

MIX

PROFESSIONAL AUDIO AND MUSIC PRODUCTION

STUDIO DESIGN

THE CLASS OF 2012: THE YEAR'S FINEST FACILITIES

Class of 2012

A COLLECTION OF THIS YEAR'S HOTTEST NEW STUDIOS

Every year in our June issue, *Mix* focuses on studio design and acoustics. Here are some of this year's best-designed music and sound-for-picture studios, starting with the impressive recording/mixing facility on our cover.

IDEAS (Orlando, Fla.) →

Bob Alach's Alacronics designed this new mix-to-picture room for multifunctional entertainment design studio I.D.E.A.S. This 7.1 surround control room is equipped with an Avid ICON console and SLS PS8R monitors and custom low-frequency systems from Bag End. Alach designed the system for all seven channels to track each other within .25 dB at the mix position and exhibit a frequency response of +1 dB from 10 to 40k Hz; resonances are well-damped and decay to below -60 dB within 150 ms. The monitor system was spec'd to produce a full-bandwidth, maximum sustainable sound pressure level of 110 dB SPL at the mix position.



IDEAS Orlando builds new space, expands mix capability

ORLANDO — For two decades, IDEAS Orlando performed its mix work successfully in their south Orlando studios. But while mix technologies changed over that time, the physical limitations of its 1980's space did not, and in 2009, IDEAS (www.IDEASorlando.com) moved into new space in downtown Orlando. Just recently they completed Audio A, a new mix studio built for 7.1 mixing as opposed to just 5.1.

"Sound quality was our first priority," says John Lux, IDEAS president. "Acoustical designer Bob Alach from Alactronics worked closely with our senior audio mixer Rob Hill and general contractor Collage Companies to create this studio. Alach conducted exhaustive tests before, during and after construction to get a clear understanding of how any sound would react in the completed space. Alach also did the final tuning and balancing of the room.

"During construction," says Lux, "Bob made sure that any design changes that were suggested would not negatively affect the room's acoustics. He was absolutely fierce about the acoustics."

Equipment for the studio was chosen carefully with IDEAS' workload and existing equipment in mind. "We do jobs of all sizes, from small mixes to major mixes to large ADR to Foley to simple VO recording," points out Hill. "Choosing a console that worked seamlessly with Pro Tools was top priority, so we chose the ICON."

IDEAS also wanted the console to be comfortable for freelance mixers to use, so Hill added familiar outboard equipment, including Focusrite Red 7, John Hardy and Studer D19 mic preamps, LA-4 compressors and George Massenberg EQs.

On the recommendation of Alach, the bass management system features five Bag End subwoofers. Each channel (left, center, right and the two rear surround channels) has its own bass extension systems. This represents the low section of the high performance full range monitor system where it extends from approximately 95 hertz down to 8 hertz. The left, center and right bass systems include dual 18-inch drivers while the rear subs are dual 12s, with both systems powered by the Minima One 1000 watt power amplifier.

Alach had Bag End adapt the X6 input section from the Infra-Pro series into this system to allow two individual inputs. Each channel receives bass frequencies from both its channel and the .1 or LFE program. The LFE is split and distributed into all five bass systems, then adjusted for the correct LFE mixing level. Combining all five bass systems into the LFE maintains the accuracy with greatly increased SPL capabilities. The



The newly-designed IDEAS studio features Avid Pro Tools, an ICON board and Bag End subwoofers.

Dual 18s are only 11-inches deep so they could be built into the walls to address space considerations and as well as acoustical performance.

"In the new studio," says Lux, "we have completed Foley for an independent feature film and ADR for series airing on ABC and Disney Channel, along with ADR for the film *Dolphin Tale* and films for Universal and 20th Century Fox. So far, we have not had a single person enter the room and not be [impressed] by the quality of the sound."

"The low-end is especially surprising," adds Hill. "Even I wasn't prepared; I can hear sub-sonic rumbles clearly. These are sounds that very few people would even know were there."



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IDEAS ORLANDO

When you bill yourself as an “innovation studio,” part of a creative juggernaut of marketing and agency services—from story to shoot to edit to post to distribution—you need facilities and workflow that match the mission. After 20 years in south Orlando, IDEAS was in need of a new home, and in 2009, they found one downtown.

“We had tremendous post audio facilities for 20 years, but the building was from the late ’80s,” says John Lux, IDEAS president, “and the technologies and philosophies used to design mix rooms have changed. We started building out in 2009, and it was critical that we had a versatile mix room that would allow us to do the same work—feature films, made-for-TV movies, corporate image pieces and Internet-based communications—but do it with the comfort and efficiencies that come with a modern room. It’s designed for 7.1 and 5.1 mixing.”

Audio A at IDEAS was designed by Bob Alach of Alactronics, who had a previous relationship with senior audio mixer Rob Hill, and built by The Collage Companies. Alach recommended the full-range Bag End surround monitor system as part of the room’s acoustic

NEW COLUMN: Ask Eddie * ‘Rave On Buddy Holly’ * ‘Frankenstein’



MIX

MUSIC PRODUCTION • LIVE SOUND • SOUND FOR PICTURE

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RADIAL ENGINEERING
WORKHORSE 500
ADAM A8X
SOFTUBE TSAR-IR



LET'S GO LIVE!

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signature. Lux and Hill selected the Avid ICON as the centerpiece because they have been a Pro Tools house for a long time and because the room must move from ADR to Foley to voice-over recording to 7.1 mixing at any time.

“The new mix room is just one part of the post audio expansion,” Lux adds. “On July 1, we will be opening our recording stage, which will allow for voice-over, group ADR, Foley. And it’s an insert stage, with multiple acoustic panels, mobile Foley, mobile LED and a ‘cove’ that is 30 feet wide by 15 feet tall with a curved corner..”

Orlando has maintained a relatively small but vibrant post industry during the past 20 years, built mainly around gaming and special-venue audio. The new rooms have been busy, and the team has been signed for the complete post audio package for Season 2 of an animated children’s series. With ESPN opening production facilities in town, Digital Domain opening facilities in South Florida and theme parks that seem to keep on expanding, not to mention the boom in corporate work, the future for IDEAS looks bright.

—Tom Kenny

