

# RADIOWORLD

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## Spectacular Radio Studios 2023

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WORLD  
EBOOK



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# RADIOWORLD

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# Spectacular Radio Studios 2023

What's more fun than looking through photos of cool new studios?



Paul McLane  
Editor in Chief

**T**his special double-size ebook features 55 pages of newly built facilities that serve radio and audio companies.

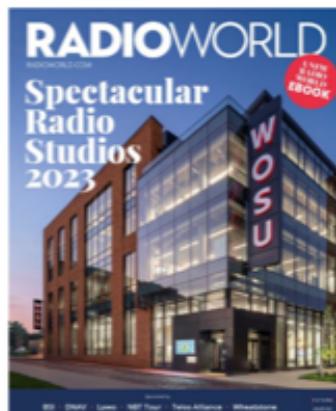
Here you'll find commercial and noncommercial stations, large companies and small ones, major markets and teeny communities, even Spotify in Los Angeles and a low-power FM in Kentucky.

Which broadcasters have been upgrading or launching facilities? What makes these projects unique? Who led the work? What are the major hardware or software systems chosen? How do the rooms look inside?

Have fun poring over the pix. Maybe you'll notice how the designers used light, color and texture to create an environment. Or you'll pick up on a clever detail of studio cabinetry, discover a creative sightline or appreciate the placement of a computer monitor.

This ebook was prompted by the success of one we published a year ago. It turned out to be Radio World's most-read ebook ever. (You can [still read it here](#).) Based on that interest, we hope to bring you this special coverage every year.

Do you have a project we should know about? Email me at [radioworld@futurenet.com](mailto:radioworld@futurenet.com).



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WOSU Public Media  
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# Old house, new digs for Radio Kingston

WKNY now broadcasts from this beautiful state-of-the-art broadcast facility

Right  
Exterior and first-  
floor entrance.



Photo by Joseph Lenczewski, Lenczewski Studios Photography

**T**he Bonesteel House is an octagonal structure in downtown Kingston, N.Y., built as a residence in 1855 and later turned to commercial use. But it recently became the home of new studios and offices of [Radio Kingston Corp.](#)

WKNY, heard at 1490 AM and via a translator at 107.9 FM, opened its doors in 2021, having moved from a longtime location across the street.

WKNY went on the air in 1939 and was acquired by Radio Kingston Corp. in 2017. Today it airs eclectic music and

talk shows in English and Spanish, supported by the [NoVo Foundation](#), which seeks “initiatives that promote a holistic, interconnected and healing vision for humanity.”

The station carries approximately 50 community-based shows, one of which is hosted by Warren Lawrence, who will celebrate 50 years at WKNY in March.

Its executive director is Jimmy Buff and the technical director is Kale Kaposhilin. Radio Kingston hired WSDG (Walters-Storyk Design Group) to lead this project and its audio/video and energy systems.

The local general contractor was Equinox Construction.

**“The building had excellent bones, but its unusual eight-sided configuration and center-floor fireplace/chimney presented a considerable challenge to space optimization.”**

