

GENELEC®

CASE STUDY

**A Universal Solution
for Dolby Atmos
Music**

GENELEC HELPS FORBES
STREET STUDIOS BECOME
THE GO-TO ATMOS MIXING
DESTINATION IN AUSTRALIA

Nick Rowse, Engineer at Forbes Street Studios





IMMERSIVE AUDIO FACILITY
CREATES NEW OPPORTUNITIES FOR
SYDNEY STUDIO



Ever since Amazon and Apple announced support for spatial audio on their music-streaming services, immersive audio (also known as 3D or 360° audio) has become a much more commercially attractive proposition. Artists in every genre are now embracing the medium, giving studios more reasons to look at investing in the technology. [Forbes Street Studios](#) in Sydney's Woolloomooloo recently took the plunge and chose to join the movement,

creating an immersive mixing environment in its main studio – complete with Genelec monitors.

“The studio is owned by Universal Music, which worked with Dolby from the outset to create the Dolby Atmos Music format and was the earliest company to begin mixing music across all genres and catalogues in the format,” explains Studio Manager Anthony Garvin. “Hopefully it’s just a matter of time before every artist wants to

” IT’S A BIG WEIGHT OFF YOUR SHOULDERS TO KNOW THAT THE MONITORING HAS YOUR BACK.

mix their music in Atmos.”

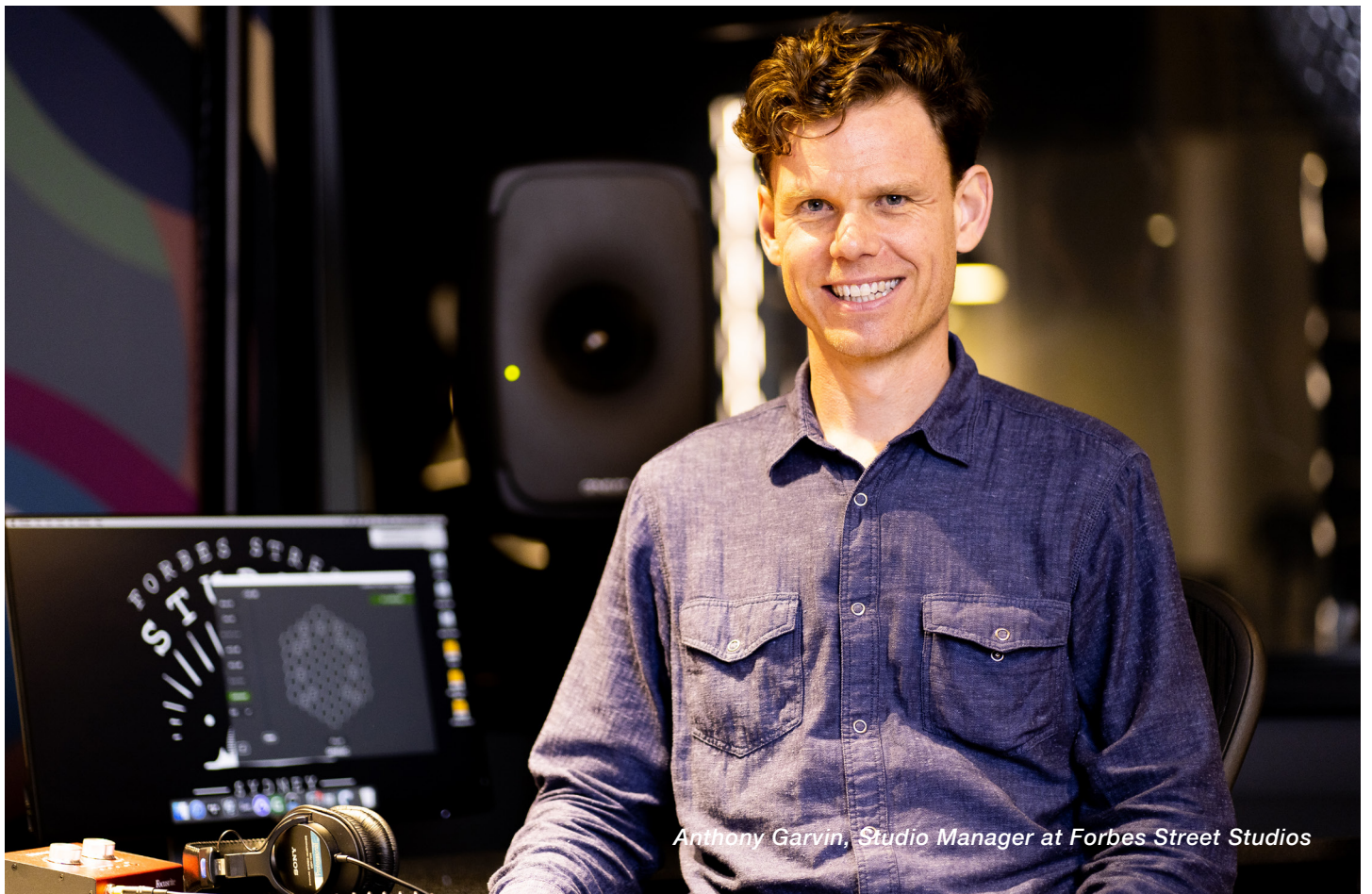
To create the Dolby Atmos space, the Forbes Street team called in [Sound Spaces](#) as the acoustic consultant and [Sounds Easy](#) to supply the equipment, working closely with local Genelec distributor [Studio Connections](#). When it came to selecting the monitors for the room, Genelec readily provided the answer.

