

**AKG C5 & D5** mics £199 & £99

AKG claim 'feedback is dead' with their new mics. Robbie Stamp checks the squeals and squawks

he life of a live vocal mic is an

## WHAT IS IT?

Condenser (C5) and dynamic (D5) stage vocal microphones

#### CONTACT

Who: Harman UK (Pro) Tel: +44 (0)1707 668 222 Web: akg.com

### HIGHLIGHTS

- 1 Balanced, wellarticulated response
- 2 Good feedback rejection
- Solid construction

unforgiving one: screamed into, spat on and dropped it's tough. On top of this they are also expected to sound good on a wide variety of voices, reject the mass of unwanted noise on stage and not feedback too easily. And so it happens that AKG release two new handheld solutions to this age-old arena: the C5 cardioid condenser and the D5 supercardioid dynamic.

The C5 and D5 are made from identical casings, which are both sturdy and yet relatively light. Removing the grill from the C5 reveals the PB1000 presence booster attachment; a small, black plastic cover that clips on to the diaphragm to create a 5db boost

between 5kHz and 9kHz to improve vocal intelligibility.

The C5 and D5 were tested against two similar models by Sennheiser: the dynamic E935 and the E865 condenser. The D5 was also tested against the classic Shure SM58.

Before considering the sound, there are two major concerns for live vocal mics handling noise and feedback susceptibility. The C5 has very little handling noise. The D5, as is typical with dynamic mics, is a lot more noisy in the hand.

The feedback performance of the C5 is similar to the E865, though tending to howl-round at a lower frequency. The

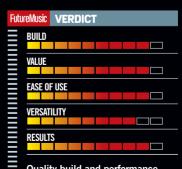
D5 also has a propensity to feedback at a lower frequency than the E935 and SM58 and took about 6db more gain to start the howling.

# And they sound like

The C5 was tested with the PB1000 presence booster in place, as is the factory supplied position. What is instantly noticeable is the lack of popping and plosive battering that can blight a vocal mic. The overall tone is full with a pleasing low end, plenty of high frequency articulation, but not suffering from the kind of over-sibilance that indicates a hyped HF response. The proximity effect is obviously pronounced, but in a way that good mic technique can really make use of. The cardioid pickup pattern is surprisingly tight and doesn't seem that much wider than the E865, which is super-cardioid. This means that off-axis sounds are well attenuated, but a vocalist must be careful to stay close to the mic to gain a consistent level.

The D5 has a super-cardioid pickup pattern, which makes it less prone to feedback and the pickup of off-axis sound sources. The sonic performance of this mic is a lot more accurate than the trusty '58, with well-balanced articulation across the vocal frequency range and enough sensitivity to capture dynamic extremities. In comparison to the E935, the D5 is slightly brighter with a fuller low end. The frequency range and transient response render a clear vocal performance, and the midfrequency fuzziness that's common with dynamic mics doesn't trouble the D5.

For the vocalist in need of a good quality mic that'll take a sound beating, I would happily recommend either of these mics for live use (I also used them for tracking guides in the studio and was pleased with the results). I'm confident that you'd be hard-pushed to find competitors out there that better them at this price point. Fi



Quality build and performance from the microphone giants that will flatter a wide range of voices.

(84) FutureMusic

FMU198.rev\_akg 84 29/1/08 13:11:37