

Mad About Audio

Mad About You Is More Than Just Award-Winning Writing

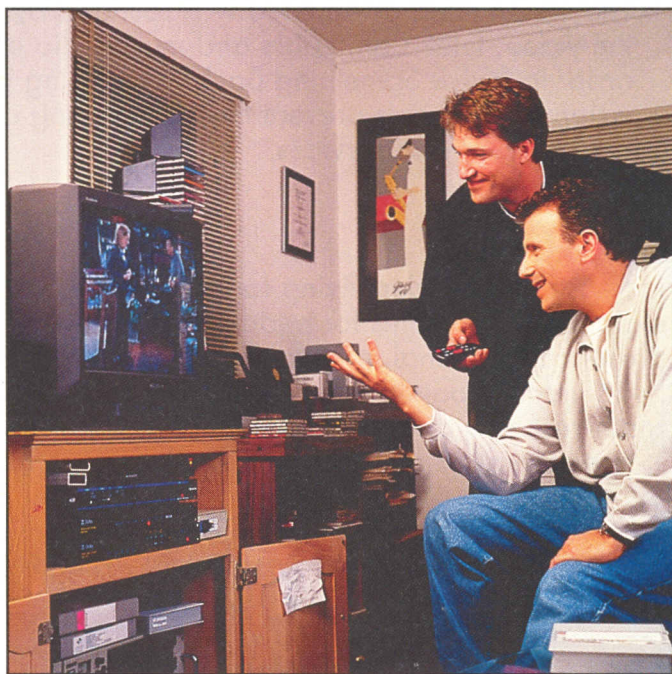
by Jennifer Vacchio

Just what is it that makes NBC's *Mad About You* so real? The neurotic relationship of the leads? The dog? the baby? While all of these factors play an important role in the sitcom, producers of the show—especially Paul Reiser—have taken a special and personal interest in the show's sound production.

"Paul has always felt close to the sound aspect of the show," says Emmy Award-winning sound mixer Marti D. Humphrey of Four Media Company, Burbank. "He feels it is a foundation to the comedy and that it makes the show more realistic and unique."

With six to eight dialogue tracks, six to 10 ADR tracks, eight to 16 tracks of music, eight tracks of Foley, and 28 effects tracks, the show is mixed in Surround Sound on an Otari Premiere console. The show was formerly mixed at Sony Pictures, a block away from Culver Studios, but once Humphrey moved to 4MC, Burbank, location became a problem.

Although the Emmy Award-winning show is shot in Culver Studios, Culver City, the show is mixed at 4MC's Sound Services Division in Burbank



Paul Reiser with Culver City Studios producer Craig Knizek.

and played back to producers Craig Knizek, and Paul Reiser at Culver Studios simultaneously, using ISDN lines and Dolby Fax technology.

Humphrey does the first audio pass and sends LTRG stereo signals to Culver Studios. While he is at lunch, Culver Studios producer Craig Knizek makes a list of changes needed.

"We lock up to timecode, and all I am hearing is the sound, but I control

when we stop, go forward or back," says Knizek. "Once the mixers have a list of notes, we go in as offline and they make the rest of the changes they need to from their dubbing stages. It allows me to be close to the set and in a moment's notice go into my office, punch up buttons and get connected to what the guys in Burbank are doing," Knizek says.

The last audio sweetener, the afternoon shift, does another pass in which Knizek is able to view and hear. "I am able to interact with the audio sweetener and advise him of the changes I want made," says Knizek. Once that pass is completed, it is laid back to 3/4-inch tape and viewed by Paul Reiser. If Reiser wants any audio changes, he and Knizek will go over to the dubbing stages in Burbank to mix the final version.

"It is becoming more common now to hook up different locations," says Humphrey. "The sound is just as fabulous as before. Executives can talk to us and make changes seamlessly. Location is no longer a concern." A