# Spectacular Radio Studios 2023



**Left**  
The talk studio provides lots of light and visual interaction with the community.

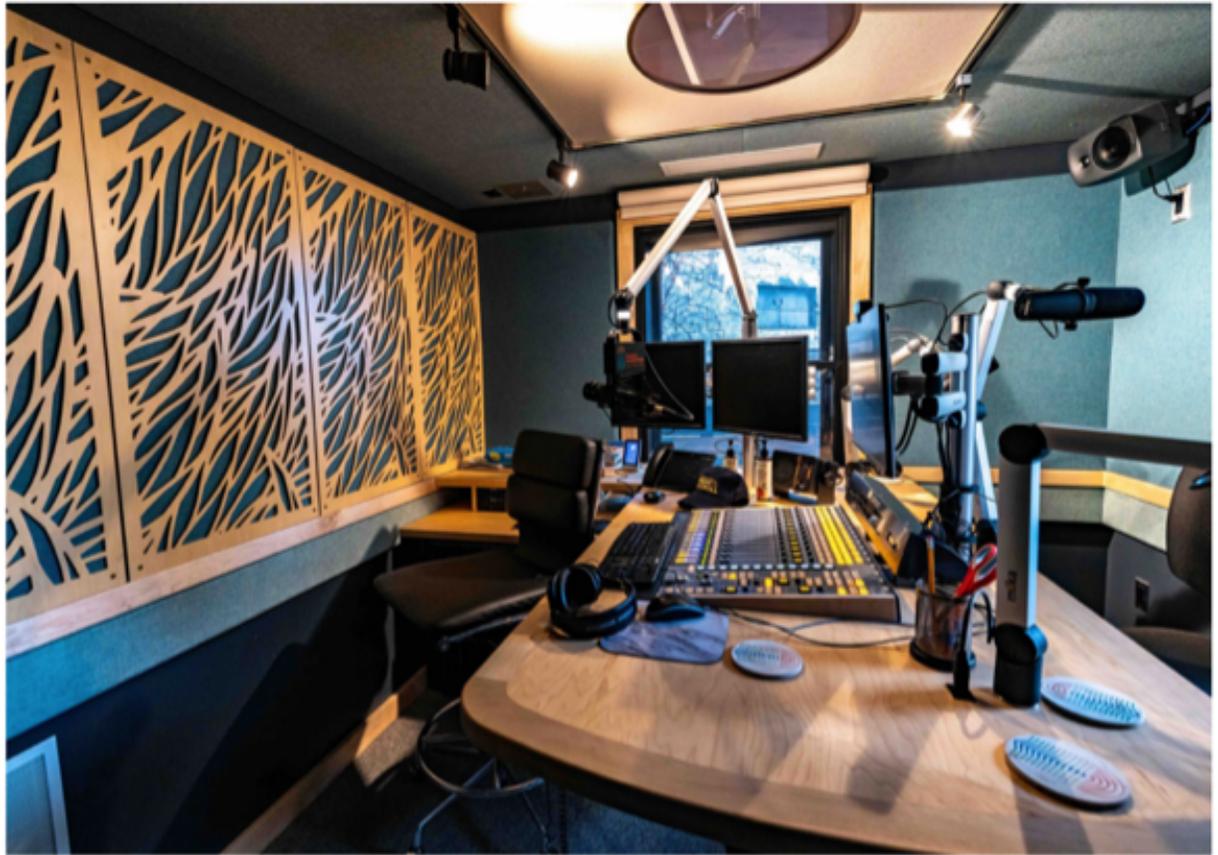
**Bottom left**  
Lounge area.

**Bottom right**  
The first-floor layout. The second floor includes offices, conference room and kitchen.



# Spectacular Radio Studios 2023

**Right**  
Production room.



Radio engineering expertise was provided by Data Wave LLC, with SAS support and design by Nick Straka and Daniel Hyatt of DNAV.

The station's Director of Finance & Administration Kristen Thorne is also an interior designer and contributed to the decisions about color trim, flooring and other elements.

Buff said the building's large windows overlooking

Kingston's Broadway were a crucial draw. "We imagined people seeing us and us seeing them while we made radio for our city, and it was quickly apparent that concept had been turned into reality when we started working in the new studios."

WSDG Partner and Project Manager Matthew Ballos said the project took an "adapt and reuse" approach to the two-story octagon.

"The building had excellent bones, but its unusual eight-sided configuration and center-floor fireplace/chimney presented a considerable challenge to space optimization." Removing the chimney provided space to house a 250-square-foot on-air/live studio, smaller talk studio with control room, and a 100-square-foot production room.

"We also added a third floor-to-ceiling window and replaced all that glass with double-paned soundproof material," Ballos said.

The project includes a rooftop solar panel installation by SunCommon, backed by three Tesla Powerwall batteries and linked to an off-site community solar farm as well as the local power grid. Buff said this infrastructure proved itself in an ice storm last winter that knocked out power in much of Ulster County.

"We remained on-air throughout the blackout and helped local officials communicate important information to our neighbors here in Kingston." 

