

SCHERTLER PIANO TRANSDUCERS: GOOD VIBRATIONS

Schertler Audio Transducers of Switzerland has put an end to the nightmare of miking pianos. Schertler's DYN-P piano transducer mounts onto any piano's soundboard. It sounds infinitely better than the piezo pickups typically used in live situations and approaches the super-sensitive quality of high-end studio mics.

The transducer itself works kind of like a stethoscope, picking up the acoustic vibrations of the instrument's body via direct contact. As a result, you get a very natural sound with virtually no feedback or bleeding, no matter where you are in the studio or on stage. This gives musicians and engineers a surprising amount of freedom. You can put the piano as close as you want to the rhythm section or horn players and still achieve total signal separation. You can even keep the lid completely open if you choose so your fellow musicians can hear you acoustically on stage—just make sure the piano isn't bleeding into somebody else's microphone for a change.

In essence, the DYN-P is a no-brainer. The only real "work" required is to secure



the pickup properly (using a small amount of provided putty) and to locate the best placement on the soundboard. You'll need to do a little experimentation, trying various positions until you locate a hot or sweet spot that gives you the balance you're looking for. The DYN-P works best when mounted close to the soundboard's

walls or borders. A grand piano version, the DYN-GP, uses two pickups to achieve a stereo effect that's even richer.

The DYN-P/GP has a flat frequency response and requires little or no equalization (the owner's manual notes that some gentle parametric tweaking can add transparency to the sound). The pickup operates on low impedance, reducing the potential for hum and interference. And it plugs directly into any mixer, amp or PA with balanced XLR inputs.

The DYN-GP sounded great on a friend's well-maintained grand, responding flawlessly to a wide range of dynamics. But, because it's so sensitive, it can reveal the flaws of a piano itself. On my old console, for example, the sound was slightly clanky, seemingly the result of hammer noise and poor string quality.

The DYN-P/GP should be kept clean and handled with extreme care (a well-designed carrying case helps protect it). After all, once you try it, you'll come to rely on it like your best friend. —Ed Enright