

British Jazz Singer Claire Martin Using DPA d:facto II Vocal Mic

Written by Frank Hammel
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LONDON — Jazz singer Claire Martin, who has been performing with DPA Microphones' d:facto II Vocal Microphone, has sung praises for the clarity achieved with the Danish microphone company's recently-launched product.

More details from DPA Microphones (www.dpamicrophones.com):

“This is definitely the right microphone for me,” she says. “It picks up all the colors in my voice and I can hear every breath, which makes it easier to control phrasing. It almost makes singing easier as I can try out vocal idea's and actually hear myself changing the timber of my sound — something I felt was lost with other microphones. It also delivers great sound without my having to be right close to the mic. So, I can definitely play around with lower end notes by coming in a little closer for a bassier response. This works really well in ballads, I feel.”

Martin, who has been singing professionally for over 25 years, has garnered numerous awards and rave reviews for her work, including winning the BBC Jazz Award for Best Vocalist and six British Jazz Awards. She has released a total of sixteen albums, all on the Linn label, and has collaborated with various prominent musicians, including Martin Taylor, John Martyn, Stephane Grappelli, Kenny Barron, Sir Richard Rodney Bennett, Jim Mullen and Nigel Hitchcock. In addition to her singing career, she is also a co-presenter for Jazz Line Up on BBC Radio 3 which is now in its thirteenth year.

Martin's decision to try DPA's d:facto II Vocal Microphone was inspired by a sound engineer who was working with her at the Pizza Express Jazz club in London's Soho.

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“The engineer was raving about the mic and saying how it would suit my voice,” she explains. “Other singers, as well as my record company Linn Records, had often talked about the quality of these microphones, so at last I was able to try one out in an intimate club setting. I was immediately impressed by its lightness and handling.”

The d:facto II Vocal Microphone was supplied by DPA’s UK distributor Sound Network and after that initial try-out, Martin was hooked.

“The d:facto II captures every nuance of my vocal sound and, once I had worked out the direction handling, it actually made me feel very confident about my diction and tone. I also notice that I don’t lose any level when I give my sound more power and pull away from the mic. The sound is still clear, full and more rounded. You can hear the whole breath. As a jazz singer, this is the sound I’m after. This microphone certainly delivers what I want and I definitely feel I’m using the best microphone there is.”

Martin’s d:facto Vocal Microphone is now in use at every one of her concerts. Thanks to its ability to deliver high-quality audio she feels she can cope much better with whatever the PA system throws at her.

“In jazz clubs some PAs are better than others, and this microphone gives me a fighting chance of getting a great sound,” she says. “I also love how light it is.”

In June 2011, Martin was appointed Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) for services to music. She is currently touring with the Montpellier Cello Quartet, a Brighton-based cello group, showcasing new arrangements for voice and cello quartet by Sir Richard Rodney Bennett, Mark Anthony Turnage and Djano Bates. She plans to return to the recording studio later this year to begin work on her seventeenth album.