“We had many pairs of Genelecs in the studio already,” says Garvin. “They’re one of the few brands that all our producers and engineers generally agree on, and of those, certainly the best for multichannel configurations.”

With the brand chosen, it was the Atmos specifications that led to the selection of the thirteen [8351](#) three-way coaxial monitors and 7382 subwoofer that combine to form the 9.1.4

system. “I knew the ‘sound’ of the 8351 monitors, and they were the smallest for our room that would meet Dolby’s SPL requirements,” notes Garvin. “Similarly, the [7382](#) was literally the smallest sub to meet Dolby’s SPL requirements for the room. And if you’ve seen the 7382, that’s an extremely crazy thought, it’s huge! But no regrets, it happily got us to where we wanted to go.”

The decision to use the same model of studio monitors for all of the channels, aside from the sub, was one based on trying to make the sound of the space as ‘true’ as possible. “Philosophically, our acoustics consultant Mike Fronzek and I believed that for musical elements to be mixed in a truly immersive manner, then all the monitors should match, to paint the best picture of what the balance actually sounds like,” reasons Garvin. “If a thick pad, for example, is pushed towards the



Anthony Garvin, Studio Manager at Forbes Street Studios

” I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW WELL THINGS TRANSLATE, IT'S QUITE REMARKABLE.



Charlotte Adelle, Engineer at Forbes Street Studios

back, then on smaller loudspeakers that will thin out – when in reality, it doesn't in the mix. And if you look at a Sonos Atmos playback system, the loudspeakers in the rear are as tonally capable as the Arc in the front; so why would you want your mix system to play tricks on your ears?"

The monitoring system was installed by a combination of Garvin and Nick Rowse at the studio, with the support of Fronzek for monitor positioning and mounting, as well as Matt Jones from Sounds Easy and Dolby's Bruce Emery for calibration. The system was initially calibrated using Genelec's [GLM 4](#) software and the value of GLM's loudspeaker management has been seen with its continued daily use at Forbes Street. "We are using GLM in quite a simple but extremely