**Below**  
View from the control room into the talk studio.





# Inside Spotify at Mateo Studios

L.A. campus features a world-class studio, podcast bays, performance hall and Dolby Atmos mixing

# W

*e conclude this ebook with a different kind of studio profile, courtesy of our colleagues at Mix.*

The new recording studio at the “Spotify At Mateo” campus in downtown Los Angeles, jam-packed

with an inspiring collection of vintage and new instruments and production equipment, is all about the vibe. “We wanted to build the un-corporate studio,” says Chris D’Angelo, head of production and studio facilities.

The provenance of the instruments alone is likely to motivate any musician to do great work. A few examples: A 1935 Rickenbacker A-22 “Frying Pan” lap steel, the first commercially available electric guitar; a rare 1969 red top Wurlitzer 200 electric piano; a 1960s Steinway upright piano used by Norah Jones; SoCal punk rock band Social Distortion’s pinstriped Hammond B3 organ; Peter Hook’s bass and amp rig from his last tour before quitting New Order.

“Spotify loves to bring creators together and give them the tools that they need to help them be the best that they can be,” adds D’Angelo, former head of YouTube’s studios worldwide and a New Order fan. “Yes, you’re coming into an office, but we wanted it to be immediately obvious that a lot of thought went into this by the best people in the industry — and we knew we wanted it to be one of the best facilities in the world.”

You may know Spotify, headquartered in Sweden, as a

**Writer**  
Steve  
Harvey

Senior content  
producer, Mix

**Left**  
Live room.

**Bottom left**  
The site housed the Union Oil Company of California’s first service center in 1913. Interior design elements recall this history.

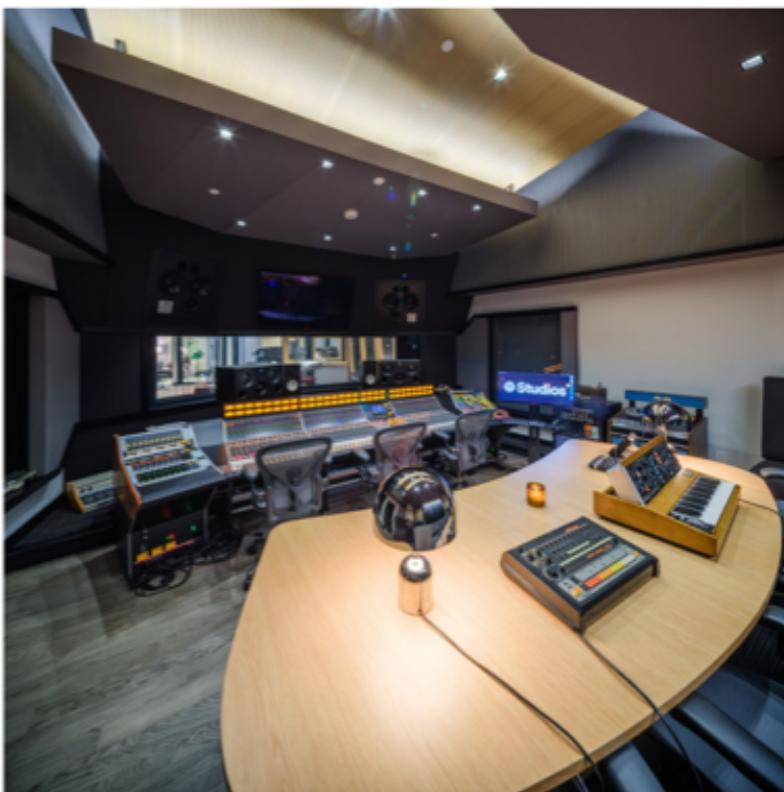
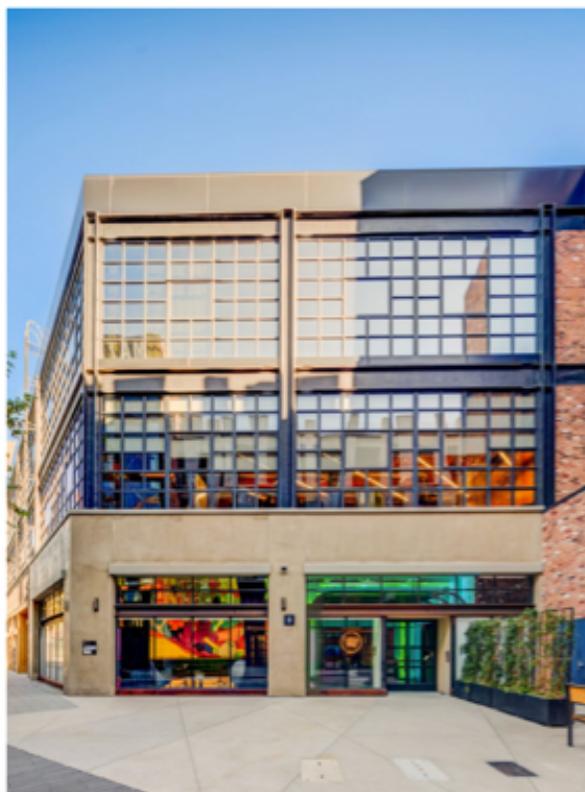
**Bottom right**  
Studio B uses an Avid S4 24-fader Control Surface and Dolby Atmos mix capability, suitable for immersive audio production. It shares an Echo Chamber with its neighbor, Studio A.

