

TASCAM Keeps the Music Flowing for Drummer / Percussionist Fredo Ortiz

Model 12 mixer, Series 8p Dyna preamp / compressor, and Series 208i audio interface prove central to his creativity



As any recording aficionado knows, capturing drums and percussion instruments is an art. Failure to properly manage the levels and attack transients can easily result in something akin to beating on cardboard boxes. With the right gear, however, the process is much easier - and to hear drummer / percussionist Fredo Ortiz describe things, his TASCAM Model 12 mixer, two 8p Dyna preamp / compressor units, and 208i audio interface make all the difference.

Fredo Ortiz is an LA-based musician who has toured and recorded albums with artists including the Beastie Boys, the American punk band Gogol Bordello, and the comedy / rock duo Tenacious D. Currently, Ortiz is playing drums and percussion for the rock band Los Lobos. He has also acted and written for TV and film projects such as Along Came Polly and the forthcoming CSI Las Vegas. His percussion talents can

also be found in the movie No Sudden Move, which was released on HBO Max. With a background of this caliber, Ortiz knows his stuff and he shared his experiences using his TASCAM equipment.

“So much of what I do revolves around my TASCAM Model 12 mixer, which I use live and in rehearsals,” Ortiz explained. “I use my Model 12 as a mixer and recorder on stage with Los Lobos. I receive a stereo feed from monitor world so I can hear the entire band on channels 1 and 2. I also connect my cell phone to the mixer via Bluetooth to reference music as well as hear a click track live. Lastly, I record the shows onto a memory card so I can hear the show and take any notes I might need to prepare for the next performance.”

“After capturing what I want,” Ortiz continued, “I take the WAV file right from the Model 12 by syncing my computer and Model 12 via a USB C cable. I drag and drop the file onto my desktop so I can then import the data into my Logic Pro digital audio workstation software and separate the file by each song. There’s nothing like hearing your last performance and making notes on those items that need further work!”

Ortiz also described how his two 8p Dyna preamps / compressors and 208i audio interface figure into his studio setup. “I have been using the 208i as my interface in addition to connecting my keyboards, guitar, and bass into the front 4 inputs,” he reports. “Via optical cable, I connect my two TASCAM 8p Dyna mic pre’s and use these to plug in my drum mics, which amount to 12 mics total for my drumkit, 3 mics for my congas and bongo, and 1 overhead for my timbales - totaling 16 inputs for the entire setup.”

When queried about those aspects of his TASCAM gear that he most likes, Ortiz offered the following thoughts, “With the Model 12, I love that I can add compression to any track and still alter it after I have recorded, regardless of whether it’s a rehearsal or a song. I also appreciate the ease of connecting a device like my iPhone via Bluetooth. The great thing about the 8p Dyna is that every input is equipped with phantom power, which I use to power my overhead microphones and anything else that requires phantom power. The knobs are easy to work with, and the excellent visibility of the meters lets me check my record levels. I also like the fact that my 208i interface sits nicely on top of my 8p Dyna and lets me control my headphone and monitor levels with ease. All in all, it’s a very cool setup.”

Occasionally - especially when ramping up with a new piece of gear - questions arise. Here too, Ortiz has been very impressed with TASCAM customer and technical support services. “I have been directed to TASCAM customer service and technical staff many times,” he said, “and I have always completed my call pleased with info I received. The TASCAM staff is well informed, they provide the information I need, and they are courteous!”

Before shifting his focus to the business of the day, Ortiz summed up his TASCAM experience with the following thoughts, “I have used top-of-the-line studio

equipment to record my drums over the years, and the latest products from TASCAM certainly hold their ground with those comparisons. Because I have recorded in my home studio using only my TASCAM 8p Dyna preamps, 208i interface, and my Model 12 with absolutely no special outboard gear is terrific. The response has been very positive, and I've never had to re-record anything I submitted to the various artists I work with. In the 25-plus years that I've been performing and recording, I have never told so many people about the gear I use as much as I have regarding my experience with the Model 12. My final thought? Get yours today!"

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