

Elie Bashkow

Spring 2022 Miller Arts Minigrant Proposal

“Acoustic Panels”

One of the most interesting parts of mixing music for me is that it forces me to become extremely aware of the ways that sound interacts with any given environment. Every object in a room influences how that space sounds, absorbing or deflecting certain frequencies, sending the sound waves bouncing around in certain directions, causing them to interact in strange and fascinating ways that affect our perception of what we hear. This can be used to creative advantage; famous studios around the world have iconic “sounds”, a sonic fingerprint of the room itself that gets imparted onto everything recorded in that space. When mixing or producing however, you don’t want the “sound” of your room to be affecting what you are hearing out of your speakers because then you are not really working with the sound of the song, you are working on the sound of the song in your room. If it sounds perfect in that one room, odds are that when it is played in a different space such as a car or a Bluetooth speaker in a kitchen on the other side of the world, it won’t “translate” well. My room, for example, has a big dip around 150 hz and buildup around 800 hz meaning I must consciously compensate while working as well as “check” my mix in many different environments as I go to ensure that the final product will sound great everywhere.

Luckily, there is a really simple and effective way to minimize the effect of room acoustics: acoustic panels! Covering the walls of pro studios, these simple contraptions

are basically just sound absorbing squares that keep frequencies from bouncing around unevenly, thereby fixing the phase cancellation, room nodes, dips, and many other acoustics issues that plague audio engineers. Often called the most unsexy but critical piece of gear, these panels truly do wonders. I know because I have worked in well treated rooms and untreated rooms alike and the difference is very significant.

Unfortunately, high quality acoustic panels are expensive-- as much as \$1000 for a 12 pack of panels. I would like to request \$500 to spend on room treatment for my space. I spend so much time working under subpar acoustic conditions, and I think my whole creative process would be drastically enhanced if I improved the acoustics of my room.

Budget:

1. Primacoustic London 8 Acoustic Room Kit – Black: \$319 plus shipping

<https://www.sweetwater.com/store/detail/London8Bk--primacoustic-london-8-black>

2. Auralex LENRD 1x1x2 foot Studiofoam Bass Trap - Charcoal (8-pack) – \$283 plus shipping

<https://www.sweetwater.com/store/detail/LENRD8CHA--auralex-lenrd-studiofoam-bass-traps-8-pack-charcoal>

Timeline: If granted, I will purchase the room treatment as soon as funds are available.