



Genzler Acoustic Array Mini

Streamlined, more affordable version of an excellent modern amp

BY ADAM PERLMUTTER

After setting up shop in a garage in Phoenix, Arizona, in the early 1980s, Jeff Genzler, a professional musician and electronics enthusiast, did much to advance the art of bass amplification with his state-of-the-art class-D solid-state amps. With the introduction of the Genz-Benz Shenandoah line in 2001, Genzler began treating acoustic guitarists to the same innovations—lightweight, portable packages with all kinds of clean headroom.

Genz-Benz amplifiers were phased out of production in 2012, after the company had been subsumed by Fender, but Genzler is again making amps with his namesake company. The first new Genzler acoustic guitar combo, the Acoustic Array Pro, was unveiled in late 2017. (See Pete Madsen's full review in the June 2018 issue of *AG*.) That amp recently received a little sibling, the Acoustic Array Mini, which, unsurprisingly, is a killer little combo.

THE BASIC SPECS

Like the Pro, the Mini is a solid-state, twin-channel amp housed in compact chassis that feels as if it could take a good beating. But the Mini has 100 watts to the Pro's 150 and an eight-inch woofer with four vertically stacked 1.5-inch soft-dome drivers, rather than a ten-inch woofer with four 2.5-inch drivers.

The Mini has a more straightforward control panel than its larger stablemate. While each of the Pro's channels has both an instrument and a mic input, the Mini has dedicated mic and instrument channels. The former channel is streamlined, with just preamp, low and high EQ, and reverb controls, while the latter has the same configuration found on the Pro—preamp and contour controls, a phase switch, four-band active EQ, and reverb and chorus knobs.

On the rear panel, the Pro has an effects loop, a trio of direct outputs, and an external speaker out, among other features, while the Mini keeps it simple with a single post-EQ direct output, as well as 1/4-inch headphone and auxiliary input jacks. These differences amount to an amp that's somewhat less flexible, but one that will be



simpler to operate for some users—and, at about six pounds lighter, friendlier on the back.

STELLAR SOUNDS, DRY AND WET

When I plugged a Martin OM-28E into the Mini's instrument channel, with the EQ controls set flat, I was straight away impressed by the amp's present and natural sound, its clarity and detail—just like the Martin, only much more of it. Whether I fingerpicked or strummed, the amp's treble frequencies really sang, while the low end had a rewarding but not overpowering oomph. And the amp's digital reverb and chorus both sounded warm and rich, though not artificially so.

Adjusting the contour control, which essentially cuts mids and boosts lows and highs, made for a useful tonal sweep without having to tweak the other EQ knobs—a definite plus, especially for players who tend to use multiple guitars (or even other acoustic-electric instruments, such as ukulele or mandolin) with distinctly different EQ requirements.

The Mini offered plenty of clean headroom; it would definitely put out enough sound for playing in a moderately loud band in a small- or medium-sized room. But guitarists who tend to play in larger venues might be better off with the more powerful Pro, with an output of up to 300 watts with an extension cabinet.

THE BOTTOM LINE

In a market that is becoming increasingly populated with good amplifier options for the acoustic guitarist, Genzler's Acoustic Array

Mini stands out as a smart choice for players of all stripes. Its small footprint, excellent sound, and rugged, lightweight construction make it gig-worthy for sure. It might not be as powerful and flexible as the Pro, but will be plenty of amp for many professional applications—and will set you back hundreds of dollars less. **AG**

GENZLER ACOUSTIC ARRAY MINI

AMP Two-channel, 100-watt class-D; XLR input, preamp control, and 2-band active EQ (mic channel); 1/4" input, preamp and contour controls, 3-band active EQ with parametric mid control (instrument channel); 1/4" auxiliary input; XLR (DI) output, 1/4" headphone jack

SPEAKERS One 8" woofer and four custom-designed 1.5" neodymium, soft-dome drivers

OTHER Reverb and chorus effects; 14.5" W x 12" D x 14.5" H; 21 lbs.

PRICE \$699 (MAP)

MADE IN China

genzleramplification.com