

## Heil PR30

### First Glance

Out of the box the mics seemed lighter than a usual mic of that size. They came nicely packaged in a cardboard box with foam padding, nice for storing and transporting the mics. A surprisingly high quality mic clip was included.

### Plugging It In

The first test I did with the mic was a recording of acoustic guitar. The response of the mic was more than I expected for its great price. The bottom end was very full and accurate, the mids came through present, and the highs were clean and crisp. As I moved the mic the tonal characteristics changed dramatically yet it was very easy to get just the right sound. Moving the mic away really captured the room reflections with detail almost too much detail. Moving the mic almost added some harshness to it that I didn't notice before. Overall I loved this mic for acoustic guitar. It really captured what an acoustic guitar sounds like. It will probably be my first choice for an acoustic guitar in the studio for now on. I have a feeling that the mic wouldn't really be the best on stage for acoustic because of the pickup pattern. I could be wrong though, I have yet to try it.

The next test I did was on overheads. I set two of them up and recorded in stereo. They picked up more than I thought they would and had good stereo imaging. Anything that the tom and snare mics missed these caught. For me that is somewhat of a problem because it takes away from that driving punch of the set. The room I recorded in was not treated, which certainly added to this. A little dampening of the room would probably fix this. I could tell that these mics would sound good in a controlled environment. They really brought out the sparkle in the symbols even with all the reverberation of the room.

The last full test I did with the mic was on live electric guitar. Personally I am a big fan of *Sennheiser's* side address guitar amp mics. The *Sennheiser e906* and *e609 Silver* are always my first two choices. Switching over to something different was kind of hard for me. When the guitarist started to play through some notes and power-chords I knew that I was going to be more than happy with the *PR30*. I was miking one of those small *Fender 35* or *50* watters; I am not exactly sure the model, anyway. The mic made it sound like a full stack. I miked it close and barely had to use any eq. Even in a six person band the guitar was very present and shined throughout the entire frequency range. The lows where shaking, the mid/bass frequencies growled, and highs screamed. I was very satisfied with the response when the guitarist switched to one of his "wah" settings it really, well, "wahhed". It sounded very dynamic and punchy. I will without doubt use it again. I might not choose it over the *Sennheisers* but I loved it and it is now one of my favorites for this as well.

## Overall

I tried these mics on a few more things as well and the results were just as satisfying. Be careful on your microphone placement, it makes all the difference. They haven't been dropped yet but I think they could a few times without a worry. These mics are really good at doing a lot of things and for the price they are a steal. A funny story about that is when I was at the AES (Audio Engineering Society) Convention. I went up to Heil's booth and wanted to try this one out because I knew I would be buying it. They had it there next to the *PR20* and *PR40* and I asked to only hear the *PR30* and the guy (not Bob Heil) said that their little testing machine just blew up the other day so they were stuck with an old little mixer. I asked if they could turn the other mics off because I just wanted to hear the *PR30*. The guy was clearly getting frustrated and said something like; just buy the damn thing its super cheap. So I just tried it out the best I could and with barely any success I bought two of them.

Get two of them if you can and you will be astonished. Thank you, Joel at Full Compass, for the great mics and excellent service.

- Billy