

## CASE STUDY: STUDIO DESIGN



Sanctuary's control room features Genelec 8030 nearfields and 1238DF midfields with a 7370A subwoofer, ensuring accurate monitoring for both mixing and tracking

*In a bustling area of Santacruz West, Mumbai, where the din of city traffic collides with fast paced lives, stands **The Sanctuary Audio Visual Studio**. It isn't just another control room with a live floor, but a rare hybrid, part high-end recording studio, part intimate performance venue, where a singer can cut a world-class vocal at noon and an acoustic trio can play to a close-knit audience by dusk. **PALM Expo Magazine** team brings you exclusive coverage of this haven's build.*

# THE SANCTUARY: WHERE SOUND FINDS SOUL IN THE HEART OF MUMBAI

Conceived by iconic playback singer, **Shreya Ghoshal** and realised under the technical guidance of her father, **Bishwajit Ghoshal**, Sanctuary was built as a place where creativity, comfort, and sonic excellence converge.

"We followed one singular brief from Shreya, that this has to be a space where artistes need to feel at peace," says Technical Advisor **Chinmay Harshe**, who played a central role in the studio's setup. The phrase "at peace" becomes the founding philosophy for The Sanctuary: it informs the acoustic decisions, the gear palette, the modular workflow, even the ambience and hospitality. This is a studio designed to lower the shoulders as much as it elevates the sound.

### Designing for Duality

The romance of a dual-purpose room often shatters on first contact with physics. Performance spaces thrive on a sense of openness and air; recording environments demand precision and control. Getting both in one footprint is a genuine challenge.

"The biggest challenge was creating a space that could seamlessly serve two very different functions," Harshe elaborates. "A studio that needed precise and controlled acoustics, and a performance space that needed space. The challenge was to ensure that both the areas could be used for two separate things if need be."

The solution at The Sanctuary is neither a compromise nor a collage. It's

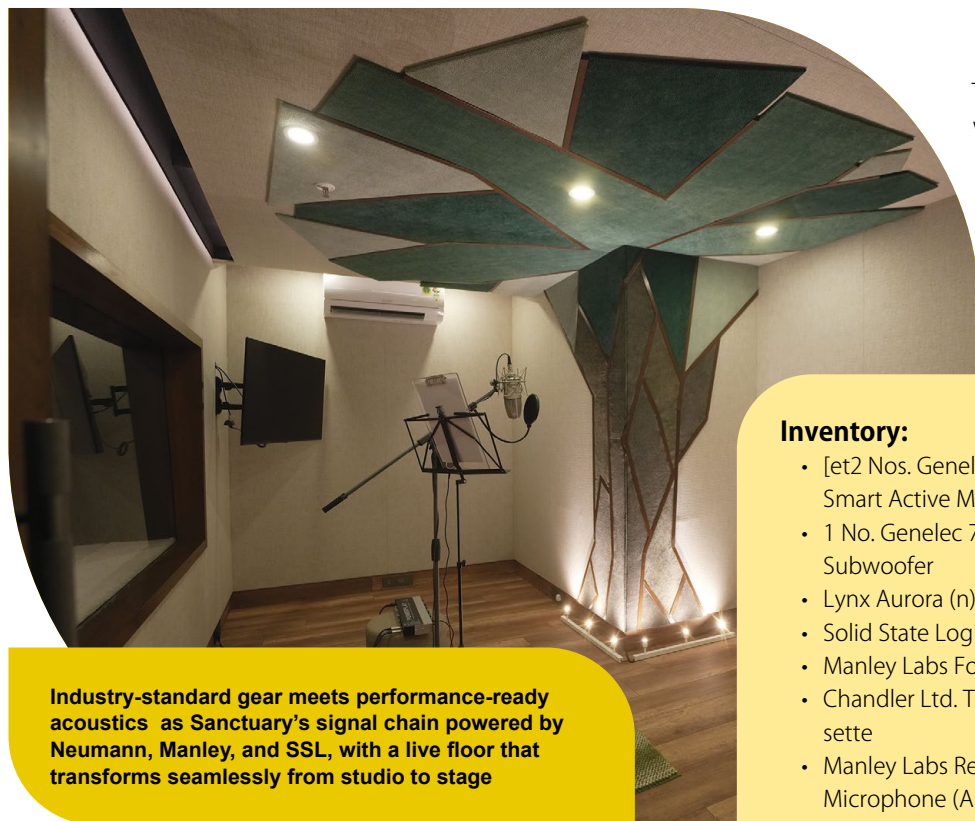
a modular design philosophy that treats the studio as an ecosystem: signal flow, sightlines, lighting, monitoring, and acoustic isolation work together, so the room can pivot between modes while preserving its sonic integrity. The architecture posed few obstacles; the acoustic brief, however, demanded meticulous planning. The result is a space that can be tightened for critical tracking or loosened for live energy, and, crucially, can be partitioned operationally so recording and performance can occur independently when needed.

