
Subject: Microphones

Posted by [DJ Dave](#) on Tue, 26 Oct 2010 16:24:56 GMT

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Ok, there is nothing worse than having a show where you are the MC, and your mike dies!! I have had this happen too many times. I am starting to think it may be that my microphone is not compatible with the rest of my equipment, or is there a good mike out there that can endure anything?

Subject: Re: Microphones

Posted by [Thermionic](#) on Tue, 26 Oct 2010 19:02:50 GMT

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Hi DJ Dave,

I'd recommend the old workhorse Shure SM58. Without going into lengthy details, I have a great deal of experience with both live sound and recording, both in front of the mixer as a musician and behind it "twisting knobs," and I've only seen two SM58s fail in about 25 years.

Both were dropped on hard floors and landed right on the windscreen. One actually died; the other had a scratchy voice coil after that. And, I feel that both were flukes, because I've seen SM58s take a LOT more abuse than that and still work perfectly.

In one group I used to play with, our four SM58s were horribly dented and chipped, having been dropped on concrete floors untold times. They looked worse than any mics I've seen to this day; really disfigured! But, they still sounded flawless, and do to this day, about 20 years after they were bought new.

There's an old joke about the SM58:

Bob - "Hey, hand me a hammer."

Bill - "I don't have one."

Bob - "Then hand me a SM58 instead."

Granted, the newer ones with the Chinese capsules aren't quite what the American-made ones were as far as sound quality (at least to my own ears), but I've used them for a few years now and have had no problems whatsoever. You just won't go wrong with a SM58, especially for the price. Are there better sounding dynamic vocal mics for stage use? Yes. Are there tougher mics? Well, very few, if any.

Thermionic

Subject: Re: Microphones

Posted by [DJ Dave](#) on Wed, 27 Oct 2010 17:52:42 GMT

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Cool, Thermionic - thanks for all of this information. This really helps. One thing I do know is that I can't afford to buy any more "cheap" mikes!

Subject: Re: Microphones

Posted by [Thermionic](#) on Thu, 28 Oct 2010 04:57:24 GMT

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Hi DJ Dave,

I just checked Musician's Friend to see if a SM58 still costs about \$100 these days, and I had to chuckle a bit when I read the product description:

"The Shure SM58 mic is legendary for its uncanny ability to withstand abuse that would destroy any other microphone. The Shure SM58 has not only helped to define the sound of rock vocals on stage, it's also been used as a hammer to build stages and gone on to perform flawlessly later at the gig."

LOL! I guess I'm not the only one who knows that old hammer joke!

As for the price, it was still \$100, which is what the SM58 and SM57 have cost for about the past 25 years. FYI, if you're not familiar with it, the SM57 is the instrument mic counterpart of the SM58, and is just as tough. It has the same capsule but a different acoustic labyrinth, which is what sets the mic's polar pickup pattern, and also affects its frequency response to a small degree.

Here's more from the SM58 ad:

"Using a club's house system? You'll be singing through an SM58. And in the studio? Daniel Lanois always uses the SM58 or Beta 58 on Bono's vocals."

I was pretty surprised to read the second half of this statement, about Bono's vocals. I've honestly never listened to U2, but I heard something by them maybe a year ago or so that totally floored me. It wasn't the song or anything about it, it was the absolutely dynamite vocal sound the recording engineer got!

The song started with the words, "Every generation gets a chance to change the world," which was sung acapella, so you could really hear all the recording qualities of the vocal track. It was on one of those advertisements you have to endure before watching a news video on the 'Net, but even on the little computer speakers I could tell the vocal sound was positively knockout. There was something about it that I still can't quite explain, but "it" was incredible, whatever "it" is.

I saw that ad a few more times, and ever since then I've wondered what kind of mic, mic preamp, and board were used to get that sound, and precisely what the engineer did to it afterward in Pro Tools. If it's true that it's a SM58 or Beta 58, I'm blown away, because that particular vocal sound impressed me VERY much and really caught my attention. Granted, it's no doubt ran through a very good tube mic preamp, as doing so really wakes a SM58 up and makes it sound incredible in the studio. But still, I ain't never heard one sound like THAT.

BTW, Sweetwater (my fave) and Musician's Friend are both great places to order from, but if you wanna buy your mic at a brick-and-mortar store it shouldn't be any problem. Most of your better quality music stores have Shure mics, and if you're in a town big enough to have two decent music stores, at least one of them will be a Shure dealer.

Thermionic

Subject: Re: Microphones
Posted by [DJ Dave](#) on Thu, 28 Oct 2010 12:54:40 GMT
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Wow, thanks for checking that for me! \$100 is actually very affordable, especially for a mike that is going to last! I'm almost tempted to replace my hammer with it, too - not! But, it's good to know that it is that tough.

And I thought that I was the only one who listened beyond the vocals, and actually appreciated the quality of the recording equipment. Good to know I'm not alone!

Subject: Re: Microphones
Posted by [Adveser](#) on Thu, 28 Oct 2010 13:49:48 GMT
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Yes, these two models are amazingly good. So good that dozens of instrument manufacturers make clones of them that aren't quite as durable. Some cost about the same. I just bought a cheap model for 8.00 bucks, electrically, they are almost identical.