sE X1 and Project Reflexion Filter Bundle £169

A large diaphragm condenser and reflection filter for £169? There must be a catch. *Robbie Stamp* checks out the latest sE bundle

WHAT IS IT?

Cardioid condenser microphone and reflection filter

CONTACT

Who: Sonic Distribution Tel: +44 (0)845 500 2500 Web: seelectronics.com

HIGHLIGHT

1 Full and pleasing LF mic response 2 Highly effective and easy to use reflection filter 3 Excellent value for money

SPECS

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Polar Pattern: Cardioid
Additional Controls: Bass
cut and 10dB pad
Frequency range: 20Hz to

Sensitivity: -32dBV/Pa (25.1mV/Pa) Equivalent Noise Level: 16dB (A weighted) Max SPL: 125dB (0.5% THD @ 1000Hz)

Output Impedance: 200 Additional Controls: High-pass filter switch

Package contents: X1 mic mic clip, reflexion filter, mounting clamp assembly and spanner he Reflexion Filter has been a great success for sE as well as an inspiration for a dearth of clones. To answer challenges

to their reputation for innovation, performance and sheer value for money, sE have released this bundle of their new X1 condenser microphone and Project Reflexion Filter, a cut-down version of their original design. At £169 this is no doubt a hard bargain to match, but the value for money can only work if the products can deliver, and so with no further ado...

The XI

The X1 may be a low cost microphone but it doesn't feel that way. The brass shell and black rubberised finish not only give it a rugged solidity but they also create a well damped low resonance casing for the condenser diaphragm. sE are keen to stress the hand-made production process used for

this mic, an approach that manifests not only in the build quality, which is excellent, but in the performance of the microphone. The X1 sounds like it looks and feels – solid, sturdy and unfussy.

The frequency response has an even-ness and mid-range clarity that is often lacking in designs at this price point. The essential tone tends towards the 'warm' without incurring those dreaded adjectives of 'muddy' and 'fuzzy'! There is no overt rise in the upper mids and instead there is a gentle lift in the HF range that helps balance the strong lower frequency response.

The X1 works very well with vocals and acoustic instruments, delivering a full bodied sound with a smooth mid range and un-hyped top. The flipside of this is that some harmonically aggressive sources, such as a distorted guitar amp can come across a little hollow or distant sounding. The output is very much in the 'healthy' category

which allows for a substantively low self-noise performance and therefore less need to crank preamps. This makes the X1 good for use on quieter sources.

Project RF

The Project Reflexion Filter uses the same basic design and patent-pending materials as the original, and even though the layering is less comprehensive, this has not left it lacking in effectiveness and the construction quality is still excellent.

The strong yet lightweight clamping mechanism is easy to assemble and adjust. The horizontal bar mount can pitch up/down over a 180° range, the filter can move up/down by 195mm while the mic clamp can move back and forth within the filter by around 150mm. In combination this allows for a great deal freedom with regard to mic/filter positioning and mic choice.

There is an appreciable 'drying up', characterised by a reduction in HF and increase in perceived LF, but no overt narrow band resonances occur as one might expect from placing a mic so close to a (relatively) solid surface. Of course the filter cannot remove all room sound, and doing so is rarely a pleasant effect, but it is a useful and gentle adjustment to the room reflections. Though particularly suited to vocal recording it is equally effective for instrument/amplifier recording and focussing the mic on more distant sources, e.g. set back from a drum kit.

The Bundle

The bundle is best suited to vocal work and in this role, I was particularly pleased with the results. Both products are set to retail at £99 each, which is hard to better, but as a bundle for £169 it seems impossible to beat. Though it is clearly aimed at the more budget conscious end of the market it would also make a real bargain addition to any mic collection. FM





A true bargain bundle deal with a very attractive value vs performance ratio.

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