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**‘One-Man Orchestra’ Stevie Blacke Arranges Strings for Pop Megastars with Mojave Audio Microphones**

*Inventive session player/arranger on developing a ‘songwriter’-friendly string style and the enduring magic of tube microphones*

**Los Angeles, CA, June 22, 2022 — For almost 25 years** [**Stevie Blacke**](https://stevieblacke.com/) **has been one of the recording industry’s most prolific string arrangers, building a memorable catalog of accompaniments for major artists like Timbaland, Snoop Dogg, Pink, Rhianna, and Weezer, fresh faces like Dua Lipa and Olivia Rodrigo, and TV shows such as Saturday Night Live, American Idol, and The Voice. A major component of Blacke’s success has been his ability to rapidly write, arrange, and record full string sections on his own, essentially allowing him to act as a ‘one-man orchestra’. To best capture all the nuances of his arrangements in the studio, Blacke relies on a stable of Mojave Audio microphones, specifically the** [**MA-200**](https://mojaveaudio.com/ma-200/) **large diaphragm tube condenser.**

**Bringing a singer/songwriter mentality to classical instrumentation**

What makes Blacke unique as an arranger is his musical background. Although he is a Berklee College of Music-trained violinist, his stylistic cornerstones remain the guitar-based rock, pop, and jazz music that he enjoyed in his youth. Coming from a singer/songwriter mentality rather than the strict classical tradition has allowed him to develop a versatile style that can readily adapt to the myriad of genres that get thrown his way. “There are so many amazing ways to use strings, and it’s exciting to adapt them to the different kinds of projects that I get asked to work on,” he explained. “Coming from a singer/songwriter/guitarist background initially and being trained in popular genres of music has become my greatest asset because it helps me get in sync with writers and producers right away.”

“The thing that makes this kind of work exciting and fun is the diversity of projects that I have the opportunity to add strings to,” he continued. “Be it realizing an existing arrangement idea that a client comes to me with, creating something totally new with no preconceptions, or even just adding little bits of ear candy here and there.”

Blacke often immediately has ideas for an arrangement the moment he is presented with a piece of music, an asset in an industry where projects move very quickly. To accommodate these deadlines as well as the rapid speed of his own creativity, he works almost exclusively out of his private studio in Los Angeles, CA, utilizing a tightly honed digital setup designed for maximum quality and minimum fuss. Doing so also gives him added control of the arrangements that would not be possible with a traditionally recorded orchestra. “My workflow allows me to eliminate the noise and downtime associated with recording a big ensemble live and turn around high-quality recordings quickly,” he said. “It gives me tight control of the quality of the sound which is incredibly important when it comes to tracking strings.”

“I often use Mojave Audio mics to help me capture that quality and they have become a key part of my setup.”

**Classic feel, modern reliability**

Blacke’s personal orchestra consists of the typical violins, violas, cellos as well as a myriad of exotic and unusual stringed instruments that he employs for unique tonal colors. He captures all of this on his Pro Tools setup using Mojave MA-200 and 100 microphones through various favored preamps and compressors. His use of Mojave stems from a longtime friendship with Mojave Audio co-founders David Royer and Dusty Wakeman as well as a desire to inject some classic tube warmth into his otherwise largely digital setup. “I’ve been a big fan of tube mics because of that old tone and feel that you get out of them, but I wanted something modern and reliable that I could use day in and day out,” he said. “Mojave just sounds the best to me, and they work wonderfully to capture the natural sound of such a diverse array of instruments. I use them on everything.”

With all of these tonal colors at his fingertips Blacke can easily suit the feel of any material that he is given, be it rock, pop, hip-hop, heavy metal, or soundtrack work. Being able to do so with ease helps fuel his creativity and keep his work feeling fresh. “It’s really important not to be too dogmatic about having ‘default’ setups because each song is different and everything, I do come back to that — what suits the song best,” he said. “I ultimately want the artist to feel like my contributions are bringing their best work forward in a way that feels honest to them.”

“Capturing the honest tone of the instruments is a big part of that, and using Mojave helps me do that in a way that always feels right.”

For more information about Stevie Blacke, please visit [http://stevieblacke.com/](https://stevieblacke.com/)

For more information about Mojave Audio, please visit <http://www.mojaveaudio.com/>

 **About Mojave Audio**Mojave Audio was founded by Technical Grammy Award winning David Royer, widely known for his ribbon microphone designs with Royer Labs. Mojave Audio makes world-class microphones for Artists and Engineers who are passionate about their sound.

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