



VIOLINIST LIZ YOUNG DEPENDS ON DPA

Liz Young must be the hardest working violinist in Australia. Based in Brisbane, where she graduated from the University of Queensland in 2007, she plays in a tango quartet, a bush band, does solo, wedding, and corporate gigs (where she sometimes is on stilts or flown), has her own kid's show, and of course teaches violin. When she's not doing any of that, she goes busking. To relax, she goes hiking, but also takes her violin!

Over the years, Liz has played with rock orchestra Deep Blue, Conrad Sewell, Colin Buchanan, and Sons of Korah, and performed at festivals including the Woodford Folk Festival, National Folk Festival (Australia) and the Tamworth Country Music Festival.

While Liz owns a Yamaha YEV electric violin for some specific jobs, her primary instrument is her acoustic violin; "My violin is a German copy of

a Stradivarius, made in some little town in Germany in the 1890s," explains Liz. "It's quite an old violin with a very deep, rich sound; often people think I'm playing a viola."

For over a decade, Liz has relied on a DPA Microphones 4099 instrument microphone to capture her playing. "During that time, the 4099 has travelled with me through hundreds of concerts, festivals, and events, and has become an essential part of my sound on stage," confirms Liz. "Quite simply, it is the microphone I trust for my violin."

The 4099 is a condenser mic with a supercardioid response pattern, capable of handling up to 145dB SPL peak. Designed to capture the natural sound of acoustic instruments, it has the flat and natural response DPA is well known for, and a mounting clip for just about any application, including the 'V' (violin) clip Liz uses.

"I originally discovered the DPA 4099 when Christian band Sons of Korah asked me to play with them when they were in Brisbane," relates

Liz. "I wanted to sound good, and I'd asked a lot of friends what they thought the best mic for violin might be. Richard Grantham, a viola player who's really into looping and a lot of amazing tech stuff, said the DPA 4099 is the best for the job. After a bit more research, I went and bought it, and since buying it, it's just been amazing. Whenever I come to a venue, every sound tech says, 'Oh my goodness, this is the best microphone!' I only wanted the best, and I got it!"

With its 140mm flexible gooseneck and the V clip, the 4099 has the versatility for musicians and sound techs to get the mic exactly where it needs to be. "With my tango playing, there's a lot of techniques on violin that are very specific to the style," explains Liz. "There's a lot of techniques in the lower half of the bow, and even playing behind the bridge. With a little bit of manipulation, you can get the 4099 in just the right position to pick it all up. You get all these very subtle, amazing sounds and the mic is not in the way of the bow."



Relying on the 4099, Liz ensures she brings it to every gig. “I play many gigs with other string players that don’t have their own mics, and sound techs will mic them with some sort of beautiful condenser mic on a mic stand, but it’s never the same as having the DPA actually mounted on the instrument.”

Like most musicians, Liz’s primary concern when dealing with being mic’d and amplified by sound techs through a PA is in the preservation of ‘her sound’. “I worry far less when I have the acoustic violin with the DPA, as opposed to when I’ve got the electric,” confides Liz. “The high end of the electric can be abrasive, and that has to be dealt with by EQ. But there’s just not a lot you need to do with the DPA; it’s just all there. It’s not something I have to worry about, ever. Plug it in, sounds good, off we go. I’m just not a big deal at venues for sound techs, and I can just rock up and do my thing. I love the sound of my violin, and all the DPA is doing is just increasing the sound of its beauty.”

The plug and play workflow is often essential to Liz’s work; “Recently at the National Folk Festival, I played with Kris Mizzi, a folk singer in the vein of Don McLean or John Denver,” conveys Liz. “It was his beautiful folk voice, acoustic guitar, and my violin. But like most of these festivals, it’s plug and play; there’s no time to soundcheck. Despite that, the sound we got at the venue was beautiful.”

With her work spanning so many genres, how does Liz classify ‘her sound’? “I’m classical, and rock, and all those other things, but ultimately I describe myself as a folky pop person,” observes Liz. “The way that I play the violin, often I’m trying to imitate a singer. I don’t want to sound like a violin player with lots of vibrato, just back and forth with a bow. I’m often trying to imitate the very beautiful, lyrical sound of a voice, with its breathing and its

tapering off. It’s emotive, it’s beautiful, and done right, it can capture something quite magical.”

The 4099 doesn’t just join Liz onstage; she’s also got a home studio for recording. “I record at home using the DPA and the Reaper DAW,” shares Liz. “I put the mic about a foot away from the violin, and I just think it sounds amazing. It’s a beautiful way to capture a good violin.”

After more than 10 years of relying on the DPA 4099, Liz has had many opportunities to recommend the mic to others. “I’m often asked by other violinists about the best way to amplify the instrument,” says Liz. “What I consistently

emphasise is that when it comes to achieving the most natural and beautiful sound, nothing compares to an acoustic violin amplified properly. And for me, that sound has always come through the DPA 4099. I mentor and teach many emerging violinists, and conversations about amplification come up regularly. I have recommended the 4099 countless times and know of many players who have chosen it after seeing or hearing my setup.”

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