



Bruce Swedien discusses the ASC ATTACK Wall



Bruce Swedien

Legendary producer/engineer Bruce Swedien is a five-time Grammy award-winner whose credits include projects with artists like Michael Jackson, Quincy Jones, Burt Bacharach, and Paul McCartney.

How did you find out about and acquire Acoustic Sciences Corporation's "Attack Wall?"

I was introduced to the Attack Wall about three or four years ago when my old pal Arthur Noxon, the brains behind the studio tube traps, which are the basis for the Attack Wall, brought one down to me and set it up in my studio. Basically, it is a group of various size traps that go around the perimeter of the recording desk. There are two sides to a tube trap — a reflective live side and an absorptive dead side. With the Attack Wall it's the absorptive side that faces in. You put them as close as you can and all the way around the desk, and even behind your mixing environment if you have the space.

I couldn't wait to hear what this Attack Wall would do for my listening environment, so I got out a couple of the mixes I've made over the years that I'm very familiar with. As I listened I was absolutely amazed to hear, and in my mind's eye, to see, microphone positions in the stereo panorama that I hadn't seen in decades — I had maybe never heard these mixes as well as with the Attack Wall. I was absolutely knocked out, just floored. I ordered an Attack Wall right there, and it's been a part of my studio world ever since.

What exactly does the Attack Wall do?

In a recording or mixing situation, it provides a listening environment free of early reflections. Early reflections in a music mixing situation are definitely detrimental to stereo imaging — they blur and obscure lots of detail that might exist in the original recorded sound field. Conversely, late reflections, if they are a bit on the quiet side and very diffused, are valuable in a mixing room, because they enhance stereo imaging and the musical transparency. So here's the deal — with the Attack Wall the sound from the speakers that escapes over the Attack Wall splashes back and forth between the bright side of the traps and the walls of the control room. What that does is it creates kind of a very low-level, wonderful, diffused backfill that is very enjoyable. As long as you remove those early reflections from the image, the detail is astounding.

