

ENGINEERED TO PERFECTION

This issue of *PALM Expo Magazine* turns its attention to where sound truly begins—the Studio Industry. While live sound captures the energy of the moment, it's within the controlled environment of the studio that audio engineering reveals its most exacting standards. Here, every decibel matters, every reflection is accounted for, and the marriage between technology and craft becomes most visible.

Our cover feature examines India's audio engineering & music education landscape, tracing its transformation over the past two decades from informal apprenticeships into a structured ecosystem of institutions offering comprehensive training in sound engineering and music production. With Mumbai as the catalyst, our cover feature profiles institutes nationwide that are shaping the next generation of sound engineers.

We also feature the **Satyajit Ray Film & Television Institute (SRFTI)**, which has upgraded one of its flagship audio facilities with a complete **AVID** post-production ecosystem deployed by Anasata, bringing industry-standard dubbing and mixing workflows directly into the classroom. Students now train on the same tools they'll use in professional environments, bridging the gap between academic learning and industry practice.

Our cover stories profile two of the Studio industry's most prominent voices, whose careers offer distinct perspectives on Studio craft, technology, and the evolution of the industry.

Shantanu Hudlikar reflects on 36 years behind the console at iconic studios like YRF. Known for his unfiltered candour, he discusses the craft, the industry evolution, and the uncompromising standards that have defined his journey.

Then there's **Sreejesh Nair**, whose name has become synonymous with technical excellence. He has established himself as the industry's most trusted voice on technology and workflow. Veterans and emerging engineers alike seek his counsel, and his workshops draw capacity crowds—proof of a rare ability to translate deep technical knowledge into practical mastery that elevates the entire community.

Our picture gallery showcases studios across India, from Mumbai to Mohali equipped with **Genelec** monitoring solutions. Calibrated with GLM software, these facilities represent a quiet but steady shift in how Indian studios approach sonic accuracy.

This issue also features two profiles from our **Know Your Winners** series. We touch base with **Vincent Samuel**, of **Greenstone Entertainment** and winner of the **Outstanding Technical Production of Live Events Award** at **PALM Sound & Light Awards 2026**, to explore three decades of behind-the-scenes work across 850+ concerts and festivals. We also speak with **Dipankar Grover**, Founder of **Sound Redefined**, whose decade-long contribution to hi-fi audio culture and luxury AV integration earned the company the PALM awards for **System Design & Integration**.

VOLUME WARS: WHO PAYS THE PRICE?

As we close this issue, we're already preparing for our final edition of the year—the November-December 2026 issue focused on Live Sound Reinforcement. The timing is most relevant, as India's live sound industry hits peak season on two distinct fronts - major stadium tours and multi-genre music festivals closing out the year in November-December, and traditional cultural celebrations like Ganeshotsav and Dahi Handi beginning in September. Both demand massive sound infrastructure yet operate in entirely separate worlds—one within ticketed venues under professional standards, the other spilling across public streets fuelled by community fervour.

Just as demand surges and stages are being built, law enforcement across Maharashtra has drawn a hard line. Pune and Nagpur police have banned Pressure Mids and Plasma systems outright, imposed the "4 Bass + 4 Top" equipment cap, and threatened criminal prosecution for

EDITOR'S NOTE



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even a single extra speaker. The crackdown stems from genuine public health concerns, as these stacked systems routinely breach permissible noise levels by significant margins.

But here's the limitation - the "4+4" formula is a numerical cap, not an acoustic solution. It overlooks the fact that sound quality, coverage, and compliance are determined by system design and deployment expertise, not speaker count alone. Manufacturers—both international brands and domestic innovators—are already engineering compact, high-efficiency systems designed to deliver clarity and impact while adhering to tighter equipment restrictions and regulatory standards.

The real question is whether regulation can evolve alongside technology. Can enforcement frameworks recognize the difference between reckless volume and responsible system design? Can organizers move away from turning every cultural festival into a war of DJs, where the race to outdo competitors leads to blanket rules that harm the entire eco system? Can the industry demonstrate that professional-grade equipment, proper deployment, and trained operators can coexist with noise compliance norms—even during the most culturally and commercially critical months of the year?

Our November-December issue will attempt to explore this challenge head-on: how the live sound industry can adapt to stricter regulations without compromising artistic expression or commercial viability, what global best practices look like, and whether India's booming live sound sector can evolve without losing its soul—or its livelihood.

