Book Review of *Sound Recording Advice*

General Information:

Title:	***Sound Recording Advice***
Subtitle:	An instruction and reference manual that demystifies the home recording studio experience.
Author:	John J. Volanski
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	P.O. Box 90471
	San Diego, CA 92169
Wholesaler:	Baker & Taylor
ISBN:	0-9721383-0-7
LCCN:	2002107138
Pub Date:	October 2002
Price:	$19.95
Page Count:	336 pages
Trim Size:	6 x 9
Binding:	Soft cover, perfect
Illustrated:	39 pictures and diagrams
Backmatter:	Index

This author, relying on his technical background and personal experience, effectively explains the fairly complicated subject of audio engineering in terms easily understood by the masses and applies it to home recording studios. The text reads very easily in an informal, smooth style. Volanski assumes that the reader could be a neophyte in home recording, so he starts right at the very beginning and defines the basics. For example, he defines a home recording studio as

> "A dedicated space within your home where you can capture the performances of multiple instruments or vocalists (either all of them simultaneously or individually at discrete instances in time) to some sort of recording medium, manipulate the live or recorded sound in some fashion in either the time domain or the frequency domain, combine them together in some relative fashion to achieve a desired effect, and then transfer the final result to some other medium for later playback."

Then he dissects that complicated sentence phrase-by-phrase and explains each segment of it in simple terms, giving the reader a clear overview of how a home recording studio can be used to produce quality audio recordings. This is an excellent way to start the text for a deep subject such as home studio recording.

This book appears to be mainly targeted at the home recording newbie who wants to establish a home recording studio to capture his or her own musical recordings or the recordings of friends and family. However, the book is also very useful for those who already have some recording experience, but who want to expand their home studio. The age of the reader can range from the mid teenage years on up. The author assumes the reader has no technical training at all in audio engineering, acoustics, computers, tape recorders, or any other studio-related equipment. The book goes on to cover such basics as the fundamental elements of a home studio, the recording formats used in home studios, power and grounding, how to connect equipment together, how to

monitor the sound, how and where to buy new or used equipment, acoustics and wall treatments in the studio, furniture in the studio, how to determine the best way to set up the studio equipment, how to record many different types of instruments, how to bounce, mix and master audio tracks, and how to perform testing and troubleshooting. These are the types of subjects you would expect a book of this nature to cover. The book also describes all of the types of equipment used in the studio and lists most all of the reasonably priced models available now on the market with approximate street prices. Volanski gives complete recommended home studio systems for budgets of $500, $1000, $1500, $2000 and $5000 using new equipment available today.

Even though all the basics are covered, the text also has information that the mid-level home recording enthusiast will find interesting and useful. Unique subject matter covered includes how to establish a solid electrical ground in the home studio, 10 pages on removing audible noise (which is apparently the bane of home studio recording), how to build a tape deck remote controller, how to add a power switch or a headphone jack to a piece of equipment, how to build a set of linear master faders, how to build a simple passive audio mixer for $5, how to handle home studio security and insurance, how to replace battery-backed RAM batteries, how to successfully burn CD-R or CD-RW disks, and a plethora of other excellent tips to solve various problems or save time in the home studio.

Overall, the author has done a comprehensive job of covering most of the issues that will arise during the set up and operation of a typical home recording studio.

The author appears to be well qualified to write a book of this nature. He is an electrical engineer with a background in audio engineering. He has operated his own home recording studio for over 20 years. He mentions that in his professional electrical engineering career he has been involved in the development of various electrical systems that use both audio and video, including cockpit simulators, virtual reality systems, and DVDRAM digital video recorders, winning a couple of industry product awards and a patent along the way. The author has written several other articles for magazines such as *Electronic Musician*, *Avionics*, and *AfterTouch*.

Review by Adolph Tree, Firesign Press.