

Multiple-GRAMMY Award-Winning Mix Engineer Chris Lord-Alge Uses Audio-Technica

Making Use of AT5047 Cardioid Condenser Microphone and Other A-T Products in 2020



GRAMMY Award-winning mix engineer Chris Lord-Alge (Green Day, Muse, Bruce Springsteen) has kept a busy schedule during the COVID-19 lockdown, taking on projects from a wide range of artists. And not only has he been applying his renowned mixing process to these recordings, but in many cases, he has been tracking artists' vocals himself. He notes, "In March, I devised a makeshift vocal booth at my facility that we were able to disinfect after every use, and everything could stay properly distanced to adhere to the health guidelines of the situation. Originally I set this up just as a temporary solution for a project or two. But nine months later, this setup is still in use, right where we assembled it." And key to the success of this vocal recording setup is the AT5047 Cardioid Condenser Studio Microphone from Audio-Technica, a leading innovator in transducer technology for over 50 years. Additionally, Chris has been using several different Audio-Technica products during the course of 2020 and in fact has been a loyal A-T user for years.

"The AT5047 is a game-changing microphone in a lot of ways," Chris notes. "For instance, I did some recent recording with Kiefer Sutherland. I'd mixed his records

in the past but not recorded the vocals myself. But getting him on this AT5047 microphone – obviously I’d heard his voice before on recorded tracks, but he and I had never heard it sound this good just raw like that. It was so clear and in-your-face, and when I brought up the track on the desk to mix it, I barely had to do anything to it. I’m known for my processing techniques when I mix vocals, but I feel like the AT5047 gives me a head start.” Equally successful were sessions with rock acts Tempt and Dorothy – both of whom appreciated the big, rich, clear tone that the AT5047 captured in the singers’ voices. Chris’s AT5047 vocal chain includes an Avantone Pro CLA-200 studio reference amplifier, a Heritage Audio HA73 mic pre, and a Black Lion Audio CLA Bluey limiter. “We have been really happy with the vocal chain, and it’s staying up!” he adds.

Chris especially likes the low-frequency response of the AT5047: “Another artist I’ve worked with is called Bald Man, and he has a very deep voice. Some of his vocals are narrated or speak-sung, and it’s important to pick up all the deep, low-end character of his voice. It’s unbelievable how much clarity you can get from the AT5047 in that situation. I can’t think of a better option for capturing Bald Man’s vocals.”

Other A-T products in use by Chris this year include ATH-M50x professional monitor headphones as his tracking headphones of choice for the artists as they record; AT4050 multi-pattern condenser mics for background vocals; AT5045 large diaphragm condenser microphone for acoustic guitars; a full arsenal of A-T drum mics, which Chris lent out to Badflower drummer Anthony Sonetti to record his own tracks remotely (an experiment that yielded impressive results that surpassed Chris’s expectations); multiple A-T turntables; and several others.

He also appreciates the A-T mics’ dependability and consistency: “One thing that differentiates me from other studio pros is that I don’t have a lot of patience or love for ‘vintage’ gear – I mean, its character can be great, but because of the units’ age and wear-and-tear, the performance is sometimes volatile and finicky, and for me it’s usually not worth the hassle. Give me brand new mics, new cables, new outboard gear any day. This year I’ve really had the opportunity to put some of my A-T mics through their paces, and I have to say, they really perform just like they did out of the box, and that’s something I can really depend on them for.”

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