global music streaming service, but it has been steadily morphing into an audio — and video — media company, acquiring podcast, audiobook and other businesses left and right. By the end of 2021, Spotify had reportedly become the biggest U.S. podcast platform, pushing Apple into second place. The company also creates music content, including Spotify Singles sessions, where artists re-record an original song, plus a cover. Some of the artists who have come through the new facility since it opened in December 2021 include Finneas, Japanese Breakfast, Bob Moses, Arooj Aftab and Snail Mail.

“The goal was to build something that was new, obviously, but with an old soul,” says William Garrett, senior music producer and studio development lead, adding that the studio team, which also includes audio engineer Jack Mason, an alumnus of New York’s MSR Studios, took inspiration from studios like Abbey Road, Capitol and EastWest/United Western. “But we didn’t want to copy them. We wanted to be our own thing.” A veteran producer, engineer and studio owner, Garrett previously helmed Spotify’s now-shuttered W. 18th Street studios in Manhattan.

## World-class studio

Studio A is the jewel in the crown on the campus, an approximately 150,000-square-foot collection of buildings in L.A.’s Arts District. In addition to offices for hundreds of employees, there are 18 podcast studios collectively known



Spotify photos by Thomas McGovern



**Above**  
Studio A was designed with a classic feel. Its analog workflow is centered around a Rupert Neve Designs Sheldford 5088 console.

as Pod City, a 600-capacity indoor live performance space, a Dolby Atmos screening room, a video insert stage with control and editing facilities, and listening rooms.

The campus was designed in partnership with design firm RIOS, prime system integration by ASG, music studio integration by ProCraft and podcast system design & integration by Sound, Production & Lighting.

Spotify chose WSDG Walters-Storyk Design Group for studio design and acoustics. It fashioned a recording studio that was neither a sterile, corporate environment nor a carbon copy of a classic facility.

WSDG designed the 18th Street studios as well as a Brooklyn podcast complex for Gimlet, which Spotify acquired in 2019. The latter buildout was guided by Gimlet's Austin Thompson, once of Chicago Recording Company and now overseeing Spotify's podcast facilities worldwide as head of studio technology.

"We really did the work — in choosing the equipment, doing the construction the way it needed to be, and getting the materials that had to be there," says Joshua Morris, COO and partner at WSDG. "[We were] composing the rooms and picking finishes and developing the volumes so that they can begin to make a new life and a new legacy."

The acoustic-design plans were largely unimpeded by the building's structure, Morris said, and made the most of substantial ceiling heights and room volumes. Laid out along a hallway leading from the event hall, the music production facilities include Studio A's 450-square-foot control room and 900-square-foot tracking space, plus two iso booths. Next door, Studio B is a 226-square-foot Dolby

Atmos-equipped mix room with two small booths.

In A's control room, Garrett says, "Sightlines into the iso booths were super important to us from a production standpoint. Also, the choice of a large analog console was very specific because we wanted the sonics and the feel of that in the room."

