Red

Tulsa Symphony Orchestra

Engineer/Mixer Justice Bigler relies on Focusrite to translate the beauty of the Tulsa Symphony Orchestra

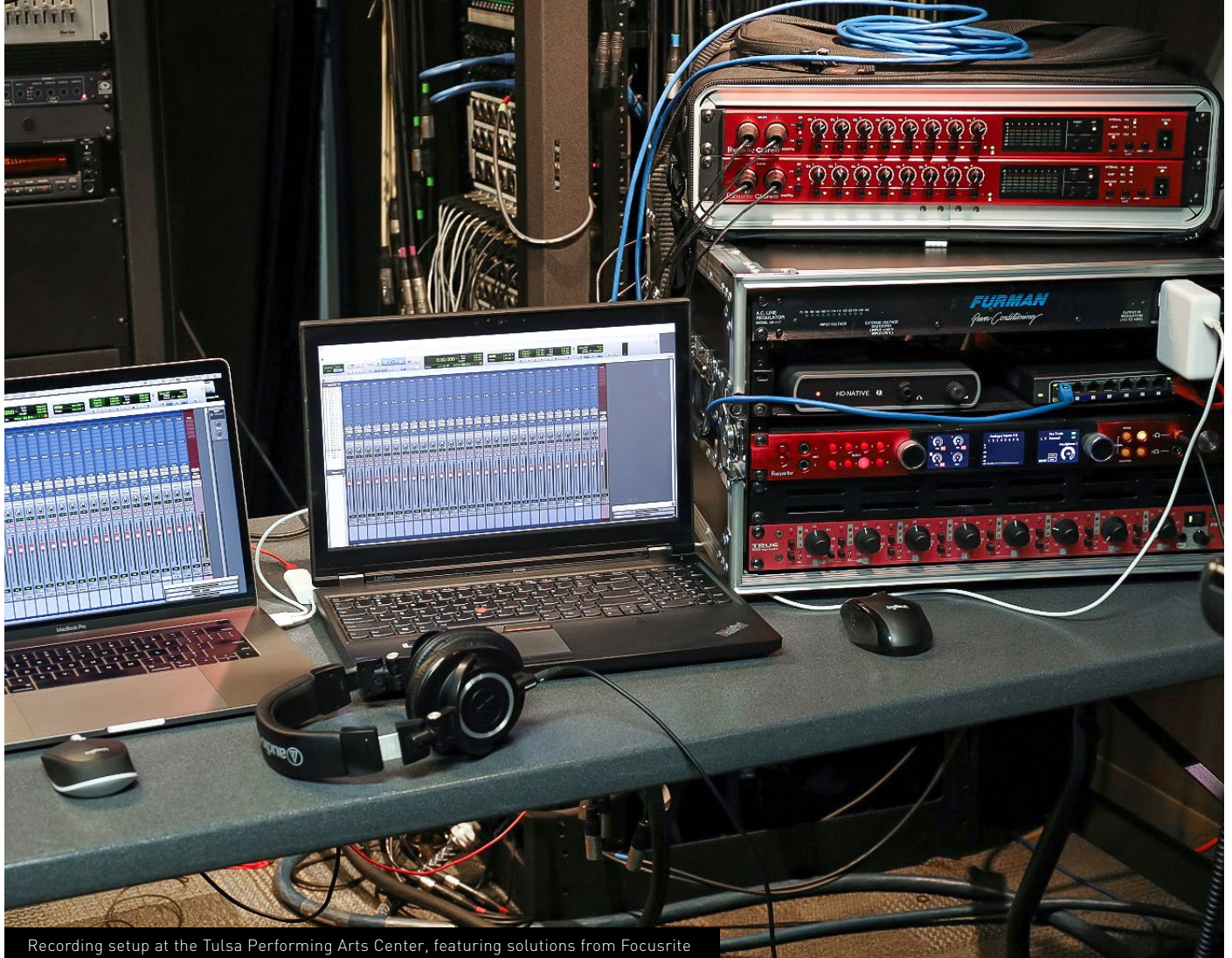Focusrite PRO

Tulsa Performing Arts Center

In fact, Bigler designed and installed the recording system at the Performing Arts Center when he was the house engineer there. The system worked so well he essentially duplicated it for himself when he left that position, including the Red 8Pre;. When he does recordings with the symphony or other performers there, it's like coming back home. "I upgraded that system because I wanted a full 64 channels of inputs and the Dante inputs there, which allowed us to get to 64 channels straight into Pro Tools | HD native, or HDX right off the network. And it works beautifully. I've done playback with that system through QLab; I've done recording directly into Pro Tools with it. It's a fantastic system. The ease of use, the networking flexibility, the robustness of the input and output sections — it's got all of the inputs, all the outputs that we need. It's just two rack spaces and you have 64 channels of input from the Dante network. It was an easy-to-implement system. And, you know, on the times that we do analog inputs with the mic preamps or the line-level inputs, they sound fantastic as well."

