

# T.H.E. BS-3D Binaural Sphere



## FEATURES

- Omni-directional pattern
- 136dB Max SPL at 0.5% THD
- 20-20kHz frequency response range

## INFORMATION

- T.H.E. BS-3D \$2,648
- Taylor Hohendahl Engineering, LLC, P.O. Box 343, S. Woodstock, CT 06267
- 860 974 3491

What better method of capturing sound equal to the experience of hearing than with a system that takes its design straight from the human body? This is the concept behind the design of Taylor Hohendahl's binaural sphere. The idea is wonderfully simple: Reproduce the human hearing mechanism by replicating the head; that is, put two matched transducers on either side of a sphere. In T.H.E.'s version, the BS-3D sphere, the execution of this idea is a piece of art in itself - a compact wooden ball crafted from hand-selected hardwood with a gold-plated grille on either side, which houses two mic capsules.

Setup and use is straightforward; there is a threaded flange on the bottom of the BS-3D that mounts on a standard microphone stand, and an adapter cable is supplied, which splits into two standard three-pin XLR outputs.

First, I used the BS-3D on a string quartet overdub session. What I heard was equivalent to standing in the room with the players. The instruments sounded natural with a satisfying midrange and upper midrange articulation. The low end was warm and coherent. The stereo imaging lined up beautifully. The most pleasant surprise was the depth reproduction, which took a bit of adjusting of the left and right faders to lock in, but which yielded a full and precise aural placement when I found the proper balance of the two channels.

Next, I used the sphere on a session where I was adding upright bass to an existing stereo mix that was rich with reverb. The signal from the BS-3D was excellent and blended with the mix without any effort

whatsoever. The roominess of the sound fit the existing mix as if it were actually part of the original performance.

On a bluegrass session with mandolin, fiddle, dobro and guitar, I ran the BS-3D through two Focusrite Red mic pre-amps. With all the notes that were flying out of those instruments, I needed to hear a bit more edge in the articulation. The sound of the sphere was too

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smooth without adding close mics to provide some individual attack. I used a single close mic per instrument, which integrated easily with the broad stereo image from the BS-3D. Still, I was thrilled with the depth and richness of tone that would have been impossible to get from the close mics alone.

On the merit of the recordings that I made, I am very comfortable giving the BS-3D a hearty endorsement. True, this is not a microphone that will be appreciated or needed by everyone but when used as an instrument that hears the whole acoustic environment, the BS-3D is an elegant, capable tool.

*Paula Wolak*