

by Mitch Gallagher

# Stereo Microphones

## Three ways to double your miking pleasure

### Microtech Gefell M 930

**Price:** \$1,000 each; M 940 supercardioid, \$1,000 each. Matched stereo pair, \$2,350

**Accessories Included:** wood case, two MH93.1 metal stand mounts, SH 93 vertical XY stereo mounting bar or TD 93 stereo mounting bar. Case holds mics, mounts, and either stereo mic bar.

**Contact:** [www.microtechgefell.com](http://www.microtechgefell.com)

There's more to miking in stereo than just putting up a couple of mics. For best results you need a near-identical pair of mics that's matched to the audio to be captured, positioned to avoid capturing too much ambience, and carefully placed to eliminate phase cancellation.

The models on review here are all sold as separate units, but they're also available in matched sets for stereo miking applications, which is how I've evaluated them.

### MICROTECH GEFELL M 930

Microtech Gefell has a long history in the business; they date back to 1928, founded by Georg Neumann in Berlin. During WWII, they moved to the town of Gefell. After the war, some of the staff returned to Berlin and started the Neumann company; the Gefell branch continued to operate behind the Berlin Wall. Since the fall of the Wall, Gefell mics have again become available in the West. Today, Microtech Gefell mics are still hand built and individually tested and measured.

The M 930 mic looks like a compact small-diaphragm model, but it's actually a large diaphragm design — it has a gold-evaporated 1-inch diaphragm. Each mic in a stereo pair is carefully measured and matched using an anechoic chamber and automated robotics to ensure

accuracy — the tests cover both on-axis and off-axis response. M 930 mics are available in satin nickel or can be ordered in dark bronze finish. You can order the M 930 in matched arrays of five, if you're into surround miking.

When you order a stereo pair, you can get it with either an "ORTF" stereo mounting bar — a flat plate that mounts to a mic stand and holds a mic on each end — or Microtech Gefell's very cool XY mounting bar, which mounts vertically on a mic stand; the mics mount to the side of the bar, and are positioned head to head for best XY results.

But the level of mounting detail doesn't stop there. The hefty metal clips allow the mics to rotate, and are inscribed with angle markings; this allows you to exactly set the angle of the mics and repeat the angle of the mics when you go back for another session. Brilliant.

With this type of mounting hardware, the M 930 set is well suited for location recording and

broadcast. But that doesn't mean it isn't outstanding for studio applications, as well. The M 930 can be used anywhere you'd normally use a large-diaphragm mic (it is, after all, a large diaphragm mic) . . . vocals, electric guitar, etc., all benefit from the mic's full, smooth sound, high sound pressure level handling, and great dynamic response. For vocals, you may not get quite the visceral gratification standing in front

of the compact M 930 that you do from a huge tube mic, but sonically the M 930 delivers.

Using them as a stereo pair in the studio, I had great results. The mics are small and light enough to be positioned just about anywhere. Both the stereo mounting bars work well, but the vertical XY bar is ingenious. I also tried the M 930 mics as a spaced pair mounted to two mic stands.

In every case, the M 930 came through with fine imaging and open sound. The large diaphragms provide full low-end response and a smooth top end. On severely detuned steel-string guitar, the bass strings were round and punchy, while the top strings had a lovely sparkle without any strident edge. On nylon-string guitar, the M 930 mics sounded very natural. My favorite position was as a spaced pair, about 15 inches in front of the guitar. The sound was nicely present, with good fullness and great dynamics.

On percussion, the M 930 is natural sounding. There was clear detailed top end on metallic instruments, without too much attack. On other instruments such as rainstick and shakers, the sound was detailed and present. You could hear each rattle as the instrument was moved.

I really liked the M 930 set on every source I tried it on — if you've only used small-diaphragm condenser models for stereo recording, give this large-diaphragm model a try. You'll be convinced.

- Brilliant mounting hardware
- Fat low-end response
- Smooth, detailed top end
- Extremely low noise
- High SPL handling

