**DPA Microphones Bring Clarity and Subtlety to the Cajón Drum**

*This popular box drum is notoriously hard to amplify, but thanks to DPA there is now an easy close miking solution.*

**Alleroed, Denmark. April 10th 2017:** The all-wooden box drum, or cajón may be the world’s most popular percussion instrument, yet it is also one of the hardest to amplify because it produces sharp bursts of sound energy (transients) when played. Finding microphones that really capture the subtle “woodsy” tone and transient-rich sound of his cajón was proving something of a challenge for percussionist David Mortara – until he discovered the DPA d:dicate™ range.

David is the band leader of MALAMBO, a London-based group performing Canción Criolla (Creole Song) and Afro-Peruvian Music. MALAMBO has performed in many of London’s top music venues and festivals, including the Southbank Centre (Royal Festival Hall and Queen Elizabeth Hall), the Bloomsbury and Ealing Festivals, and on the club and corporate entertainment circuit. Corporate gigs can take place in some very unusual and acoustically problematic spaces not designed for critical listening – such as the Victoria & Albert Museum Refreshment Rooms and Cannon Bridge Roof Gardens in London.

David plays a variety of ethnic percussion, and his principle instrument is the cajón. Originally from Peru, this all-wooden box drum is played by slapping the front face with the hands, fingers, or sometimes various implements such as brushes, mallets, or sticks.

“For years I struggled to achieve a decent, faithful live sound on cajón with those popular models of directional dynamic microphones one encounters on-stage”, David explains. “Although directional dynamic microphones can be good, my sound always lacked articulation and ‘sparkle’; as greater mass and inertia of the moving parts in dynamic microphones (compared to condenser microphones) “smear” transient details.”

“Also, the sound character of my instruments would alter when placing directional dynamic microphones up very close, to minimise reverberant spill and feedback, because these microphones exhibit bass “tip-up” (known as the Proximity Effect). I’d spend ages during sound checks getting the engineer to adjust EQ settings for something sounding natural. On occasions, my cajón would end up sounding like I was playing a biscuit tin!”

After hearing good reports about DPA microphones, David contacted UK distributor Sound Network and was put in touch with Les Mommsen, Chief Technician at London’s Union Chapel – a venue that has won awards for the high quality of its sound reinforcement. Mommsen suggested a close mic solution that involved the use of two d:dicate™ 2011C Cardioid Condenser microphones - one front and one rear – plus a d:screet™ 4061 Miniature Omnidirectional Condenser capsule, which was used as a low level mixing option and positioned on the ‘sweet spot’ of the cajón’s rear sound porthole.

In his capacity as a freelance sound engineer, Mommsen provided sound tech services at two recent MALAMBO gigs – one at Ceviche Old Street, a large and busy restaurant in London’s financial quarter, and another at a private venue in Kent.

“The DPA solution was ideal because it delivered a very natural low end response and allowed us to capture a really big sound from the cajón”, Mommsen says. “The restaurant venue, in particular, was a challenging acoustic environment because it had a lot of tiled surfaces and was also pretty noisy. By close miking the drum we were able to reduce off-axis spill and really capture the nuances and subtlety of the instrument.”

For both gigs, Mommsen also provided a d:facto™ Vocal Microphone for MALAMBO’s lead singer Juanita Euka, who recently won Vocalist Of The Year 2016/17 at the annual LUKAS Awards that celebrate Latin American arts and culture in the UK.

“The d:facto™ is a real hit with Juanita because it doesn’t colour or distort her voice in the way some other popular microphone brands do”, David Mortara says. “Recent performances have sounded fantastic and I’m personally very happy with the mic set-up Les has put in place on my cajón. I receive regular compliments and questions from other percussionists regarding my sound reinforcement, because the cajón is such a popular instrument and yet it can be problematic to amplify, live. Now, I happily recommend DPA microphones as the solution to delivering superb on-stage cajón sound!”

**-ends-**

**ABOUT DPA MICROPHONES:**

DPA Microphones is the leading Danish Professional Audio manufacturer of high-quality condenser microphone solutions for professional applications. DPA’s ultimate goal is to always provide its customers with the absolute finest possible microphone solutions for all its markets, which include live sound, installation, recording, theatre and broadcast. When it comes to the design process, DPA takes no shortcuts. Nor does the company compromise on its manufacturing process, which is done at the DPA factory in Denmark. As a result, DPA’s products are globally praised for their exceptional clarity and transparency, unparalleled specifications, supreme reliability and, above all, pure, uncoloured and undistorted sound.

**For more information, please visit** [www.dpamicrophones.com](http://www.dpamicrophones.com)

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