Native music, and Ken Hill," said Salas. "He has been a good friend to me and to all Native people."

In fact, it was Salas that found the centre piece of the new studio, a 72 Channel mixing console that once graced Studio #3 at Abbey Road Studios in London, England.

"I was producing a record in Costa Rica," Salas told Tekawennake, "There was an unfinished studio there. The owner had gone through a divorce and didn't have the money to finish it. Sitting in a back room, in seven cases, was the sound board from Ab-

bey Road Studio #3. People like Madonna and McCartney have recorded huge hits on that very piece of equipment. He was selling it and I called Kenny and told him about it."

Salas and Hill had met earlier when Hill told him about his vision for the Jukasa Studio.

"He said 'OK Stevie, go and buy it'. So I did and had it shipped here," he says.

Although the 72 channel state-of-the-art console

had been sitting in crates for about three years, the hermetically sealed crates were never opened and the board had received a complete overhaul before it was sent from England to Costa Rica.

"This thing is still under warranty. It was a fantastic find," he says.

After so many years in the industry, Salas has been refocusing his life and his career lately on "Indian Country", helping new Aboriginal artists

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