



## Examining DPA Microphones

d:dicate 4011™ Cardioid Condenser Microphone

d:dicate 2011™ Twin Diaphragm Cardioid Microphone

d:vote™ CORE 4099 Instrument Microphone

I recently took three superb DPA microphones for a ride in my studio and used them in a variety of applications. These smartly-designed beauties are rugged enough to take out on the road, size-efficient enough to place with few restrictions while offering a very colorless representation of the sound source. The result is an accurate, ready-to-go, easy-to-work-with sound image.

One of the more interesting and helpful aspects of these DPA microphones falls under the heading of “pre-amplification.” DPA offers or includes different preamp modules that fit directly onto the mic capsules . I tried the microphones with the DPA preamp running directly into my recording interface and also through an Avalon VT737sp to compare.

My first session was about acoustic guitars. I used several techniques. In the first application, I auditioned the DPA d:dictate™ 4011A Cardioid Microphone (<https://www.dpamicrophones.com/ddictate/4011-cardioid-microphone>) using a common technique—centering the mic about 15 inches from the lower bout—aimed a few inches below the bridge. I used the DPA preamp/interface combo in one case and then again with my Avalon.



The result in both cases was exceptional in that the signal-to-noise ratio was super, super clean, very well-balanced warm, colorless resonance while expressing exceptional detail in the attack. I had no preference, really, regarding the influence of the preamp/recording interface vs. the channel strip (when set to flat). I'd be perfectly happy with the DPA preamp signal in most any case, opting for the channel strip if I needed to shape the sound, further. With that said, the DPA preamp combined with the mic provides a truly workable sound that needs very little attention when fitting it into a mix.

Then, I tried the same position again, but, adding the DPA d:dictate™ 2011C Twin Diaphragm Cardioid Microphone (<https://www.dpamicrophones.com/ddictate/2011-twin-diaphragm-cardioid-microphone>). Two opposite-facing miniature capsules are custom rebuilt inside this microphone. They are placed into a double-diaphragm, one-capsule composition. This combines the advantages of small capsules with the lower inherent noise achieved from a larger diaphragm area. These capsules provide fast impulse response and large frequency bandwidth. The

capsules are loaded to the supreme d:dictate™ microphone series preamps, which gives the sound more air and precision.



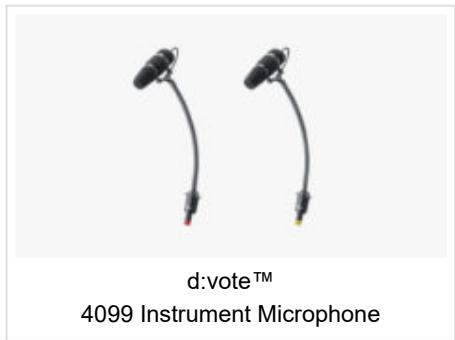
In my session with it, I placed it at the 12th fret in one instance—and also moved it back to about 18 inches, aiming it at the lower bout. By adding the twin diaphragm at the 12th fret the expression, of course, offered a stereo image, which I loved. I am usually trying to make the acoustic guitar sound as though it's being played by someone sitting in a chair right in front of you [when you are up close to the source you are hearing the source in stereo. When you step back further away from the source, it appears as more of a mono image]. The result was beautiful, rich, ambient and I was very pleased with the ease of working with it. DPA Microphones also offers this mic as a matched pair.

Further, I went on to audition these microphones on amplified guitars, vocals and percussion where my results were just as pleasing. With the d:dictate 4011A, there is plenty of headroom—go ahead and place it right up to the amp. The first-order cardioid (<https://www.dpamicrophones.com/ddictate/4011-cardioid-microphone>) pickup pattern provides superb separation between sound sources. Holler all you want. This mic bears no anxiety when handling your hot signal. It doesn't even break a sweat.



The d:dicate 2011C is rich and dynamic in the way it offers atmosphere and spacial information. This is the one that helps you establish a spatial environment. Each of these DPA microphones stand tall on their own. Put them together and these two beauties provide a basis for magic.

I also auditioned the d:vote™ 4099 id:vote™ CORE 4099 Instrument Microphone (<https://www.dpamicrophones.com/dvote/4099-instrument-microphone>). The miniature d:vote™, while discreet on stage, is already the recognized standard for this type of microphone and the CORE version adds just another layer of sound quality that further distances this mic from its competitors. d:vote™ CORE 4099 brings more clarity and details to your music, across the entire dynamic range. Further, it also features an enhanced shock mount design, providing excellent isolation from handling noise and rumble.



I took it for a spin on cello, violin, double-bass, acoustic guitar, drum toms, hi-hat, cymbals.... and just for the hell of it, my vocal out of curiosity. After the session, my very accomplished bass-player friend immediately bought one. I want one, too. This is a deadly accurate microphone that captures the instrument respectfully. Cranking these instruments through this mic into my studio, or through a Fishman PA was a superb experience. In the case of micing for live sound, I kept moving the instrument (and mic) closer to the speaker to see how loud we could make the signal before feedback. We basically had to sit on the speaker to get it to start looping. That's the first reason I want about 5 of these. I can see this being ideal in orchestra and ensemble settings.

With the cello player, the sound was so accurate the cellist asked me several times if it was coming through the speaker as I kept increasing the volume. In the studio it proved to be downright colorless, warm, balanced, expressive and tight. That's the second reason I want one.

The d:vote CORE 4099 being as versatile as it is, comes with a variety of mounting clips, so be sure you order the right clip for your instrument. You also have the opportunity to calibrate the mic sonically as per your preferred instrument. In my opinion, this is required gear for any serious musician who seeks the very best representation of their sound. I imagine sound engineers including these mics as standard gear in their arsenal of microphone and sound solutions.

To find out more about these terrific DPA microphones, the full extent of their capabilities and more products and accessories, be sure to visit [www.dpamicrophones.com](https://www.dpamicrophones.com) (<https://www.dpamicrophones.com/>).

To see a video discussing DPA Microphones and other products from the 2018 NAMM show (<https://makingmusicmag.com/the-2018-namm-experience/>) in Anaheim, CA, click here. (<https://makingmusicmag.com/making-music-mag-namm-2018-product-spotlight-dpa/>)



## About Chuck Schiele

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