

Elie Bashkow  
Fall 2022 Minigrant Application

### “PreSonus FaderPort 8 8-channel Production Controller”

Mixing has become one of my main musical activities in the past year. I love mixing because it really combines the science and the art of making music. It is an extremely technical process requiring a knowledge of biology, physics, acoustics, history, tradition, mechanics, and much, much more. It is also a beautifully creative process with the end goal of maximizing the emotional impact of a song through these technical processes.

Before the digital audio revolution of the last 30 years or so placed the ability to create and mix music in a computer that could fit in a backpack, mixing used to be done on large format consoles and other pieces of hardware gear that you controlled with knobs, sliders, buttons, and other physical interfaces. Nowadays, most mixing is done “in the box” using a mouse to click buttons on a screen rather than actually touching them with a real hand.

I learned to mix by mixing on a computer, using a digital audio workstation and plugins to make music. I love digital mixing because, even though it is slightly less sonically warm than using actual hardware, it is way more accessible. A single hardware compressor or equalizer can cost as much as \$5,000 while there are many free compressors and eq plugins that do similar things.

However, there is one thing that especially sticks out to me as a real disadvantage of digital mixing. Turning a real knob, and sliding a real fader is simply a much more human way to interact with music. When mixing on a console, using the sliding fader to control the volume is almost like playing an instrument. It is interactive and expressive.

Luckily, there is a way to get the best of both worlds: control surfaces. A control surface is a digital controller with real faders, knobs, and buttons that connects digitally to a computer and lets you adjust the parameters of digital processors with a real physical interface. This majorly speeds up workflows and makes the whole process much more fun. I have used a control surface before at a friend’s studio and I can honestly say it was such a different and better process. I would love to purchase one with a miller arts minigrant.

One of the most highly regarded and best reviewed control surfaces is the PreSonus Faderport 8 which controls 8 channels of audio simultaneously.

Proposal:

1 Presonus Faderport 8 Control Surface: \$499 Purchased as soon as funds are available

<https://www.sweetwater.com/store/detail/FaderPort8--presonus-faderport-8-production-controller>