



Austrian Audio MiCreator Studio

\$199/\$199 **PC** **MAC**

This recording bundle is as much at home recording podcasts as it is instruments. This might be the only mic you need, says **Andy Jones**

> In a short period of time, Austrian Audio has certainly made a mark with its mics and headphones. It has models of each for just about every occasion, yet the company only started out some six years ago. However, its latest product, MiCreator Studio, aims to be a single microphone for many creative activities (we're guessing that's where the name comes from) - and as a 'one mic for all', it's a bargain.

Two into one

MiCreator Studio is both a USB-C microphone and an interface that can plug straight into

iPads, Android phones and iPhones (with optional camera kit) - and, of course, any Mac or Windows PC.

One of its main selling points is revealed around the back of the mic, where you get two 3.5mm connections: Out and In/Out. These can be used either as two headphone outs, for latency-free monitoring for two people, or as a single out with another device plugged into the In/Out, which can then be mixed with MiCreator.

This single feature means that MiCreator is instantly ideal for many activities. For a podcast or interview, all you need to do is plug your

interviewee's microphone into the In/Out, and you can then balance between the two for both monitoring and recording. Singer-songwriters can use a MiCreator Studio with, say, a guitar plugged into the second In/Out, then blend that with their vocal.

Interestingly, Austrian Audio also sent us a second microphone, the all-analogue MiCreator Satellite (£89/\$99), which plugs into the In/Out. The company has also released a Y-Lav lapel mic (£49/\$49) - ideal for interviews - but you needn't use either of these options if you have your own mic to use for the second option.

There may be no fancy built-in effects, but that means sound quality and flexibility take centre stage

Red light on

For a \$199 microphone, MiCreator Studio feels very solid. There are two rubber feet that help, combined with a shockmount built around the condenser capsule, to remove vibrations and noise. The head of the microphone tilts for more directional recording, and if you want to put the mic onto a stand, it has both a standard European connection and a US adaptor.

Two High/Low controls around the front and back allow you to select between recording situations. Use the former for typical spoken-word podcasts or for more standard instrument recordings, and the latter for close mic'ing or loud music, where you can utilise the full 130dB SPL bandwidth of the mic. Finally, a main rotary controls both the input monitoring level and that from the computer. This also doubles as a balance control when two microphones are connected. One will be monitored through the left channel, the other through the right.

The recording quality is excellent - and not just for voice, although it does excel in this area. It also sounds exceptional with instruments. Use the supplied instrument cable to plug in a keyboard or guitar, and that sits on one channel while the main mic goes on the other channel - as expected, this is ideal for singer-songwriters.

That said, the two-mic option that MiCreator Studio offers will get you greater recording flexibility, especially for mic positioning, so we decided to test this option too. We recorded a piano using the single MiCreator, then added the Satellite - see *MiCreator in the studio* for more on how we did this. The single stereo MiCreator Studio mic gave great results in the centre of the piano, but adding the Satellite allowed us to experiment - one at each end of the piano, for example. The quality of both recordings was similarly great, but the two-mic option certainly allows for more flexibility during mixing.

You get the USB-C mic, instrument cable and stand connector, plus two cool fascias to change the mic colour to red!



MiCreator ships with Cubasis LE, a great DAW for iPhone, iPad or Android. It's not essential to use the mic, though - we got on fine with the mic in Logic and Live

MiCreator in the studio

MiCreator Studio is not just about singer-songwriters and podcasters: it also very much has the studio recordist in mind. A copy of Cubasis LE 3.5 - an excellent recording companion for smartphones and tablets - is included.

In our tests we used both mics in various configurations with our DAW, and it works like this. You set up the 'master' MiCreator Studio as the interface - which will then be picked up by your DAW as any interface would. You can then simply use that single mic

to record on one stereo track or across two mono tracks. However, when you connect up MiCreator Satellite (via its Link connector and with a supplied 3.5mm cable), you then record two mono tracks, but with the added flexibility that the mics can be positioned away from each other for interviews, better stereo recordings or singers playing a guitar. Of course, you don't need Satellite to do this, but it does have an extra headphone out, and we think it's well worth the extra \$99.

Mic drop

With MiCreator Studio, Austrian Audio has designed a mic fit for multiple purposes. There may be no fancy built-in effects or gimmicks and few controls, but that means sound quality and flexibility take centre stage. Throw in the good price and build quality (and that extra input) and MiCreator is a great buy. **cm**

Web www.austrian.audio

Alternatively

Rode NT15th Gen
£249/\$299

Not as flexible, but it has a great sound that's also ideal for podcasting and recording

Aston Microphones Origin
£195

Not for direct podcasting, but one of our longstanding favourites for all-round recording

Verdict

For Great-sounding USB mic
The extra mic input gives great flexibility
Fantastic build quality
No frills, so easy to use

Against No built-in effects or other gimmicks (also a plus!)

MiCreator Studio - and indeed the Satellite option - is a fabulous, well-priced and easy solution for podcasting, singer-songwriters and high-quality instrument recording

9/10