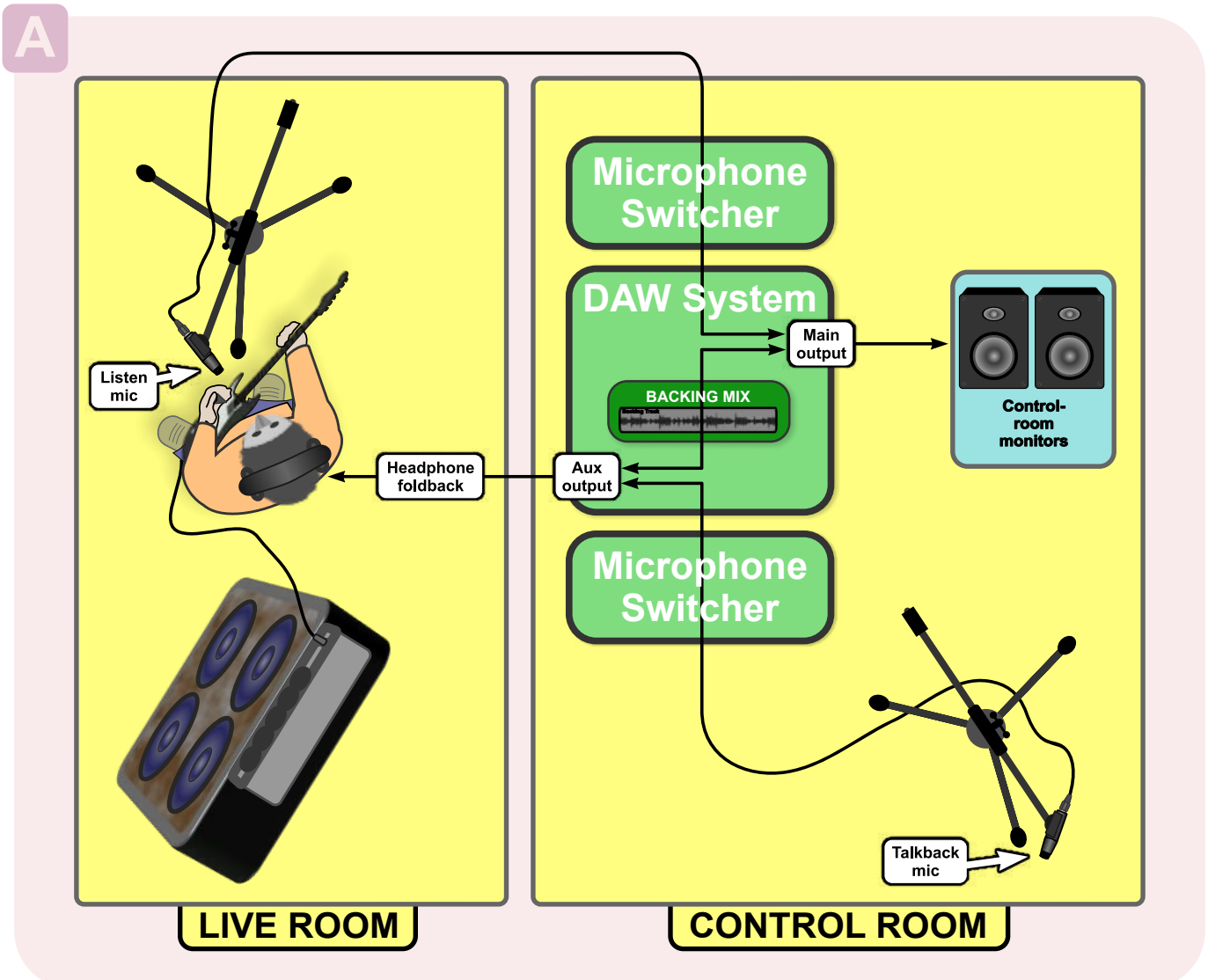
‘Recording Secrets For The Small Studio’

