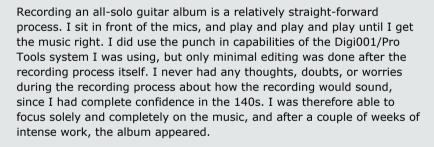Report ▾

Recording "Hands of Time"

By Larry Pattis

I had heard from other touring/recording musician friends of mine that the Neumann KM 140 small diaphragm microphone was "the" top quality mic for capturing a natural acoustic guitar sound. I have always had absolute faith in the Neumann name, and so I bought a pair of these dimunitive microphones. I have a smallish bedroom (9' x 12') outfitted as a studio in my home, well insulated, carpet and sound foam creating a very dead space. All I wanted was to get the close-miked sound of the guitar, and nothing else. Other than determining where the mics sounded the best in front of my custom Martin OM-28V guitar, there were no problems to solve. And as it turned out, determining optimal mic location only took a few attempts. A modified X-pattern, with the mics separated by about 10-12 inches did the trick. The mics were quite close, approximately 2-3 inches away from the top of the guitar.

Recording an all-solo guitar album is a relatively straight-forward process. I sit in front of the mics, and play and play and play until I get the music right. I did use the punch in capabilities of the Digi001/Pro Tools system I was using, but only minimal editing was done after the recording process itself. I never had any thoughts, doubts, or worries during the recording process about how the recording would sound, since I had complete confidence in the 140s. I was therefore able to focus solely and completely on the music, and after a couple of weeks of intense work, the album appeared.

The other equipment used for the recording consisted of my custom Martin OM- 28V, Elixir Nanoweb strings, a Summit TPA200B Dual Tube Pre-amp, and a Digidesign Digi001/Pro Tools system set-up on a Macintosh G4 computer. The mix and mastering were done by a local (Salt Lake City) Pro Tools wizard, one Mr. Ken Kruckenberg. Minimal EQ'ing was required during the mix down, as one might expect. I am very gratified that people who have heard the CD have been uniform in their praise for the recorded sound of the project and, without appearing to be immodest, the music, too! I would also like to thank the folks at B-Band, Ltd. for providing internal guitar amplification equipment for my plugged in on-stage sound.

That reaction to my effort validates the equipment, especially the KM 140s. I have in my hands (no pun, "Hands of Time"!) a recorded project, an album, a picture in time, that has been perfectly captured by the Neumann microphones.

To learn more about Larry Pattis or his recording "Hands of Time", please visit ▶ http://www.larrypattis.com