

# ADAM LEWIS

LIVE SOUND ENGINEER + DESIGNER

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## Mixing Concept

Mixing is one of the most pure art forms and also one of the least understood. It is easy to know if a actor doesn't have the right costume on or a prop is in the wrong place and even if a lighting cue is not the right color. As Rick Thomas would say, sound is a temporal artform and a subjective art form, what one person perceives to sound good may sound bad to someone else. One thing I have learned while working under my mentors at Purdue University is to trust my ears. "Walk the space" echoes through my head every time I tune a sound system or prepare to mix a show and is still my approach to mixing any show.

I also perceive that my ability as a live sound mixer is to become a part of the story and manipulate the audience with each push of a fader and button. To accomplish this as a mixer, I need to have a good repertoire with the cast, to know how each member of the cast is feeling on a particular night is crucial. Having this relationship with each actor allows them to know they have someone they can trust making sure they can be heard and sound good, thus giving them the confidence to perform well.

A good mix is one that is not talked about. Engulfing myself in the music of a musical to the point of knowing the individual climaxes of each song is crucial in my mixing concept, to know the arc of the song and the show. Yet, the most important part of my mixing concept is knowing how to communicate with my sound designer & sound team. Adjusting to the quirks and needs of each different designer allows me to better serve their specific needs and allow them to feel comfortable letting me mix their design.

## Show Specific Concept

The sound designer's concept for *Next to Normal* was to create the complexity of what is happening inside the main character's mind on stage. Through varying amounts of mass, the sound of the musical contributed to the recreation of the highs and lows experienced by the main character. This became an important concept for my mix. Musical numbers within the show ranged from a typical Broadway song, an intimate café, and a rock concert. Accentuating these differences and blended them became the mixing concept for the show. By balancing the band's dynamics with the actors vocal, the mix was able to flow freely between musical styles while still presenting a cohesive story with an arc and a climax.

Similarly, leading and guiding the sound crew for the show was part of my responsibility. I created a cohesive unit that worked well together similar to the arc of the show that allowed for streamlined communication, room for learning and most importantly, fun.

Sincerely,

Adam Lewis 