### Analog-digital production

A 48-channel Rupert Neve Designs 5088 Sheldford analog console with swept 19-inch bays at either end, one housing the patchbay, dominates the control room. ATC SCM200ASL main monitors are positioned above a broad expanse of studio glass, offering an unobstructed view of the live room and booths. A pair of midfield ATC SCM45As are at meter-bridge height. The credenza is full of outboard gear, from API to UREI, and a 3M M79 half-inch, two-track tape machine from Malibu's Indigo Ranch sits to one side.

The mic collection offers a deep bench. "We have a beautiful vintage [AKG] C24, some vintage [Neumann] KM 84s and 87s, then we mix it up with Soyuz mics for surround capture, some sE mics and a lot of Shure mics," Garrett said. A Neumann U67 from Clinton Recording in Manhattan has pride of place: "It just lives in the vocal booth."

Studio B was planned as a smaller session, overdub and post-production room that features a digital workflow. "We also wanted to future-proof the room for multiple emerging technologies for audio and video," Garrett said. Studio B opened with an Avid S4 24-channel worksurface and a 7.1.4 Dolby Atmos monitor setup of ATC SCM150ASL



and SCM45A models, PMC TwoTwo5, TwoTwo6 and Wafer2 speakers, and ATC Pro Studio Sub 12s.

Sandwiched between Studios A and B is an echo chamber. "It started in a conversation about what would be exciting and unique for us to have," Garrett says. "Once built, we dropped a vintage Altec 604 in there in a new cabinet. We have a binaural head, a pair of DPA 4011s plus a pair of DIY RE RM-5 ribbons, and, man, it sounds incredible." A vintage EMT 140 plate, AKG BX 20 spring and various digital reverbs are available.

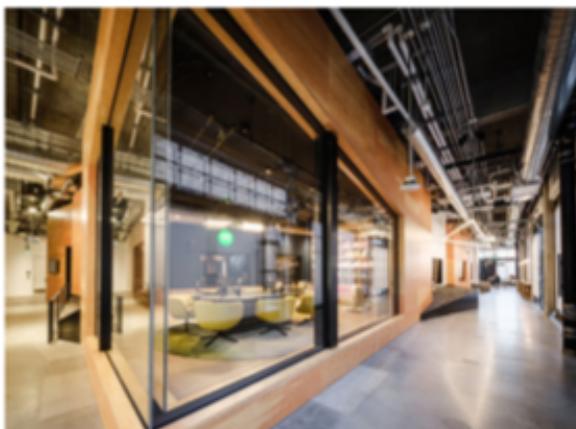
The event hall is tied into Studio A to support live content production. In fact, all the rooms are interconnected for maximum flexibility.

## The Gimlet model

There was a core requirement for the assorted podcast studios: "We wanted them to be built on the same technology and with the same acoustic principles" as Gimlet's facility, D'Angelo says. "It was a conscious effort to make it super-easy so that artists and creators could go into the room and only have to worry about the conversation and stay focused in the moment."

WSDG's Morris chimes in: "There's a lot more to it than just going into a room, talking and pressing Record. To make it easy to use, to give parity between rooms, that's difficult, not only technologically, but also acoustically. During this project, we had these different types and styles of rooms that we couldn't treat the same, so there was a little bit of a learning curve for us."

D'Angelo added: "What I loved about what Gimlet



**Above**  
Screening room.

**Left**  
Podcast recording  
studio.

had done is the technology stack," with Dante networking and one-button operation enabled through customized interfaces and behind-the-scenes DSP and routing. Standardized gear includes Neumann BCM 705 microphones and KH Series speakers alongside a custom headphone system. "You get a sub-one-millisecond stream of your own audio into the headphones and a sub-four-millisecond stream of your mix-minus, so that you're not hearing a slight delay in your head.

"It's very important to us that they all work exactly in the same fashion, to sound the same, work the same, and be built off the same technology and principles," D'Angelo sums up. "Gimlet built a fantastic system that we wanted to improve on, so we call this our G2.0 system." 🎧