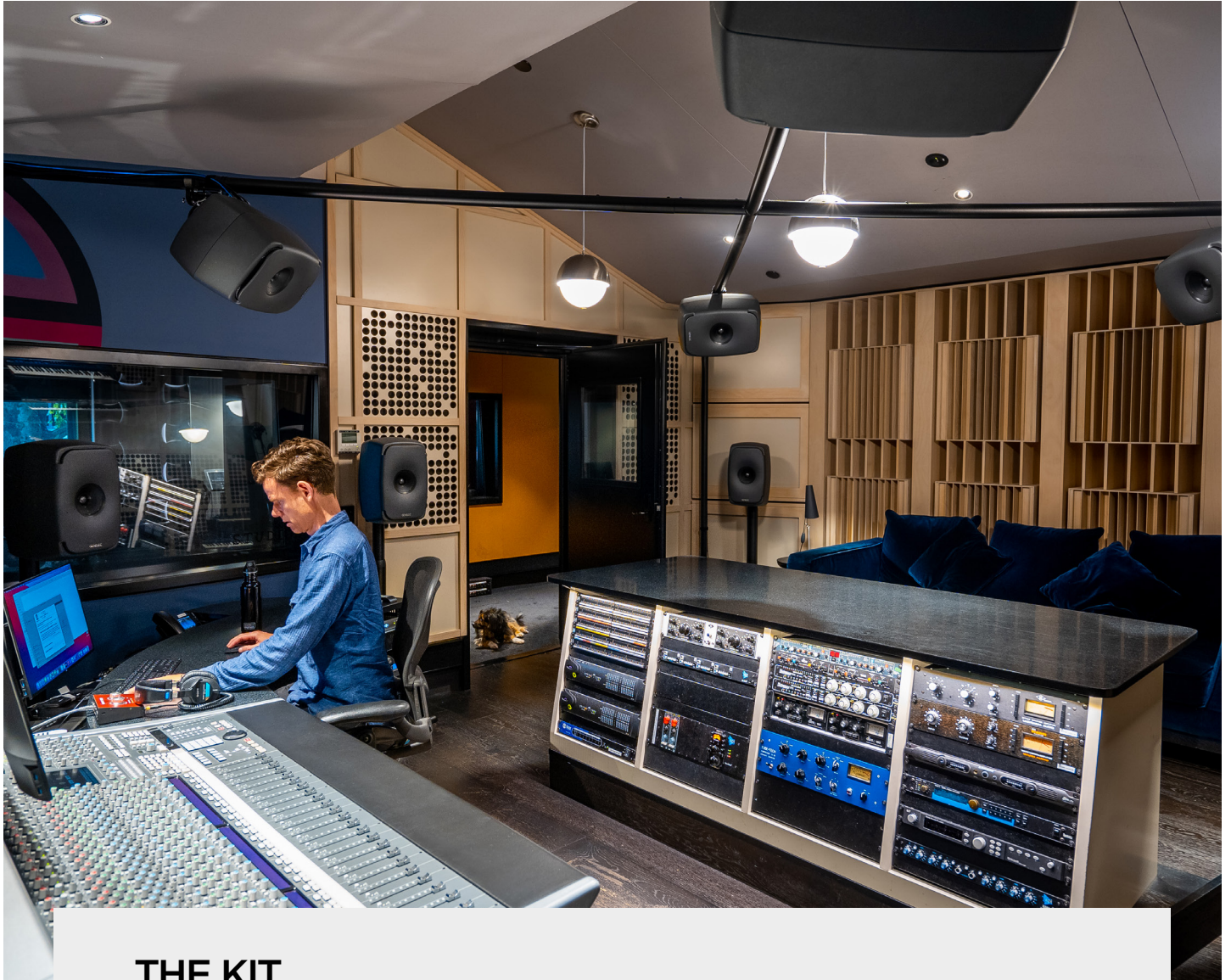
helpful way," says Garvin. "It boots the monitors up for us when we turn our computer on and turns them off when we shut down. Plus, it's extremely helpful for troubleshooting and avoids having to get around the back of the monitors to change a setting!"

With the Atmos mixing facility configured and open, Forbes Street has seen a steady flow of immersive work. "We've had projects for BENEE, Hilltop Hoods, Vera Blue, Lee Kernaghan, Havana Brown, Meg Mac and Dragon, plus a couple of ads/trailers," reports Garvin. "We also helped INXS with playbacks of 'Kick' and 'The Very Best Of' albums. Giles Martin mixed them from Abbey Road, whilst sending us progress mixes for the band to listen to in Sydney."

The work that is now coming through the doors is certainly justifying the investment, but just as importantly, the new space has proved to be a hit with Forbes Street's engineers. "It's been really impressive," says Callum Howell, one of Forbes Street's busiest spatial mixers. "I can't believe how well things translate from our system onto other playback mediums, it's quite remarkable. It's a big weight off your

shoulders to know that the monitoring has your back when you're working on a new system in a new format."

"It's simply wonderful hearing new and old songs mixed in spatial in the room," concludes Garvin. "It really changes my appreciation and insight into a song."



THE KIT

- 13 x 8351B
- 1 x 7382A
- 1 x GLM 4 Software

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