### Acoustic Architecture: Silence as a Starting Point

Before any microphone hears music, it is bathed in the sound of the room, and the sound of the city beyond. In Mumbai, the humdrum of street life seeps in day and night. To make silence the default, Sanctuary starts with isolation at the structural level.

"We prioritised full acoustic isolation with a floating floor, double-wall construction, and air-tight doors to ensure zero bleed," Harshe explains. Walls are decoupled; floors are floated; doors seal like a studio should. The HVAC, that often-overlooked source of mechanical noise, was custom-designed. "Soundproofing was non-negotiable," he adds.

That foundation is what makes the hybrid vision work. Isolation protects the delicate details that define high-fidelity recording, transient subtlety, stereo imaging, low-level ambience, while allowing the live floor to become a performance zone without dragging the street into the sound or the sound



Industry-standard gear meets performance-ready acoustics as Sanctuary's signal chain powered by Neumann, Manley, and SSL, with a live floor that transforms seamlessly from studio to stage

#### Inventory:

- [et2 Nos. Genelec 1238DF Three Way Smart Active Monitoring System
- 1 No. Genelec 7370A Smart Active Subwoofer
- Lynx Aurora (n) Audio Interface
- Solid State Logic BiG Six Audio Mixer
- Manley Labs Force Mic Preamp
- Chandler Ltd. TG Microphone Cassette
- Manley Labs Reference Cardioid Microphone (Anniversary Edition)

That last phrase “rather than just a studio” matters. A room may measure well and still feel wrong. At The Sanctuary, the technical brief and the human brief never part ways. It’s functional, but it’s also a place you’re invited to inhabit.

### World-Class Yet Welcoming

In an industry that can sometimes feel guarded, Sanctuary leans into approachability. “We wanted the studio to feel world-class without being intimidating,” Chinmay says. “For established artists, everything from microphone choice to vocal booth acoustics was tuned to international standards. At the same time, we created flexible packages, approachable engineers, and a welcoming atmosphere so that emerging musicians feel comfortable experimenting here.”

That dual welcome, seasoned pros finding the precision they expect, new voices discovering a safe room to learn, gives the studio its cultural weight. It’s not only a destination for production; it’s a catalyst for community. Musicians can test songs in an intimate performance setting, then capture that energy on the same floor without changing buildings

or headspace.

What can the room actually do? Much, and quickly. “Engineers can track a full band live, host an intimate gig, have jam sessions or record a single vocalist with equal ease,” Chinmay says. The workflows are supported by adaptable patching, lighting, and monitoring systems, so the same space can feel like a precision instrument or a living room.

The studio culture carries small, human touches too. “Thanks to Bishwajit Ghoshal’s enthusiasm, there is also a TT table to de-stress.” In a profession where ears and nerves fatigue before the gear does, that kind of relief valve is more than whimsy—it’s part of the craft.

