



## Desert Wind Records and the M 147 Tube

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Desert Wind is a musical group headed by myself, Alan Scott Bachman. I'm originally from Rochester, New York and now live in Salt Lake City, Utah. I'm currently an Assistant Attorney General for the State of Utah during days and a musician/engineer in the evenings and weekends.

I first became interested in recording through my childhood friend, Mick Guzauski, of whom you may have heard. I still remember being in Mick's basement studio when we were young teenagers and Mick said "This mic cost \$100". I'd guess this was about 1968... and I could not believe that someone I knew had such an expensive microphone!

Anyway, back to the story at hand. When the M 147 came out at the end of last year, I was very interested in that microphone. I ordered one and received serial #26 and became even more excited. Then I got a second one (serial number 205). These mics sound great on everything I've tried; they have plenty of high end and yet the sound is smooth and silky. The bass is also fine, although not exaggerated like it is with some tube mics.

The mic was great on flute and piano and all kinds of percussion. Our band features flute and a lot of percussion ranging from traps to middle eastern drums, tars, riqs, bells, djembes, etc. I was surprised how well the mic sounded on guitars and mandolins. At first I had both mics in front of the acoustic guitars/mandolins, but found that this picked up a lot of "picking" sound, especially on the mandolin tremolos. Perhaps this could be because I am not the best mandolinist... Anyway, I found out that by putting one of the microphones facing the back of the mandolin it received a lot of the richness of the wood instead of just the picking sound. This blended with the front mic aimed at one of the "f" holes (this is not a swear word) and ended up producing just the sound I was looking for.

I've tried small diaphragm mics that were suppose to be great on acoustic instruments, but I found that while they were more accurate, I really wanted great sound. Aren't musicians supposed to take the world around them and add beauty to it? Well, these mics serve that purpose. How many of the millions of musicians in this world really want to sound on their recordings exactly as they really sound? Just witness the rise of auto-tune type components! There is nothing wrong with this...

From the time a tree was cut to make a drum frame, people altered their natural surroundings to make their music sound better and better. How many people go to hear classical concerts on pianos built in 1810! While they may be beautiful pianos, the real truth is that sometimes instruments actually do evolve to a higher state. The same is true of microphones. As beautiful as many of the older microphones are and the wonderful purpose they serve there is a greatness of taking the best of those antique mics and adding the best of modern technology. This, I believe, is the M 147 mic.

My only regret is that I wish there was another version priced between it and the M 149 that had a couple of more patterns. Yes, the M 147 has to be positioned properly and this may cause impatience in major studios pressed for time. For the project studio, most owners would rather save thousands of dollars and get that rigorous exercise of moving the microphone a couple of inches. I also found that these mics worked well with tube mic pres and compressors. While this mic is not a real exaggerated "tube" sound, it is warm.

This is good because the tube mic pre and compressor can always make the mic sound "fatter" but it is hard to make a "fat" mic "thinner". (I guess this mimics the fact that it is always easier to gain weight than to lose it!) I even tried the mic on snare drum and the drummer was very happy with it. It is a quiet mic for a tube mic and it is a hot output. This really helped when used with a nice rich tube mic pre and compressor. I did not try these mics on male vocals but they work great on female vocals. Some of the reviews I have read seem to agree with this point. What do I know? I am just a project studio guy. I guess I know as much as the other millions of project studio folks springing up all over now that "studio" quality is so accessible. While the great engineers "analyze to paralyze" all the statistics, etc., I just know that my ears liked this mic. As long as the public still uses their ears with music, these mics will do well. Here is another important point for us project studio owners. This is a NEUMANN. While I do not believe in buying something because of the name, it is a fact that Neumann mics hold their value. And if, for economic reasons, we might have to temporarily or permanently sell our equipment, it is nice to know that such microphones are "money in the bank". For more information on Desert Wind Records, please visit ▶ <http://members.aol.com/andalin/>

