

GENELEC®

CASE STUDY

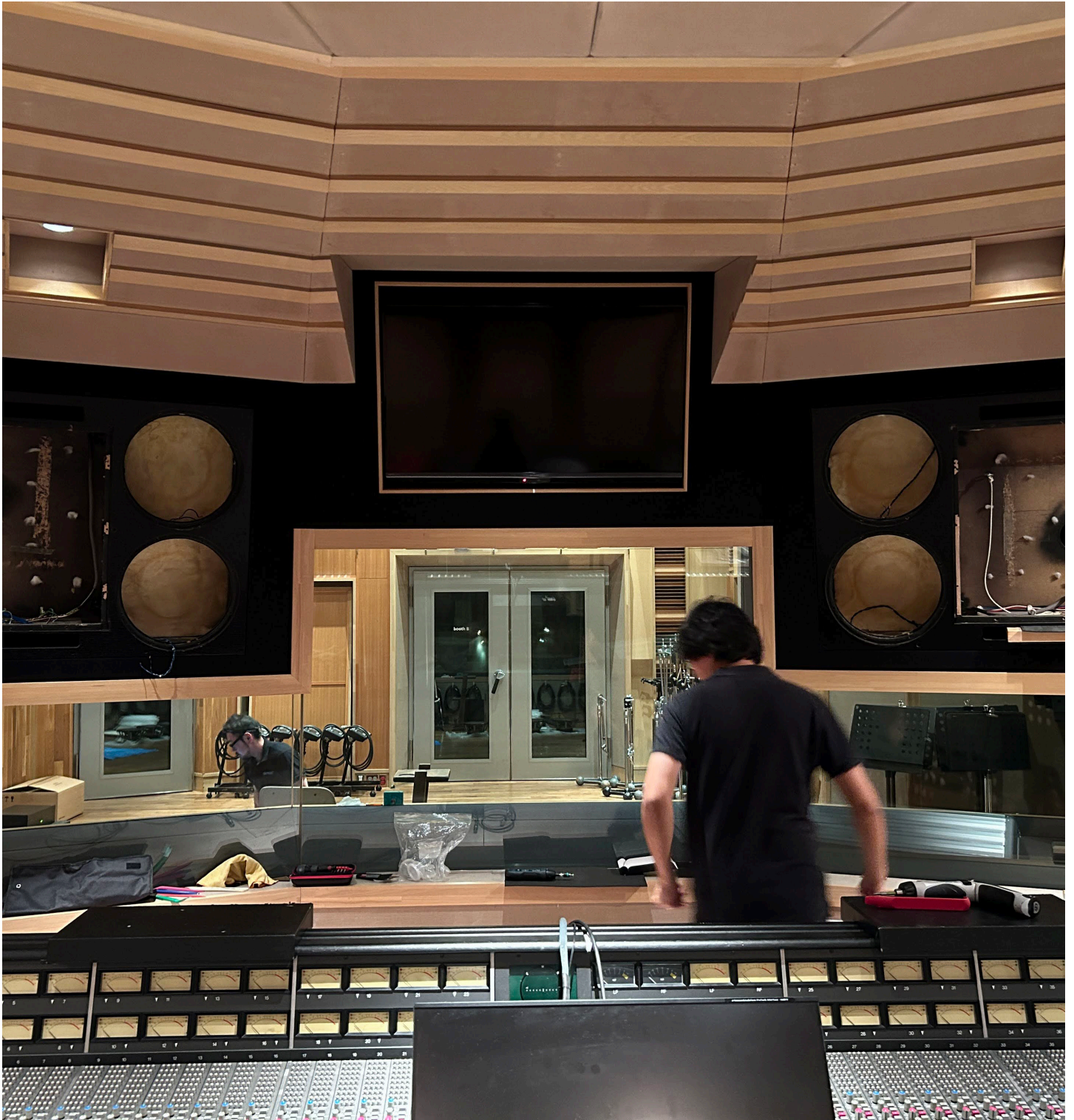
Memory in Motion

PRIME SOUND
MODERNISES ROOM 1
WITH A RETROFIT THAT
HONOURS THE PAST AND
EMBRACES THE FUTURE





WITH GENELEC 1235A MONITORS AND GLM SOFTWARE AT ITS CORE, THE STUDIO DELIVERS NEXT-GENERATION PERFORMANCE WITH REFERENCE SOUND QUALITY



For many studios, change means letting go. Of trusted gear, familiar workflows and the sound that shaped their identity. Upgrades often bring disruption, forcing teams to re-learn what they once knew instinctively. The nuance of a favourite monitor, the unique quirks of a space, the sonic signatures that engineers rely on day after day are rarely carried forward. Preserving identity while embracing

progress isn't easy, but for one Tokyo studio, it became the ultimate goal.

