

TOM YOUNG believes that DPA's 4099 Series fits a wide range of live instrument applications with rugged build quality, thoughtful design, and graceful performances.

DPA has a stellar reputation with live, recording, and broadcast professionals for capturing a natural, realistic sound, so I welcomed the opportunity to use DPA's new cost-effective 4099 Series of performance microphones, made in Denmark for an array of musical instruments. The first four models are the 4099 Guitar, 4099 Sax, 4099 Trumpet, and 4099 Violin. The 4099 Series is designed with the professional musician and his or her sound in mind; as such, it brings a more affordable high-end product to the marketplace.

Features

In itself, the 4099 microphone is a lightweight miniature super-cardioid condenser. Each 4099 in the series comes in a case incorporating a windscreen, shock mount, gooseneck, and an instrument-specific mount. Also included is a 3-pin XLR adapter, belt clip, carrying pouch, and storage case. The 4099 is designed with either of two different microphone sensitivities; normal for the guitar, sax, and violin versions which handle 142dB before clipping, and a high SPL version for trumpet that handles 152dB before clipping.



Photo credit: Ty Ford

The windscreen protects against wind noise, and the integrated shock mount virtually eliminates handling noise. The length of the gooseneck is fully adjustable to allow for the greatest flexibility in finding an instrument's sweet spot. The mounts can be adjusted to fit virtually any size instrument within their respective families, and, once fitted to an instrument, it can be taken off and on without losing the adjustments. The 3-pin XLR adapter can be used with or without the included belt clip, and is offered in two versions: the DAD4099, which is standard with the 4099 offering balanced output and an 80Hz low cut filter, or the optional DAD6001 with flat response, which is geared towards use on instruments that produce frequencies below 80Hz.

All 4099 mics are terminated with a proprietary MicroDot connector, and more than 35 connection adapters to wireless systems are available from DPA. The supplied XLR adapter allows the 4099 to work as a standard 48V phantom powered microphone. A belt clip located on the XLR connector can be removed and replaced with an enclosed ring to use directly in stage boxes or mixing consoles.

In Use

I had the opportunity to use these mics on several occasions, and my sound company – ACIR Professional – also used them on various shows. I was immediately impressed with the design of the 4099's mounting accessories. By squeezing two clamp knobs to expand the clip, you simply mount it on the instrument and release; each clamp fits the contour of its intended instrument sound source. The ability to easily adjust the height and lock the clip for remounting in the same position works very well. Importantly, the 4099 microphone mounting system is designed to be very instrument friendly; it never mars the finish of an instrument. Everyone I worked with

while using the 4099 Series commented on how easily it mounts.

The gooseneck is a proper length to adjust, and flexes in all directions to achieve the desired angle to the instrument. It appears rugged and stable when adjusted, and never needed to be re-adjusted regardless of the musician's movement. The cable, like all-miniature microphone cables, is light but strain relieved properly – with normal use, it should hold up well.

The mounted windscreen is very well designed, too. I have used Countryman Isomax mics for years on strings, and the windscreens have often fallen off and created wind problems during performance if not taped onto the cable. The 4099 windscreen is extremely secure and provides exceptional elimination of popping sounds.

Using the 4099 Series on strings, trumpet and sax, I found them to be excellent sounding, similar to what I have experienced with all DPA products. They reproduce a natural sound with nice richness, clarity, and presence. On one occasion in which the 4099 was on a sax for solos and the horn section was miked with other microphones, I would have preferred to use the 4099 Series on everything, simply because of the pleasant

DPA 4099

Performance Microphone Series

detail it provided to the instrument. And again, when using the DPA mic next to the Countryman, I wished I had more of them for the string section.

Summary

I would definitely buy these mics. The DPA 4099 Series of microphones are high quality products that will find a wide range of use in professional live sound. According to the company, there are plans to expand the line for additional instruments and applications; that's good news. If you are looking for a well-designed product with sonic excellence, you should consider the DPA 4099 instrument microphone series. **AM**

INFORMATION

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THE REVIEWER

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