

LEALE relies on Focusrite ISA C8X



LEALE (known for his work with Juice WRLD, Deante Hitchcock, Ben Reilly) is a man of many audio hats: from recording and mixing both major and independent projects from his home studio space in east Atlanta to serving as a crucial faculty member at the city's SAE campus, his talent, expertise and creativity have made a real impact on those who work with him. And naturally, he is a bit of a gearhead, always on the lookout for the right tools to streamline his workflow and help bring the best possible version of his audio vision to life. A recent addition to his arsenal is the Focusrite ISA C8X USB-C Audio Interface, which has assumed a key role as a centerpiece of LEALE's setup at his home studio.

His history with Focusrite has evolved organically. Prior to relocating to Atlanta around five years ago, LEALE was based in Chicago, where he co-owned and managed a recording studio, Glass Tree Creative, for close to a decade. But he also found that those walls couldn't contain his creative energy, and he found himself increasingly working elsewhere, after hours with a portable setup, using the Focusrite Scarlett 2i2 as his primary interface. After the big move to Atlanta, he outfitted his studio with tools he knew he could trust, notably the Scarlett 18i20. In 2025, he was invited to be one of six audio pros at a Focusrite-hosted creative summit in New Orleans known as Flow State, where he was first exposed to the ISA C8X, and he was eager to explore how that new interface could improve his workflow at home even further.

Projects at his home studio run the gamut from pop and hip-hop tracking and

mixing to indie rock and beyond, and the ISA C8X has helped facilitate his busy workload in recent months. "I think that the C8X has really helped me step up my game," LEALE notes. "The first thing I would say is that it has elevated my vocal chain. I would call it an advancement toward better signal, better sound, more character and the right kind of color in the path. Second, I would say that it does several different jobs that I might previously have relied on multiple outboard units to accomplish. Whenever you can look to a single device to do multiple jobs at the same level as several devices would do, that is a win. Any time you can fold down your workflow into a more streamlined path, it not only de-clutters your space in a literal sense, but it reduces variables and possible noise in the signal chain. In terms of the quality of the mic-pre, the simplified routing, and the robust functionality, I support the ISA C8X in a big way."

The Flow State event served as LEALE's formal introduction to the Focusrite organization. "Flow State was a relatively recent retreat, but I consider it a major event, as I feel like I was brought into the Focusrite family. They've shown me a lot of love, and it has proven to me that they go the extra mile in nurturing creatives and artists. They're a great group of people and I think I'm really blessed to be able to know them and do cool stuff with them." And his fondness extends to other brands in the Focusrite Group. "Novation, ADAM, Oberheim, Sequential, Sonnox and so on – these are all brands I love, and now I understand how they are all sister brands under the Focusrite Group umbrella." (Unsurprisingly, his home studio arsenal also includes ADAM D3V active nearfield monitors, a Novation Launch Control XL and a Novation MiniNova synth.)

As he continues work on an expanding roster of recording and production projects, LEALE says the Focusrite ISA C8X will remain a dependable cornerstone of his studio. "It's incredibly approachable and intuitive, and it's performed flawlessly from the start," he says. "The best customer support is the kind you never have to use because the product simply works. That reliability is invaluable when you're moving from one project to the next. At the same time, it's reassuring to know Focusrite is there if I ever need them. It's a great product backed by a company that genuinely cares."

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