



Danny Davenport is armed and ready with the TLM 193 and U 87 microphones

May 2000 by Danny Davenport - Promoter, Artist Developer and President/Owner of Firstake Studio

The music business is an ever-changing complexity of people with dreams, talent and experience in a wide variety of areas which, in every way, are totally dependant on each other to make it all work. Without each other, the chain is broken and it all falls apart. One of the most overlooked links in this chain (as far as the public is concerned), is the equipment used to bring the sounds you hear and fall in love with together for the radio or stereo or now to the Internet. I for one (along with countless others familiar with the process) believe one of, if not THE most important links in this chain, is the microphone.

That's Danny on the left and Buddie Buie of the Atlanta Rythum Section, the world famous Buie/Cobb writing team and the Lowery Music Group, on the right.

Growing up in a small mining town on the Georgia / Tennessee border, I learned the value of owning something and what it takes to own something of value. By that, I mean, we were rich in many ways, but not with money, and we learned to appreciate what we had, and strive to achieve the best.

My Dad was a singer in a gospel quartet, and had an old Roberts tape recorder and a couple of mics that he used to tape his quartet. The group would set a mic at the piano and stand one up in the middle of the room and record for hours. Every time I had the chance, I'd tinker with it to see how it worked and listen to my own voice. I never thought it sounded like me.

I followed that part of my dad's life and started my own musical group, The Blazers. Not gospel, mind you, but still musical, and suitable for recorded material.

I found my way into the music business and continued to tinker with recording gear throughout my life until my dad passed away and my mother gave all the children our inheritance early so she could see us get use of it while we were young and in need of a helping hand. I built a small woodshed studio behind my house and proceeded to find and develop the career of Travis Tritt from the ground up.

The time spent in every area of the process was exciting and rewarding but we always knew we were missing one very important piece of gear, a Neumannmic. We made due with what we had, but were never completely satisfied without a Neumann.

My first encounter with a Neumann came at a session with Mike Clark, who runs Southern Tracks here in Atlanta, while recording a band I was working with at the time. I remember thinking "Geezzzz, this is like standing in front of a fabulous mirror, only its audible, not visual!" Mike is the curator of one of the most unbelievable vintage mic. collections in the world, which I might add, houses some of the best vintage Neumann's ever made. They not only house them, they use them. You can visit online and see for yourself at ▶
<http://www.southerntracks.com>.

Tritt's first album Proud of the Country served its purpose, however, and helped us land our deal with Warner Bros. and now, some 14 million pressings of various albums later, I decided to build another studio and retire from Warner Bros and enjoy recording music full time. Knowing my story and what was lacking in the other "WOODSHED", (my original studio), my two bosses, Tom Biery and John Boulos (Sr. VPs at WB), gave me, at my retirement party, a Neumann U 87Ai as my parting gift from WB for the new studio.

