

Roswell Pro Audio Delphos II Condenser Microphone

A solid, all-round studio staple gets a robust update

REVIEW BY PAUL VNUK JR.

I can't believe it's already been one year since we looked at the Roswell Pro Audio Colares Boutique Vocal Condenser Microphone (October 2018). The large-diaphragm Colares was best summarized in one word: attitude. It's even harder to believe that it was back in September of 2015 that we introduced our readers to the Roswell Pro Audio brand, which launched with the affordable, classic FET-flavored Mini K47, a pint-sized condenser mic with super big sound—a pair of which still sees regular use in my studio.

In between the Mini K47 and the Colares, Roswell released Delphos. We first reviewed it under its original name, Aurora, in May of 2016. Seven months later in our December 2016 Buyer's Guide it was re-released under the Delphos name with a snazzy new enamel finish. I summarized the Delphos as a jack-of-all-trades microphone that sounds good on pretty much any source, from vocals to guitars, drums, and anywhere you may desire a clean, honest capture that's rich and full but not too colored or imposing.

Now Roswell brings us the Delphos II. According to company founder Matt McGlynn, it's such a significant upgrade that it's essentially a new mic. When it comes to upgrading microphones, Matt McGlynn is a master of the game. That may sound like hyperbole but the fact is, Matt's pedigree includes being the founder of Recording Hacks (recordinghacks.com) which is arguably the most significant and historical microphone database in existence. Matt also runs Microphone Parts (<http://microphone-parts.com>), which is one of the top resources for microphone hot rodding and modding, DIY parts, and microphone kits. His third company, Roswell Pro Audio, is a distillation of the two worlds, as Matt knows what he wants his mics to sound like, and what parts to use to accomplish it.

Delphos, Chapter II

Keeping with the prominent Roswell aliens theme, Delphos is a town in Kansas and the site of the 1971 Delphos Ring Incident; Google it to learn more! Now, back to our regularly scheduled microphone.

The second generation Delphos is now housed in the same robust, one-pound, 7.24" x 1.97" brass body as the Colares. It features a dark metallic blue multi-stage enamel finish and an embossed brass Roswell badge. Delphos features a -10dB pad switch on its upper left and a

three-position polar pattern switch on the right, with settings for Figure-8, Cardioid and Omni patterns. Note that the original Delphos was Cardioid and Omni only.

The Delphos II comes as a kit in a small rectangular briefcase. Inside are a microfiber cleaning and storage bag and a Cutaway™ shock mount, which is thin but sturdy, with an open front that allows the mic to get up close and tight to a source.

Specs

The multi-pattern Delphos makes



Review reprinted from Recording Magazine, Oct 2019 issue.

use of a dual-backplate 34mm center-terminated K67-style capsule. It offers a frequency response of 20–16,000 Hz, 35 mV/Pa sensitivity, 200Ω impedance, >82 dBA signal-to-noise ratio, and <12 dBA of equivalent noise. These specs reflect improvements over the original in overall sensitivity and S/N ratio. The Delphos is a transformerless JFET design that uses NOS transistors and high-grade components including low-noise, high-precision metal film type resistors. According to Roswell, "The JFET is selected for low input capacitance, then manually biased in our shop to maximize signal level without distortion, and the components in the DC circuit are also selected by ear."

Despite the microphone's updated specs, its sound capture remains tonally similar to the original, with a gently boosted low end from 20 to 100 Hz and a flat mid response to 1 kHz. It rises 1–2dB from 3 to 4 kHz, and another 1dB between 8 and 16 kHz, culminating in a steep roll-off to complete the curve.

Sound

In the Roswell Pro Audio family, Delphos II is the sonic antithesis of the Colares. Where Colares is bold, forward and ready to 'get into it,' the Delphos II is laid back, smooth and I do say, polite. **It has the clear neutral tonality of a classic solid-state mic, with a detailed yet nicely smooth top end.**

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There's nothing forceful, brittle, or fighting about the Delphos II. By comparison, I'd say that Delphos II exhibits C414 clarity with the top end of a 1970's U 87.

One word that comes to mind as it relates to the sound and function of the Delphos II is predictable. Its full proximity effect rolls off gently and evenly as you back off. It has a radio announcer thickening in the Fig-8 mode, a gentle forward centering in cardioid mode, and an open clarity in Omni mode.

Use

Like the original, this is a mic that can work on darn near any source. The caveat is that if you're looking for it to punch or cut its way through a mix or add weight and character to a source, the Colares and Mini K47 might be better choices.

Delphos II is a mic that captures sources as they are in a natural, non-hyped way; it doesn't add its own aural opinion to the sound. The Delphos II has just enough richness to keep it from sounding dull or clinical. Despite being a large-diaphragm mic, it falls into almost the same sonic camp as a classic small-diaphragm Neumann KM 84 or a Shure SM81. Its slightly nuanced, even, and non-hyped

capture contributes to its classic FET feel.

As with the original, Delphos II is equally at home on acoustic guitars, electric guitar cabinets, lead or backing vocals, strings, brass, and percussion. Favorite moment: I was blown away by how good a pair of Delphos II mics sounded as drum overheads. This was a rare case of zero EQ needed beyond some gentle highpass filtering; I threw up the faders and the drums sounded even, balanced and very real.

Conclusion

As with the original Delphos, this is the best all-around workhorse mic in the Roswell Pro Audio line. Every studio needs a mic or two with this kind of sound and style. At \$899 street, the Delphos II offers a great balance of sound quality, build quality, and value.

PRICE: \$999 (*\$899 street*)
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