



## Why I Use Neumann Microphones

July 2000 by Kyle Gordon

I am a professional studio singer and composer in NYC. As a singer, there is no mic that I would rather sing on than an M49. It fits the character of my voice extremely well, and I have never come across another mic that fits my voice in the same way. Singing on an M49 seems much less fatiguing, and never gets harsh, with plenty of sheen to spare. It is my favorite mic to sing on. Overall, I'm a fan of Neumann mics in general; KM184s, vintage M49s and trusty U 87s in particular. I own a U 87, and a pair of KM184s, and hope someday to acquire a vintage M49.

As a composer, and project studio owner, I rely on my U 87 and KM184s for most of my condenser applications. Between the two of them, I am covered for almost any situation. The U 87 seems to be the default for vocals, and it is a high quality mic that I use as an Omni mic for M/S stereo applications (with a ribbon mic as the bi-directional side addressed element). At home, and in studios all over Manhattan, I sing into U 87s, and I will usually request one if there is another condenser set up, and they have an 87. I personally own other mics, and other singers sound good on other mics as well, but for my voice, an '87 is a known quantity, and one I know I can use to my advantage. I have had good experiences on TLM 103s as well, but anything brighter usually doesn't work out too well.

I like my KM184s on acoustic guitar a lot. They have a wonderful quality that seems to leap out of the speakers. The capsules are small, and due to their lower mass, they pick up transients and high frequencies extremely well. Stereo imaging is excellent. Stringed instruments, drum overheads, piano, percussion, choir, orchestral uses are all areas where the KM184s shine. They have an open tone that often leaves my EQ untouched. Mic placement is critical with small condensers, and when you get it right, its just beautiful, and natural, requiring very little additional processing. I have never before formally endorsed any products, and the number of audio products that make me warm and fuzzy is a very short list, the majority of them these days being vastly inferior to many vintage pieces available on the used market. Quality is sorely lacking, but I am happy to say that in my opinion, Neumann is making some of the finest microphones available, and I use them regularly. Almost always, my choice for condenser microphones is Neumann.

The equipment we choose to make our recordings with is the equipment that defines our sound. A big part of my sound is Neumann condenser microphones. To be fair, there are ribbons (Royer, Beyer, etc) and dynamics (such as the Sennheiser 421, EV RE20, and Shure SM57, SM7, etc) that I like and use for certain applications, such as guitar cabinets, bass cabinets, kick drum, snare drum, toms, tambourine and others. No mic cabinet is complete without at least a few of these too.

