

Column by Renzo van Riemsdijk (Masterenzo):

The importance of a great mix

“It all starts with a good mix, preferably a perfect one.”

To my recollection I've mentioned this before but it's the whole truth and nothing but that whole truth.

So a mix should sound great, causing the end product -the master- to sound equally great. Even more so, I dare to state that the less knobs I'd have to turn, the better the master tends to sound. A good mix doesn't need a whole lot of (unnecessary) corrections.

It sounds pretty simple, a good mix. Yet, the simple part depends on some critical factors. To name a few:

Experience: experience cannot be bought. Experience is probably the most important of all factors. To be fully aware and in control of the tone, ambience and sound of a recording. For a trained mixing professional these are pretty obvious subjects. I've done some mixing once. Those so called “pretty obvious subjects” turned out to be not so obvious and simple. So many choices and possibilities. My ears and mind started dazzling and soon I decided to go easy on myself with working on just two channels: mastering.

But an experienced and trained ear is priceless for both mixing as mastering engineers.

Monitoring: without a decent monitoring system your precious trained and experienced ears are useless. Good monitoring (your speakers and the room acoustics) makes it possible to translate your mix choices and decisions into that so desired result: a good mix, preferably a perfect one. Good monitoring is essential for both mixing as mastering engineers. Good monitoring establishes that what we all want to achieve with music: connection. Connection towards the outside world of listeners to your music.

The final judgements regarding sound and tone of a recording take place in an environment of utmost perfection in monitoring and connection: the mastering studio.

A great mix, it doesn't come easy. Let's not forget to mention things like good playing by some good musicians or let alone a great song!

Without those pretty essential ingredients you can turn and twist all knobs in the world but the real beauty only shows when all of those musical factors are taken into serious consideration.

On Monday September 30, 2019 at 7:30 pm a “Meet The Pro” session will be held in the studios of Okapi Recordings here in Rotterdam. The session, organized by Dutch music platform Popunie is moderated by musician and engineer Budy Mokoginta.

Rogier Hemmes of Okapi Recordings and I will join forces to share our knowledge and experience in recording, mixing and mastering with the audience.

The main theme of this session is how to efficiently use studio time while recording and mixing. I will elaborate on the connection of a recording and mixing environment with the mastering studio.

More info can be found on the website of [Popunie](#). (it's all in Dutch)

Renzo

*Renzo (Masterenzo) is a Rotterdam based Dutch mastering engineer. He has worked for Gery Mendes (GMB), The Legendary Orchestra Of Love and the John F Klaver Band.
More info about mastering and about Masterenzo can be found on his [website](#).*