

Club Restrictions

Too many boneheads running the board?



Here's one of those situations that make you wonder about your career choice or where you are in your life path. Pay close attention, our buddy Brian is showing us how to keep the disgust-edness in check and not resort to a brick through the front window of this fine establishment...

Dear OSM:

O.K., try this one out...

Hit me with it, Bri! Let me have it!

You just found out the band you regularly mix for has a gig at a "new" or "never played there before" club...

Surely this is not an unknown experience for you.

So you lock out the night for the gig, then the band calls back and says "uh, the club guy says 'no outside soundman touches the board' but you can stand next to him and assist."

Ah, that's brutal, Brian! I can see why you're ticked off. But don't freak out if I tell you that this is exactly what happens if you and your band go on Conan or Letterman or "The Tonight Show" or any of the 99,000 awards shows.

So in a weird way, what you're faced with is good training for the big time!

Although those broadcast mixers usually have a conscience and spend a little time studying the record.

I'm actually going to have my own awards show next year! It's going to be called "The People's Radio Scene Superstar Vibe-A-Thon For Players and Soundpeople." All of the servile tools-of-the-manufacturers audio mags are going to cover it, and my co-hosts will be Ann Wilson of Heart, Martha Davis of the Motels and the new chick from Evanescence.

I'm pretty sure she has a "thing" for me! (But don't tell the Old Soundwoman.)

And I reply, "Did you mention to the club I'm a 'professional' and do this for a living, know the band's material backward and forward, and have special cues for each song?"

Of course your pals did! Didn't they?

They reply, "Sorry, we get too many boneheads running the board and screwing things up." (Gee thanks, boneheads.)

Yeah, thanks a lot, boneheads!

So at the gig, I'm supposed to tell the house guy, "O.K., on this next chorus, hit the lead vocal with a 360 ms delay to trail off on his last note, then a big snare hit, followed by a guitar solo...?"

May I make a suggestion, Brian? Go to this club as a customer one night, and strike up a conversation with the soundman. Tell him exactly who you are. Have a couple beers with the guy,

and tell each other some tales of the soundman life.

Of course, if the club is far from your home, this may not be practical. But if it's nearby, go ahead and do your best to make friends with this individual who you're busy demonizing, just as he is demonizing you.

Because, really, we all know he has a point – there are so many boneheads out there running around ruining sonic life for everyone within earshot of their ham-handed hijinks.

But – he is taking it pretty far. After all, he's not controlling a major network program going out to millions of people every night.

Ahh, forget it – I'd rather stay home and watch reruns of "The Twilight Zone."

Brian W

Can I come over and watch with you? How about the one with William Shatner as the nut who sees the ape out on the wing of the old airliner? Yeah, you know exactly what I'm talkin' about! You've now established yourself as a soundman of great taste and discernment.

I'm sure this is only a tiny, momentary stumbling block in your rampage to greatness!

Luv –

The Old Soundman

There's simply no denying the love. The Old Soundman (OSM for short) continues to hang out on ProSoundWeb, dispensing his wisdom to anyone who has the nerve to ask. Check out more OSM files at www.prosoundweb.com/sr/osm.