Furthermore, Bigler adds, the redundancy his Focusrite system provides is critical, as it is for anyone entrusted with capturing live performances. "It gives me the ability to run an automatic backup through either a Dante Virtual Soundcard, or I can connect a Dante-enabled external dedicated hard-drive recorder for a tertiary backup if I need that, as well," he explains. "You know, you only get one chance to capture the recording; if the computer crashes, the Focusrite's line-level outputs keep running — it doesn't take down either the Dante network or the analogue outputs from the interface. So, I can run two computers directly off of the Red 8Pre with a Dante virtual sound card as well as a dedicated hard disk recorder through the Dante network. If anything happens, it just keeps running."

Finally, Bigler says, Focusrite sonic quality is unparalleled: "I especially love the Air preamps, especially on symphony recordings. It just opens up the sound and makes it more natural, more present. These Focusrite units are everything that anyone who does live recordings for a living could ever ask for."

Focusrite Red 8Pre, Clarett OctoPre, Red 4Pre and RedNet HD32R interfaces assure compatibility with Dante® and Pro Tools for the ensemble's performances and recordings at the Tulsa Performing Arts Center

Justice Bigler has become firmly associated with the Tulsa Symphony Orchestra, whose live performances he's recorded often over the last decade, as well as with the orchestra's home at the Tulsa Performing Arts Center, where he held the position of House Sound Technician for nearly 10 years. Work with other venues and groups round out a varied and interesting career, including live sound and recording for the Tulsa Opera, the Duet Jazz Club, Gathering Place Tulsa, the Utah Shakespeare Festival (as Lead Audio Tech). Most recently, he was Head Audio/A1 for the award-winning Blue Man Group North American Tour, for which he mixed shows all over the U.S. and in Mexico, until the tour was shut down because of the pandemic. The Tulsa Symphony and Performing Arts Center have been central to his career, and technology from Focusrite has been the same.

"My personal setup is a Focusrite Red 8Pre [64-In / 64-Out Thunderbolt™ 2 and Pro Tools | HD™ compatible audio interface], which is my main audio interface for larger recording jobs," he says. "And I have a pair of Clarett OctoPre's that I route into the Red 8Pre. Along with another analogue mic pre I've been using, I now have 32 channels of input to the Red 8Pre at 48k or 24 channels at 96k. I'm also using a secondary laptop to record a redundant backup using Dante® Virtual Soundcard on the Red 8Pre. And then I'm going into a third separate computer system that is owned and run by the Tulsa Performing Arts Center, and which has their own Pro Tools | HDX system and their own RedNet HD32R [32-channel HD Dante network bridge] and Red 4Pre [58-In / 64-Out Thunderbolt™ 2 and Pro Tools | HD™ compatible audio interface], so they can record 64 channels into Pro Tools from their house FOH console. We're all almost completely Focusrite, which makes working there very efficient."

In recent months, the Tulsa Symphony has been recording with no audiences in a physically distanced setting, with extra space between all of the players. "That necessitated using eight to 10 microphones more than I normally would in order to cover the larger ensemble, and that was greatly facilitated by the two Focusrite Clarett OctoPres," he remarks.

Recording setup at the Tulsa Performing Arts Center, featuring solutions from Focusrite

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Justice Bigler uses:

Red 4 Pre

1 x Red 4Pre
58x64 all-in-one interface
32x32 Dante I/O

Red 8 Pre

1 x Red 8Pre
64x64 all-in-one interface
32x32 Dante I/O

Clarett OctoPre

2 x Clarett OctoPre
Eight-channel mic pre and
AD/DA converter

About Focusrite Pro
Focusrite Audio Engineering has pioneered professional audio recording technology spanning almost three decades. Focusrite Pro, the company's professional and commercial division, meets the demands of recording, post-production, live sound and broadcast professionals. It consists of RedNet, a fully modular audio-over-IP solution, and the Red range, Focusrite's flagship multi-format interfaces, along with the heritage ISA range of microphone preamplifiers and analogue signal processors. The solutions have been developed to meet the needs of the most demanding applications through a relentless focus on ease of use, quality and reliability. Focusrite is based in High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, with offices in Los Angeles and Hong Kong.

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