

Rico Casazza uses TASCAM's Portacapture X8



As an electronic music producer, DJ, and film sound designer/location sound recordist, the ability to capture a wide array of sonic innovation keeps Rico Casazza very busy. As a music producer, he has been creating electronic music for over 15 years. As a film sound designer, he records sounds on film sets, focusing primarily on dialogue. He also captures a variety of ambient sounds, which he uses to add various textures to his projects. And to capture all this and more, Casazza relies on the versatility and creativity inspired by his Portacapture X8 Portable Audio Field Recorder from TASCAM.

Since 2007, Casazza has released music under his own name and other aliases in both vinyl and digital formats. These efforts have given him the opportunity to work as a DJ while also performing live sets of his own music. He also teaches sound design at the Prague Film School in the Czech Republic and has worked as the main sound designer on numerous independent films - earning several sound design nominations in the process. His passion for music and sound design has resulted in many creative opportunities. He discussed his use of the TASCAM Portacapture X8,

which is central to much of what he does creatively.

“For songwriting, I use the Portacapture X8 to record percussion sounds to build my drums in electronic music projects,” Casazza explained. “Sometimes, I also capture sounds with interesting textures, which I then load into Ableton Live, my preferred DAW for music composition. In Ableton, I can transform and modify these sounds to create something entirely new, similar to Musique Concrète.”

Casazza also uses his Portacapture X8 for various types of sound design work. “As a location sound mixer, recording sound is an important part of my daily routine,” he reports. “I capture dialogue, foleys, and ambiences for film sound design. I also have a page on freesound.org where I upload various sounds that I've collected worldwide for free download, as I believe in giving back to the community I'm part of.”

When queried about the various Portacapture X8 features he finds so well suited to his manner of working, Casazza focused on the recorder's 32-bit floating point recording capability and its various presets. “The Portacapture's 32-bit float recording mode is a game-changer, especially for recording loud percussive sounds. Sometimes, striking an object hard risks distortion, but with the recorder's 32-bit float capability, I don't have to worry about that. I can lower the gain in post-production and retrieve the sound quality, ensuring clean recordings even in intense sessions.”

“The ability to switch between the Portacapture's specific field recording presets, like Nature, Birds, Vehicles, and City, has been incredibly useful,” Casazza added. “Each preset tailors settings like mic sensitivity, EQ, and dynamic range, which optimizes the recorder's audio for different environments. This feature is especially helpful when I need to capture the unique characteristics of each soundscape accurately. The Portacapture's field recording mode is fantastic. Being an avid ambience recordist, I find it the best way to customize recordings with different ambience presets - enabling me to capture a wide variety of soundscapes with precision.”

The Portacapture X8's Manual Mode enables the operator to customize one's own settings for various types of recording tasks - providing the highest level of flexibility for capturing sounds. Here too, Casazza is finding the feature to be very beneficial. “Thus far, I've used the manual mode with the built-in microphone, but I can see it being ideal for filmmaking when you need four inputs, such as a boom mic and three radio mics. The ability to adjust gain staging between the gain and volume fader, along with the option to assign panning, makes it a highly professional multi-track recorder.”

With much of today's electronic music and audio gear, questions inevitably arise. Hence, responsive and capable support services are crucial for assisting customers. Here too, Casazza was very complimentary of TASCAM, “I have always found TASCAM to be very supportive of its customers. They clearly have musicians and

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recording enthusiasts on their support team - and since they understand what you're trying to accomplish, they are very helpful. While I've only had the Portacapture X8 for a few weeks, I have used the TASCAM DR-40 handheld recorder for over 10 years. In the process, I've also learned how TASCAM approaches audio recording, which makes it easier to adapt to a new piece of equipment."

Before turning his attention back to the business of the day, Casazza offered these parting thoughts on his Portacapture X8, "I feel incredibly fortunate to have this fantastic device, and with each use, I discover more of its potential. It's the perfect recorder for world travel, offering professional multi-track recording with a range of powerful features. The touchscreen adds a sleek touch to the design, making it even easier to navigate. The built-in microphones have impressively clean preamps with a very low noise floor. While recording my voice for a tutorial, I was amazed by the crystal-clear quality the recorder delivered. This is a very capable recording tool and I'm confident others will find it equally compelling."

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