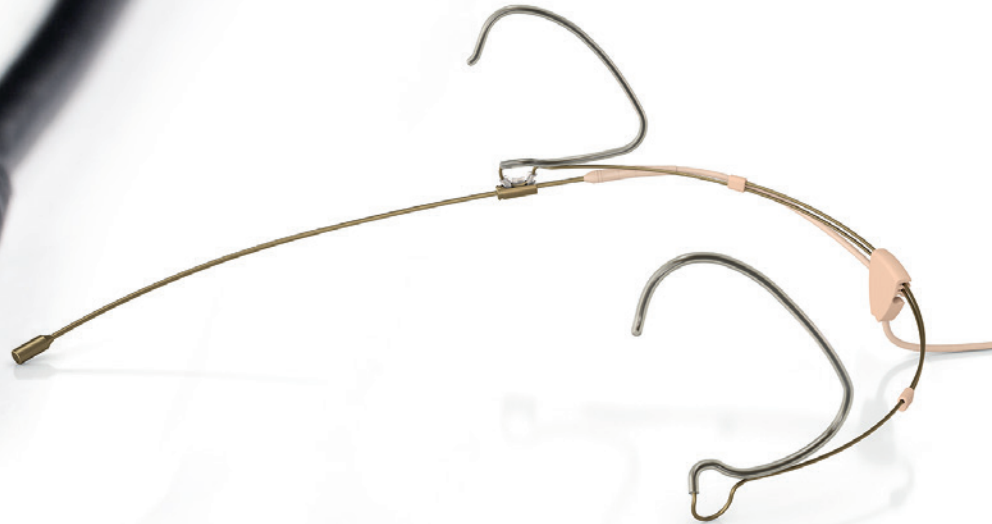


/ DPA 4060 (L) vs 6060 (R)...



/ ...and here's the 6066 headset version

DPA d:screet 6061 & d:fine 6066 headset

SIMON CLARK tests two brand new subminiature mics and discovers... size is important

Everything is getting smaller today — mostly production budgets, *sigh* — but also tech items, with the notable exception of the “smart” phone and the ultra, giga, super, HD TV screen. So why was I so taken aback when I first saw these new offerings from DPA? I’ll be honest and say that whilst I have always known the 4000 series of miniature mics sound superb, have low self-noise, fantastically low THD with the introduction of CORE by DPA, and are ubiquitous on film sets, I have used other personals in my work because the DPA’s are in my opinion, well... a bit big for hiding from eagle-eyed costume departments. Not any more!

Resolution was loaned two products from the new range, a d:fine 6066 headset and a d:screet 6061 personal lavalier. At first glance the 6061 gives the impression of just being a slight bulge at the end of the 1.6mm cable. Indeed, the diameter of the new product is just 3.4mm with its stainless steel cap fitted. Unlike the 4000 series, only one size of cap will be available, equivalent to the soft boost from that product range. DPA tell us that the new physical dimensions mean that it would take a very long cap to produce more HF boost. I say, with low self-noise like this you are unlikely to need a high boost, instead EQ on the desk should work fine. The cap is removable for cleaning after the talent has sweated on it, oh joy! DPA did not provide *Resolution* with mounting accessories with this (very early) example of the new personal but we are told a rotatable clip will be available when the range goes on sale. For my tests I used Rycote

Advanced Stickies and Undercovers to body mount it, which worked perfectly.

Test it I did because when a major manufacturer produces something like this, claims the sound is the same as before and calmly publishes self noise, and sensitivity figures identical to their previous product, a sceptic like me needs the evidence of their own ears. Recordings can be accessed via the *Resolution* website, in each case the equivalent (non-CORE) 4000 series is on Channel 2, and the 6000 on Channel 1. I am fairly confident that you will agree they are nearly identical. The photo online shows my next generation improved (after *Resolution* V17.2) near coincident mounting system using Robot Snot (sometimes called Clear Tac) to record the piano, the playing of which is courtesy of a composing student from NFTS who said “I guess you’ll want to hear stuff from the whole range of the keyboard then?”.

DPA 6000 vs 4000 series

The 6000 came out 3.5dB below the 4000, and the only manipulation I made was to boost it by this amount in order to make it easier to compare like-for-like aurally, and on screen. It is not until we get above 12kHz (and the threshold of my ancient ears) that the two products diverge significantly with the 6000 showing a fairly uniform lift. More importantly the sound is excellent, as with previous product. How did they do this? Well, unsurprisingly DPA are a little tight-lipped about the inner workings but they assure us that they have included their CORE by DPA technology in these mics.

In practise for TV and film drama use, this

range is a huge step forward. Hiding a mic this small will be much easier for us and I did not find clothing noise to be more of a problem than before. Indeed with this diameter of capsule we now have the option to create a little space around it inside a costume, without being seen, and thus reducing mechanical noise further. All this and the sound we expect from a DPA miniature microphone — I am struggling to find something to moan about.

The headset version differs from its predecessors in the mounting hardware as well as having the new smaller capsule. Bizarrely, the extremely thin boom of the unit lessens the shock of seeing how small this mic is. I do not have a lot of experience with the 4000 headset models but I can say that the 6000 is very comfortable indeed, feels secure on the head and, therefore easily forgotten about. With this range DPA have introduced a pivot point below the ear so that one no longer has to bend the boom arm to adjust the mic height. I welcome this because, when I have used headsets before, they always end up looking as if they have been in some terrible collision. The unit is designed to be dismantled for both left/right ear placement and the replacement of key components.

Overall DPA have performed the trick of making something extremely lightweight and small, which still feels sturdy enough to withstand professional use. I do not currently have a 4000 series headset to compare directly but the recordings I made with this unit sounded as clear and well defined as expected.

Now where did I put my spectacles? More worryingly, where did I put the new 6061 that DPA loaned *Resolution*? I remember now, the mic is still hidden on the specs, find one and I find the other. 📍

resolution/VERDICT

PROS Superb sound. Low self noise. Build quality. Easily hidden.

CONS What took them so long?!

www.dpamicrophones.com