Some Example Studio Communications Setups

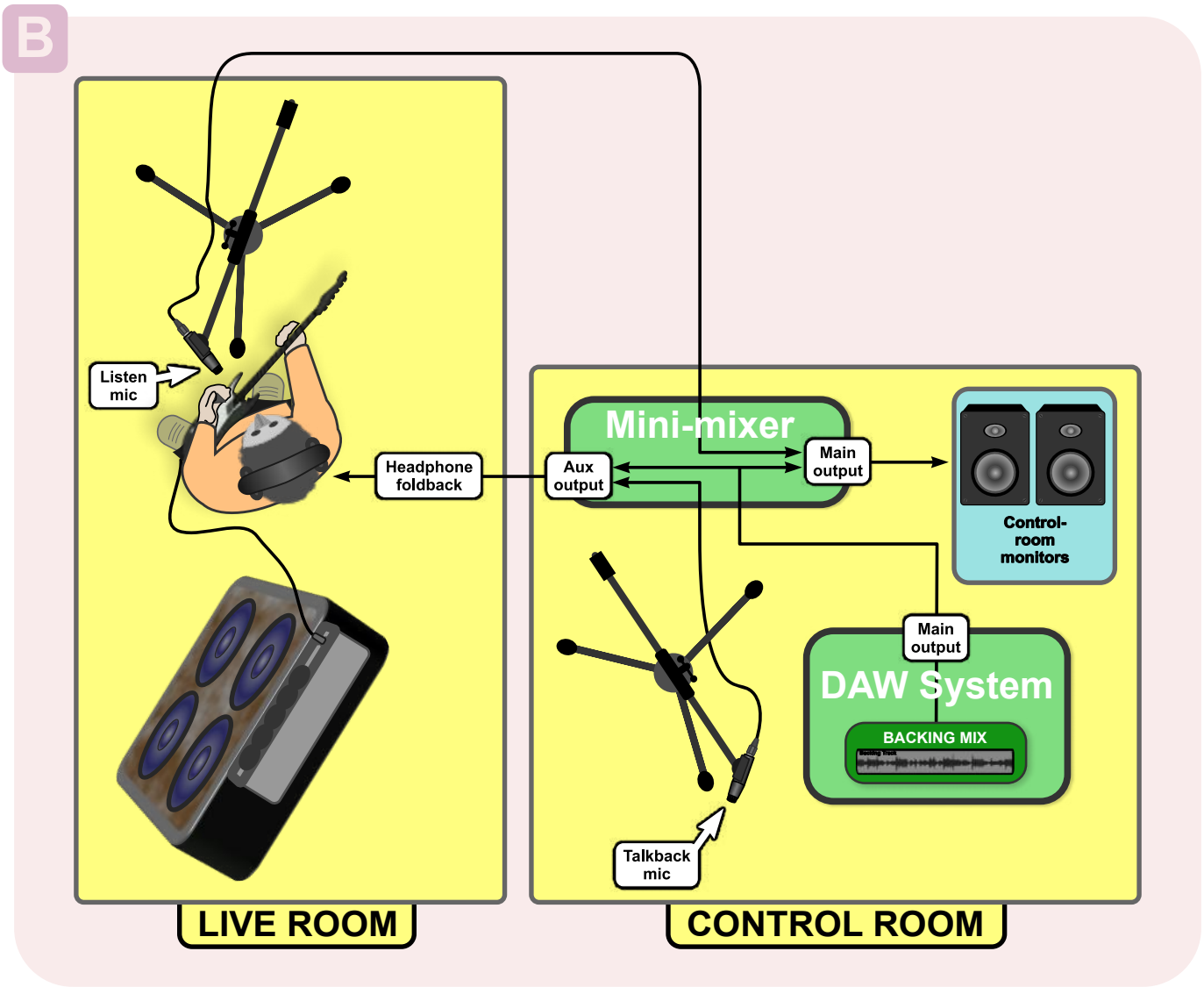
In Chapter 3 of ‘Recording Secrets For The Small Studio’ I discussed how you could combine a talkback mic and a listen mic to create a studio communications system for two-room recording setups. There are many ways of implementing such a system in practice, but here are some concrete setup examples to get you started. Note that all of these setups use hardware switching, as discussed in the book.

In Diagram A all the monitor/foldback mixing is carried out inside the recording software, with hardware microphone switchers inserted in-line between the mics and the DAW microphone inputs. The downside of this approach is that the control-room monitors won’t automatically ‘dim’ when you switch on the talkback/listen mics, so there’s a small risk of feedback howlround if the artist wants to use open-backed headphones (or indeed loudspeakers) for their foldback monitoring.

A



In Diagram B the monitor/foldback mixing is carried out within a separate analogue mini-mixer. The talkback and listen mics are switched via the hardware channel Mute buttons on the mini-mixer. The artist's foldback mix is created using the mini-mixer's aux sends, while the mini-mixer's main outputs feed the control-room monitoring. Again, this setup doesn't automatically 'dim' the monitoring when talkback/listen mics are enabled, but it does have the advantage of working within a true zero-latency monitoring setup (as discussed in Chapter 4).



In Diagram C a multi-ouput DAW system accepts the listen-mic signal via a hardware microphone switcher. The DAW then feeds two separate mixes from its outputs: (1) just the backing track; and (2) the backing track with listen-mic signal mixed in. These mixes are sent to separate source inputs of a hardware monitor controller with built-in talkback mic, mix (1) feeding the ‘artist mix’ output and mix (2) feeding them main control-room monitoring output. In this case the monitoring controller’s internal talkback mix will also feed the ‘artist mix’ output, and the switching logic should dim the control-room loudspeakers whenever talkback is engaged.