

Nuage and RIVAGE PM Bring The Best Sound To Oestrich-Winkel's Studio 22

Photo credit: Magda Rogler



Located on the river Rhine, the German town of Oestrich-Winkel is perhaps best known for being at the heart of the Rheingau wine-growing region and its annual Rheingau Musik Festival. But in a quiet residential street, Studio 22 owner and audio engineer Stephan Weber is at the cutting edge of live and recorded sound with Yamaha RIVAGE PM5 and Nuage systems.

Stephan started as a professional IT networking specialist but, like so many who graduate to the audio industry, as a musician in his spare time. A small home studio and mixing local bands led to more audio work, including mixing musical theatre and events at the Kurhaus resort, casino and conference complex in Baden-Baden.

A request by cruise company Hapag-Lloyd for his IT skills led to Stephan being asked to assist with his entertainment technology knowledge, leading to the creation of Studio 22. Since then, his core business has been planning, service and installation of entertainment technology systems on luxury cruise liners. He has also

developed the Digital Remote Entertainment And Media Solution (d.r.e.a.m.s) streaming server system for background music, with customers throughout the world.

Being married to singer and vocal coach Dunja Koppenhöfer, Stephan established a multi-function recording room at their Oestrich-Winkel home. Adding two more dedicated audio rooms in 2019, he has continued to expand both the live and studio mixing aspects of his business.

"We needed space for Dunja to teach acting and rehearsing, so recording 'in house' made sense. We also train my customers here," he says. "Importantly, I need to be hands on with audio for the good of my soul!"

Stephan started using Yamaha digital mixers at the beginning, with the ProMix 01 back in 1995. "I purchased two - one for live work and the other for automating MIDI sound modules and other outboard gear in the studio," he says.

Since then he has used a range of Yamaha digital mixers, noting, "From the launch of the CL series, I have really liked the availability of different sizes of Yamaha console surface, depending on what you need to do.

"Another thing I like is how the workflow has basically stayed the same. Technology should not take your concentration away from the performance and, for me, it's very useful that it doesn't matter which Yamaha mixer you are in front of, you can work without thinking. Along with the stability, reliability and excellent support, this is why Yamaha offers the perfect tools for me."

Stephan's live and studio work ranges from mixing and recording orchestras, bands, speeches and conferences to music production, surround sound mixes, film synchronisation and corporate training videos. To stay up to date, he needs to keep investing in both live and studio technology.

In the summer he purchased one of the first RIVAGE PM5 digital mixing systems in Germany.

"I have three CL series consoles, but sometimes reached the limit of the CL5's channels, auxes and matrix busses, especially with musicals and crossover projects, which always have a lot of different requirements and backstage gear," he says.

"Investing in the RIVAGE ecosystem with the new CS5 surface was the perfect upgrade to increase capacity and benefit from the new RIVAGE plug-ins. RIVAGE PM5 allows me to be more flexible for all kinds of live events and, with the CL series consoles, I have the choice of using the best system to fit the customer's needs.

Meanwhile, in the studio, he has been using Steinberg's Nuendo DAW since it was first launched in 2000. But he found that third-party controllers always involved a lot of configuration to get something usable and too much compromise in his

workflow.

“After trying other brands, I didn’t believe that I would ever use a controller with Nuendo. That was until I had my hands on a Yamaha Nuage console. It was immediately clear this was the first Nuendo controller worth thinking about,” he says.

“Having everything in a ‘one brand box’ - including a straightforward interface which perfectly matches the software, motorised faders, monitor switches and more for control during recording, automation during mixdown, and all the necessary things like speaker management and control, talkback, surround panner and everything - is awesome.

“I like the touch strip for scrolling, the easy access of filters, EQs, aux channels and the channel automation curves for effects. It’s so simple that I can ignore the technical part of my job and work truly ‘musically’. Nuage saves a lot of time, allowing me to respond to customers more quickly.”

He concludes “Both the RIVAGE and Nuage systems are very impressive. And I truly believe that anybody giving their blood, sweat and tears on stage or in the studio deserves their production or recording to use the best tools.”

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