### Urban Isolation, Inner Calm

Mumbai’s density is both its electricity and its acoustic hazard. Sanctuary addresses the city not by shutting it out alone, but by building inward. Floating floors, decoupled walls, multi-layer insulation, and air-tight doors seal the envelope; silent-ducted HVAC sustains comfort without adding a noise signature. Inside, the ambience is tuned to regulate pace: warm lighting, clean sightlines, an absence of clutter.

This is how the “rare hybrid” works. It’s not a showpiece trick where a recording studio moonlights as a stage. It’s an integrated environment where performance and production are peers, where capture can be live, and live can be captured so creativity remains continuous across modes.

### Why The Sanctuary Matters

Studios tend to reflect the values of the people who build them. Sanctuary’s values are legible: respect for craft, openness to community, and a refusal to choose between polish and play. By placing an intimate performance venue inside a meticulously engineered recording context, the studio shortens the distance between song and record, between idea and document. Artists hear themselves in a room that supports both outcome and experience.

In the end, Sanctuary is named for what it promises, not what it contains. Technology here is abundant and adept, but it is never the protagonist. The protagonist is the person who walks in with a melody, a beat, a lyric, and leaves with something captured and transformed, and who might, on another evening, play that same idea in front of a few dozen listeners and discover how it breathes.

“It’s not just a studio or just a performance venue, but a seamless blend of both,” Chinmay says. Seamless is the operative word. It suggests the absence of friction—between gear and imagination, between room mode and musical mode, between the demands of engineering and the needs of the soul. That frictionless state is rare. In Santacruz West, it has an address.

into the street.

### The Technical Backbone: Clean Paths, Fast Pivots

Sanctuary’s technical layout reveals a modern control philosophy: keep the signal paths clean and keep the options open. A central patch bay feeds both the control room and the live floor, enabling engineers to flip the room quickly, overdubs in the morning, a full-band live take after lunch, an evening showcase without re-cabling the world.

Monitoring is resolutely professional. Nearfield duties fall to **Genelec 8030**, while midfields are handled by **Genelec 1238DF** with a **7370A subwoofer** anchoring the low end. It’s a pairing that allows critical decisions to translate: the 8030s offer a reliable close perspective; the 1238DF/7370A rig opens up the picture with headroom and depth for mixing and production choices.

On the conversion front, the studio leans on **Lynx Studio Aurora AD/DA**, a platform valued for sonic transparency and clocking stability. That clarity keeps the analog and digital sides of the room in conversation, no personality lost, no detail dulled.

### Gear That Inspires Confidence

Sanctuary’s equipment list speaks to versatility with taste. “We combined industry-standard microphones like **Neumann, Manley, Audio Technica, AKG & Shure** with **Chandler, Manley, UAD & SSL preamps** going into the Lynx Studio Aurora AD/DA converters,” Harshe elucidates. The mic locker spans the colours engineers reach for every day, neutral condensers for fidelity, character tubes for presence, trusty dynamics for control, while the preamp bench provides both warmth and muscle.

“Analog warmth and digital precision were both essential,” he adds. “So, the space carries a mix of **SSL workflow** with **Pro Tools** as the core recording DAW.” That balance, analog front-end expression feeding a robust digital environment, keeps Sanctuary fluent across genres and workflows, from singer-songwriter intimacy to pop vocal production and band tracking.

An artist-friendly headphone distribution network rounds out the day-to-day experience. Musicians hear themselves the way they need to; engineers keep cue mixes flexible and uncluttered. The result is, faster takes, better performances, fewer retakes, happier sessions.

### Collaboration at the Core

Sanctuary didn’t materialise from a single blueprint; it emerged from a conversation between sound, architecture, and the lived needs of artists. “**Shiv Sood** from **Sound Team** guided us to decide the best equipment as per our vision, while **Kapil Thirwani** of **Munro Acoustics** focused on building the studio to world-class standards and keeping the vibe intact of building a creative space rather than just a studio,” Harshe shares.