

# Peluso P-24

A modern vintage-inspired stereo tube mic

## REVIEW BY PAUL VNUK JR.

he Peluso Microphone Lab P-24 is a brand-new stereo tube microphone based on the classic AKG C24, arguably the most sought-after stereo mic ever.

# In the Peluso Mic Lab

John Peluso has been designing, building and restoring microphones under the Peluso Microphone Lab banner since 2002. John and his team were at the forefront of the "vintage-inspired" mic trend over 23 years ago.

Peluso was one of the first companies to adopt the now-common practice of combining the overseas production of metalwork with circuit boards, capsule tuning, final assembly and quality control at the company headquarters in Willis, VA.

Today, the Peluso line includes 18 different models of all shapes, sizes and styles.

# The Inspiration

The classic AKG C24 was released in 1959; while essentially a stereo C12, in regard to its dual 9-pattern CK12 capsule implementation, the cathode-biased tube circuit was closer to the equally famous AKG-produced Telefunken ELA M 251. Less than 800 C24 mics were ever made, and a working condition C24 will set you back upwards of \$25,000.

### Twelve Times Two

While the C12-inspired P-12 already existed in the Peluso line, for the P-24, John decided to start from scratch and create a new, more accurate take on the original AKG CK12 capsule. This new P-CK-12 capsule is a dual 32mm edge terminated capsule design with a 6-micron gold vacuum deposition diaphragm.

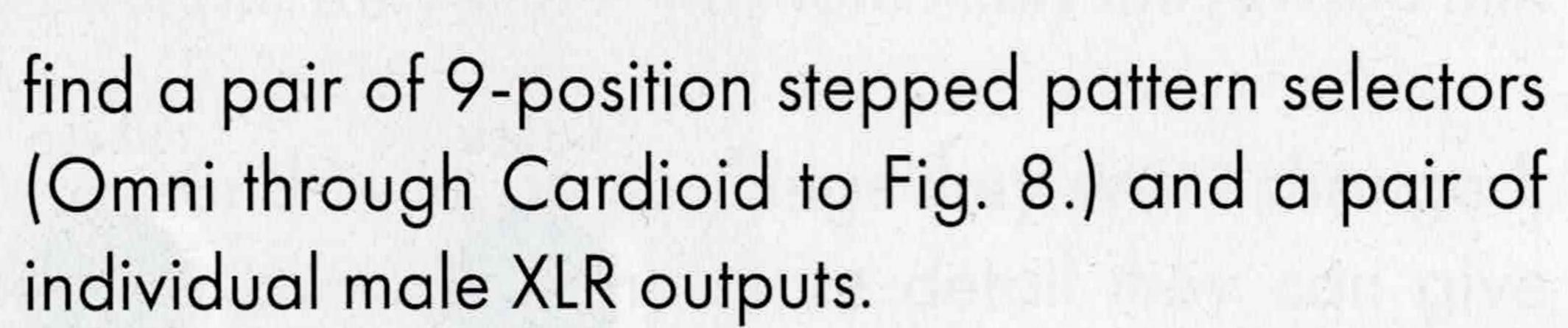
Note that John is so happy with his creation that Peluso now stocks them in its parts department for use/replacement in vintage C12 and C24 models.

The P-24 measures 10.6" tall with a roughly 2" diameter. The mic is finished in a classy matte black with a matching dual-head rotating capsule assembly.

The heart of the Peluso P-24 is a glass 6072AM vacuum tube and a pair of custom-wound T14/1 output transformers all connected to a pair of isolated and independent custom through-hole circuit boards. Except for the shared tube, the P-24 is genuinely two mics in one.

# Power

To provide adequate power, Peluso updated its existing power supply to handle the dual independent circuits in the mic. On the power supply is a single 12-pin connector for use with the 20' multi-pin cable that attaches to the mic. You will also



The Peluso P-24 comes with the stereo power supply, the 20' 12-pin screw-on stereo cable, and an updated shock mount to handle the increased weight of the mic, all in a locking padded flight case.

Chris Newitt from Peluso tells me that an optional hard mic mount is in the works.

# 180° Rotation

The first large diaphragm stereo tube condenser in the Peluso line was the now-discontinued Neumann SM-69-inspired Peluso P-Stereo. This and the Peluso SR 14 stereo ribbon mic only offered 90° of rotation. By contrast, the P-24 allows the full 180° throw offered by the original C24.

The newly designed turret mechanism is smooth to turn yet firm enough to hold the capsules at the desired angle with zero slippage. This fully variable design includes easy-to-see bright white degree markers.

While  $90^\circ$  is fine for most Blumlein and M/S applications,  $180^\circ$  allows you to record two singers facing each other with separate mics that can be tracked, EQ'd and compressed individually versus

| Frequency Range   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Polar Pattern:    | 9 - Switchable from omni- to bi-directional |
| Sensitivity:      |   |
| Impedance:        |   |
| SPL:              |   |
| Equivalent Noise: |   |

putting a pair of vocalists around two lobes of a Fig. 8 mic.

Combining two 9-pattern capsules with a full 180° throw also opens up the door to some unique and varied stereo recording options—you will find ten great stereo-starting points on the P-24 web page.

## Sound

Of course, the first thing everyone will want to know is how it compares to an original AKG C24. If you have one, stop over anytime, and we will find out.

I do own a modern AKG C12 VR and as we learned in our March 2023 A Family of AKG C-Series Mics Compared round-up, while the two are close, a vintage C12 is a bit more airy in the top-end, while the C12 VR was a few degrees more rounded.

In comparing a single capsule of the Peluso P-24 to my C12 VR, I found similar results. The P-24, while not what I would describe as airy, was indeed more open on the top end than the C12 VR, if not a bit sparkly. For fun, I compared it to the also CK12 capsule-inspired Peluso P-414, and while the two were sonically related, I again found the P-24 a bit more opulent

and open-sounding in the top-end, and a bit richer and deeper in the lows.

Does that make it a match to a vintage C24? Let's just say that I am confident in my experience and that it definitely exhibits the C12 family of sound.

Taken on its merit, the P-24 exhibits a smooth, even, neutral sound with a nice full but never overbearing low-end and the aforementioned top-end sparkly clarity—not harshness or overt brightness, mind you. It exhibits a respectable proximity effect (bolder in cardioid and nonexistent in omni) and a tight off-axis rejection on all patterns cardioid to Fig. 8.

The mic offers a natural, firm capture from 6" to 6' or more away, which is important as most stereo mics will be used at greater distances.

#### Use

This mic will be used anywhere a perfectly phase-coherent pair of C12-style tube mics would normally be used: drum overheads, small group vocals, small string ensembles, M/S stereo acoustic instrument recording, etc. It is also quite handy (with the proper positioning) to

tackle the recording of simultaneously singing acoustic guitarist—phase will never be an issue there.

My two favorite uses of the P-24 were setting the mic in a fixed position in my room and, when tracking individual players in a folk-style setting, having them sit in different positions and depths in the stereo field. When blended in the final mix (even with spot mics), it creates the illusion that they were all together in the space.

Similarly, I loved using the P-24 for things like auxiliary percussion and ad-lib backing vocals. This allowed the performer to move around the mix, resulting in a unique, spacious panning.

# Wrap Up

Once again, Peluso Microphone Lab has knocked it out of the park with the P-24. As a stereo tube mic, it does carry a healthy price tag; however, it is less expensive than many similar competing options and infinitely more affordable than a vintage specimen.

Price: \$3,999

More From:
pelusomicrophonelab.com