

Rihanna's Engineer Greg Ogan on World-Class Vocals

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New Product Reviews:

API • Audio-Technica • Cathedral Pipes • DPA Microphones
Korg • Manley Labs • Neumann • PreSonus • Resident Audio • Universal Audio



REVIEW

BY PAUL VNUK JR.



In the field

Mics like this will probably not have too many practical uses for studio-based audio engineers. However, they can be a great option if, like me, your work takes you out of the studio and into the fields of speech for video, producing and recording sermons, dramatic readings, and speeches, as well as general theatrical work. It is a

DPA Microphones d:screet Necklace Microphone

A mic that's great-sounding, simple to use... and yes, discreet

DPA, short for Danish Pro Audio, is a Denmark-based microphone company known for (among other great products) its ultra-clear and ultra-compact microphones. This month, for our Vocal issue, we are looking at the company's new d:screet Necklace microphone, perfect for voice capture in video, public speaking, and theatrical situations.

Typically, a "necklace microphone" refers to a standard lavalier mic literally attached to a piece of string worn around the neck. This was often an option for when a speaker or interviewee was wearing a shirt or dress that could not accommodate a typical clip-on lav mic. By contrast, the new d:screet Necklace mic is a purpose-built high-quality solution that greatly improves on that old workaround.



Audio-Technica, beyerdynamic, Electro-Voice, Trantec, and more. You can even get one for a standard XLR mic cable.

This mic is available in black, white and brown in lengths of 18.3" or 20.9". If, like me, you have a huge neck, you'll be much more comfortable with the longer necklace. I was sent the 18.3" model and it was a tad snug.

Specs

The mic itself is an omnidirectional pre-polarized pressure gradient condenser element with vertical diaphragm. It has a 20 Hz to 20 kHz ruler-flat frequency response, but comes prefitted with one of the company's high boost grid covers. This adds a 10 dB soft boost at 12 kHz, useful for when a lavalier mic like this one will be chest mounted. The mic is built to handle 144 dBA SPL peaks prior to clipping and further specs are as follows (from the DPA website):

- ~ Sensitivity, nominal ± 3 dB at 1 kHz: 6 mV/Pa; -44 dB re. 1 V/Pa
- ~ Equivalent noise level, A-weighted: Typically 26 dBA re. 20 μ Pa (max. 28 dBA)
- ~ Equivalent noise level, ITU-R BS.468-4: Typically 38 dB (max. 40 dB)
- ~ S/N ratio (A-weighted): 68 dBA
- ~ Total Harmonic Distortion (THD): < 1 % THD up to 123 dB SPL peak; < 1 % THD up to 120 dB SPL RMS sine
- ~ Dynamic range: Typically 97 dB
- ~ Output impedance: 30-40 Ω

great alternative to traditional lav mics as well as over-the-ear mics like DPA's d:fine headset models (reviewed May 2013).

Trust me, there will come a time when based on factors like a person's attire, or the liveness of the room, that a lav mic is not an option. Also, I know quite a few speakers and actors who feel that over the ear/headset mics are uncomfortable, conspicuous, and even showy.

Anyone can use it

This mic was also designed with the technophobe and novice in mind. Many people get selfconscious and second-guess both lav and headset placement, but almost all of us know how to wear a necklace! This design doesn't offer much room for placement mistakes.

I found this mic sounded wonderfully clean and clear, just like every other DPA mic I have used. Currently I have four various d:fine headsets in my public speaking/theater collection, and this sounds as good as all of them, plus it offers two advantages thanks to its placement. It is much less prone to plosives, and being by the throat, it captures a nice deep resonance.

On the downside, it is an open mic, and just like a lav, it will pick up noise if fabric or long hair crosses its path. I also found that some male speakers I wanted to use it on felt that the black model I was sent looked too much like a gothic choker... but on the other hand, it hides nicely in a shirt collar.

All in all, this is another great solution from the folks at DPA, complete with the sound these mics are famous for! ➡

Prices: \$649.95 (not including adapter)

More from: DPA Microphones,
www.dpamicrophones.com

The microphone

As the name suggests, this mic is built around one of DPA's d:screet series miniature omnidirectional microphone capsules. Typically the d:screet series mics are best described as standard lav-style microphones, i.e. a tiny mic capsule on the end of a long thin cable. DPA offers a plethora of optional kit packages, including solutions for both indoor and outdoor lavalier use—even with heavy-duty wind-screen assemblies, instrument mounting systems, and more.

For this new version, the mic is built into a rubber tube-style necklace with a magnetic, locking clasp on the back, along with a pivoting metal swivel where the cable attaches. The 3.6' cable terminates into one of DPA's familiar Microdot plugs, which can then attach to the wireless-pack connector of your choice. There are many different choices that will work with this mic for connecting to almost every brand of wireless belt pack—Shure,