[Prime Sound Studio Form](#) has been a vital force in Japan's music landscape for over two decades. Operated by leading label Avex, the five-room complex has helped shape countless hit songs, with Room 1 serving as its flagship control room.

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At the heart of this space was a trusted reference: Genelec’s [1035A](#) large-format monitors – a system the team knew inside out.

“They were the face of the studio,” says recording engineer Koji Morimoto. “Back then, we tried a few options, but the 1035A just felt right. Even when we compared it to the next generation [1035B](#), I still preferred the A model. It became our standard.”

Over time, however, expectations evolved and the studio finally decided it was time to upgrade. Rather than replace the beloved monitors with something new, the team opted for a retrofitted [1235A](#) system, preserving the original 1035 enclosures while

updating the internal components with Genelec’s latest Smart Active Monitoring technology. “It was a way to keep our identity, but move forward,” says technical engineer Yuhiko Utsu. “I’d first heard the 1035A back at Victor Studio in the late ‘80s. At the time, no two large monitors sounded alike – you’d spend days tuning. But the 1035A didn’t need that. It was a revelation.”

The retrofit brought new possibilities, including [GLM software integration](#), Class D amplifier upgrades, and quieter system operation. “The S/N ratio has drastically improved,” notes engineer Yuji Tanaka. “We used to hear a faint hiss. After the upgrade, it was gone. That was a real surprise.”



From left: Recording engineers Koji Morimoto, Hiroshi Sato, Yuji Tanaka, and technical engineer Yuhiko Utsu

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But not everything was swapped out. For Morimoto and the team, one element couldn’t be replaced: the original high-frequency compression driver. “The retrofit allowed us to upgrade all the drivers, but to us the sound of the 1035A’s high end is still the reference. So we asked if it was possible to retain the original HF driver and Genelec said yes. They even rewrote firmware and updated the pcbs to make it work. That level of manufacturer support is rare.”

The close relationship with Genelec Japan was key throughout the project. “It’s unusual these days for manufacturers to stay hands-on,” says Utsu. “But they still visit because they still care.

We’ve always been able to talk directly with their technical team...and that’s huge.”

Once the retrofit was complete, system calibration became the next priority. Starting with GLM’s AutoCal feature, the studio began with a flat baseline and spent several weeks fine-tuning by ear. “GLM makes the whole process easier,” says Morimoto. “You can store and switch between different settings instantly. It makes experimenting and comparing effortless.”

The system also solved several long-term physical issues in Room 1. “Because it’s a floating floor, the front-heavy 1035A had caused the baffle to tilt



slightly over time,” Utsu explains. “However, GLM can easily correct such issues. So even if various changes occur over time, we can fix them – which is reassuring.”

The team were already familiar with Genelec's Smart Active Monitors through their sister facility, Prime Sound Studio Aoyama, which had previously installed [1234A](#) main monitors. “We knew what to expect from the DSP technology when upgrading the 1035s,” says engineer Hiroshi Sato. “That made the transition even smoother.”

With the upgraded monitors in place, sessions in Room 1 continued without interruption. “Clients have only noticed improvements,” says Sato. “The precision is better, but the balance is still

familiar. That's what we wanted – an evolution, not a reset.”

For Tanaka, the biggest change is versatility. “We used to rely on nearfields to judge balance at lower levels. But the 1235A is so accurate, we can now do that directly on the main monitors. Even at low volumes, it holds together. The old system needed to be pushed to feel right, this one doesn't, which is a huge difference.”

With both the monitors and recording booths updated, Room 1 has been fully refreshed. “The quality has improved, even in the parts you don't see,” says Tanaka. “It's still our studio, just sharper, more refined, and we hope our clients can feel that difference.”



KIT LIST

- 2 x 1235A (upgraded from original 1035A)
- 1 x GLM Calibration Kit

GENELEC OY OLIVIE 5 | 74100 | IISALMI, FINLAND | TEL. +358 17 83881 | GENELEC@GENELEC.COM | WWW.GENELEC.COM