

recording bands



## MY TEENAGE STRIDE

### DIRT POOR AND WANTING A BETTER SPACE



**J**ed Smith is the mastermind behind My Teenage Stride. He spends his time in a small Brooklyn rehearsal studio rehearsing, recording and making things happen. In recent years he's switched to DAW recording from a long history of 4-track recording. His equipment list includes old rusty mics as well as new shiny toys that he can afford...

#### Tell me about what your setup is...

Well, I use Logic [Express 7.1.2] for recording and mixing. I was borrowing an MBox and using Pro Tools LE for weird purposes like the Massey plug-ins but the MBox is gone now. But I use Logic and record into an [Echo] Audiofire 12 which is a really good converter. It doesn't have any pres which is actually why I got it. It's kind of an add-on that I don't really want and because it's 12 in/out which is good because I record live drums all the time.

#### When did you switch from analog 4-track recording?

I decided I wanted to take engineering and production more seriously and I couldn't offer my services doing 4-track stuff even though I was really, really good at the 4-track stuff — I'd probably gotten the most out of a 4-track than I'd ever heard since I'd been doing it obsessively since I was...I don't know...14 or something. The limitations were too

much so I finally broke down and went to digital about 4 years ago.

#### Do you make a conscious decision to limit the amount of tracks you record on?

Yeah, if I had been doing digital the whole time, I wouldn't have learned as much about engineering because I had to learn the craft in order to get the results I wanted out of the 4-track. If I can fit 20 tracks of music onto a 4-track, it's not going to sound modern, but I

can make it sound like an interesting record that isn't necessarily lo-fi, then I've done something right. I miss the sound of the 4-track an awful lot. You get such an authentic sound trying to cram tons of instruments onto 1/8" of tape. You cannot replicate that digitally.

#### Were you using outboard gear when you were 4-tracking? Do you still use it or do you use plug-ins now?

When I was doing 4-track, it was incredibly primitive. I didn't even have a condenser mic. If I wanted compression, I would use a guitar pedal. All my reverb was a Boss digital delay pedal. Now, other than the actual board, it's mostly in the box and I try to concentrate on getting the sounds as I'm recording them.

#### Do you have a basic set of mics that you use?

Mostly I use the AKG [D112] for the floor and I've got a mod'd [Shure] 57 and 58 that I use for the snare, top and bottom.

#### How are they mod'd?

I took the transformers out...it's really easy and makes a big difference. It takes away a lot of gain but it scoops out a lot of nasty, box-y mids. I was using the [AKG] D112 for the kick but I'm going to be using a [Shure] Beta 52. For overheads, I just have some low grade CAD [SDCs or LDC], nothing fancy at all.

#### What about amps? Do you go direct a lot or mic the amps?

I usually do a direct and a mic'd amp for the same guitar track. For bass, I almost never go direct anymore. I actually don't use bass amps. Everytime I plugged my bass into a guitar amp, I liked how it sounded in

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