

Ellis Nolan

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Spring 2022 Minigrant Proposal

Studio Monitors

Almost since I first started playing music I've been interested in making records. At first, I used samples and software instruments to make music since that's what was available to me, but more recently I've been experimenting more and more with using "real life" equipment, i.e. recording an actual electric bass through a DI Box rather than a software bass, or recording a live drum set with microphones instead of software drums. Recently, I've recorded a few tracks with completely live instrumentation for my YouTube channel, and I've also started collaborating with WXTJ Student Radio on a "Tiny Desk" Project, where we record UVA and Charlottesville Artists in the WXTJ Studio. For this project, I'm in charge of everything audio: mic placements, recording, mixing, you name it. My recent interest in recording live instruments and performances has also made me more aware of and interested in mixing, which in many ways is closely tied to recording.

Currently, I mix on headphones, however, as I've gotten more interested in mixing, I've learned that studio monitors can produce a more accurate sound as they have better capability to produce low end frequencies. This has been congruent with my experience: Whenever I've listened to older mixes of mine on studio monitors, it's a toss-up whether my kick drums and bass will be audible at all, and if they are they might not be distinguishable and can muddy up the entire mix. Recently, I've had access to the VCCM, which has large studio monitors and has been very helpful to my learning mixing; I've found that the recordings I've mixed on the VCCM monitors have been a lot more consistent when I listen to them on headphones, through other speakers, or even in my car's stereo. However, at any given time it's uncertain if the VCCM will be available, and furthermore, I'll lose my access to the room once the class I'm in is finished, unless I'm taking another class in the VCCM. From the research I've done, I think a happy medium would be for me to have a smaller set of monitors than are in the VCCM that I can mix on at my home in Charlottesville.

In consulting my professors, other students and friends who are experienced with mixing, as well as online resources, I've come to the conclusion that the Yamaha HS5 Studio Monitor Pair will meet my mixing requirements. The HS5s are well known as a time-tested solution for home recording setups. They're quite flexible to untreated rooms such as mine due to the Room-Control and High-Trim switches, and as studio monitors should, they have smooth and even frequency response across the frequency spectrum. Furthermore, I think the 5" drivers

would be a good balance between producing an accurate low-end image of my mixes while not being too large for my desk. Finally, placement of the monitors is another important element, and so I would add desktop stands for the monitors to ensure correct positioning of the monitors in relation to where I'd be sitting.

I plan on continuing to learn more about recording and mixing from faculty, friends and other resources as I have been very lucky to this semester, and I think these monitors would be a more solid foundation for me to apply skills from those lessons with. I am very grateful to the committee for considering my proposal, and I look forward to hearing from you!

Budget

Yamaha HS5 5 inch Powered Studio Monitor Pair - \$399.98 (Pair)

Found on Sweetwater at this link:

<https://www.sweetwater.com/store/detail/HS5pr--yamaha-hs5-5-inch-powered-studio-monitor-pair-black>

On-Stage Stands SMS4500-P Desktop Monitor Stands - \$88.95 (Pair)

Found on Sweetwater at this link:

<https://www.sweetwater.com/store/detail/SMS4500P--on-stage-stands-sms4500-p-desktop-monitor-stands>

Total: \$488.93