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Producer KC Porter's Career Profoundly Influenced by TASCAM Recording Gear

From childhood through the present, TASCAM has always been part of the sonic equation



With a resume that includes artists like Carlos Santana, Michael Jackson, Ricky Martin, Toni Braxton, Bon Jovi, Boyz II Men, and Janet Jackson (to name just a few), producer/artist/engineer KC Porter's resume reads like a Who's Who of popular music icons - and it doesn't stop there. As an artist, he was a featured vocalist on Santana's Supernatural album and served as producer/vocalist for music featured in various films including The Mexican, Mr. & Mrs. Smith, and Despicable Me 3. He is also a former trustee of the Latin Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences, the CEO of WorldBeat Productions, and co-founder of Oneness, a non-profit organization that fights racism through music and the arts. Through all these accomplishments, there has been one steadfast component: TASCAM.

"Dating as far back as the mid-60s, my father had his TASCAM / TEAC open reel recorders that he used, and I was always fascinated by what he accomplished with

them," Porter recalls. "In the course of being around the gear and listening to his recordings, the name TASCAM was everywhere, and that hasn't changed. These days, I routinely use the DR-701D 6-track recorder, a DR-100 PCM recorder, TH-06 and TH-07 headphones, and a DR-10SG camera mount recorder with shotgun microphone - depending upon the nature of the project. What I love about all these products is their intuitive operation and their ability to interface with other studio equipment. This affords me the opportunity to select the best tool for any particular recording task."

Porter reports he has been using his DR-100 recorder for several years and that it has been a staple of most projects he has worked on. These days, he's also integrating his DR-701D into the process. "The DR-100 (used with multiple lavalier mics) was, for a long time, our main recorder for filming documentary-type projects," he explained. "In some cases, we also used it to record directly via the onboard stereo mics for sound fx or background fx. More recently, I used the DR-701D as the main audio recorder with some wireless lavalier mics for a short film project. And for monitoring on location, I like the TH-06 headphones. They're terrific for remote recording because of the isolation they provide. In the studio, we use both the TH-06, which are a bit smaller and have some reinforced low end, and TH-07 headphones, which provide exceptional detail and are a great reference for mixing. This way, I'm able to give artists some options - and this is crucial because I believe it's paramount to achieving the best possible sound."

When queried about that one TASCAM product that he relies upon more than any other, Porter was quick to point out that all his TASCAM gear - regardless of age - has been pivotal to his success, "Because we've been using so many TASCAM products for so many years, it's hard to name one as our favorite. For years, I used the DA-88 digital multitrack recorders on a daily basis in conjunction with a Studer A827 24-track analog machine and the DA-45HR DAT recorder - all of which we used for Santana's Supernatural sessions and for digital mixes (in addition to analog half-inch tape). The song Primavera ended up using the 24-bit mix on the DA-45HR, which in my opinion, is a true testament to the quality TASCAM always puts out. But in hindsight, I would say the DR-100 has been one of the most practical pieces of gear I own."

Reflecting a bit further, Porter added the following thoughts, "I'm also quite impressed with the DR-10SG camera mount recorder/shotgun mic. I say this because of its excellent sound quality and its ability to connect directly into a camera or be a totally remote mic that records internally. I feel the size of the unit is remarkable given the size of the mic itself. While I haven't A/B'd it with other shotguns just yet, I feel it really holds its own sonically."

With most electronic equipment - and this is certainly true of studio gear - questions inevitably arise from time to time. As a result, it is critical for a company's customer and technical support staff to provide accurate information in a timely, responsive manner. When asked about his experience with TASCAM, Porter offered the following, "In many ways, TASCAM support is like the Maytag repair man. Both the

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product and the support are rock solid. The equipment works as you would expect it to and, as a result, I haven't needed to ask for assistance very often. On those rare occasions when I have called in, the response has been everything I would expect it to be."

Before turning his attention back to the business of the day, Porter offered a few final thoughts. "As I believe is quite evident, I've used a lot of TASCAM gear," he said. "The DR-100 has been my go to field recorder for everything, and it has worked flawlessly. Now, with the DR-701D and its versatility, I expect I'll be using it for most field recording going forward - unless I need the built-in mic on the DR-100. TASCAM has been an integral part of my musical/technological career, ever since the beginning when I used a reel-to-reel TEAC machine as a child in Guatemala. I later used the company's PortaStudios and, from there, multitracks like the DA-88. It's been TASCAM throughout my career and it's a part of who I am."

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