

TAPE OP

The Creative Music Recording Magazine

Curtis Technology *AL-2 Stereo Microphone System*

The AL-2 is sold as a matched pair of tube condenser mics with an external rackmountable power supply and cables. The mics are smallish, with 2.2 cm exposed of the diaphragm, and have light aluminum shells containing a 12AU7 tube and other high-end components. The mics kick ass. Curtis claims an “elongated cardioid” pattern—and that makes sense in the way the mics pull sounds in closer and clearer—but the real treat is in how great they sound. On acoustic guitar or piano I needed no EQ or even compression to get well-balanced natural sounding images of the instruments. As drum overheads the mics can be either fantastic or not quite right. Sometimes the mics picked up the muddy ambience in my room and highlighted unflattering aspects of the kit. Sometimes the drums sounded beautiful and open. They would kill on a jazz session. One real practical bonus is that the small size and lightness of the mics makes placement a breeze, something I can’t claim for many tube mics out there. These mics are of a very high quality (apparently they are popular with symphonic recordists!), and they provide some of the truest, most natural sounds—in stereo! - *Larry Crane*