



COURTESY OF SCHERTLER

Schertler Giulia X

Compact, straightforward amp boasts plenty of great tones

BY MARK GOLDENBERG

Squarely in the good-things-come-in-small-packages camp, the Swiss-made Schertler Giulia X is a compact and great-sounding amplifier offering great flexibility and ease of use. Putting out 70 clean watts, it's ideal as a rehearsal or studio amp, and can also be used as a preamp or DI in a larger setting.

At first blush, the sound coming out of the speakers is surprisingly clear and warm, with plenty of low end, thanks to the two-way bi-amped bass reflex cabinet, which houses a 1-inch dome tweeter and coaxial 5.5-inch woofer. But the Giulia X does more than just provide a reliable amplified sound. I tested it using a handful of different guitars and pickups and was impressed by the abundance of great tones the amp delivers.

SOLID BUILD AND INTUITIVE OPERATION

The Giulia X is available in either a black or

dark-brown wood finish. I reviewed the latter and, removing it from the shipping box, was pleased as much by the amp's handsome appearance as its light weight (16.5 pounds) and clean construction—not to mention its comfy leather handle.

The amp is intuitive to use. All of the controls, inputs, and outputs are logically arranged on the top panel. From left to right, there's an XLR input for a mic; two phantom power buttons, 24 and 10 volts, respectively; a 1/4-inch instrument input jack; gain controls for the mic and instrument channels; three-band EQ; a Warm button; reverb and master volume controls; 1/4-inch insert and line-out jacks; and finally, an XLR DI out. All of the controls and buttons feel solid and tight.

The EQ section includes low, middle, and high knobs, with a center detent for flat frequency response; to boost turn right, and to cut turn left. These knobs—along with the Warm button, which

cuts the high end a bit—have a wide range and can be used subtly or to radically shape the sound.

NATURAL SOUNDS AND GREAT FLEXIBILITY

I tried out the Giulia X with a variety of guitars: a Collings 001 Mh outfitted with a Trance Audio Amulet pickup-and-preamp system; a 1929 Pickguards—modded Recording King Dirty 30's 000 with a rubber bridge and both a vintage DeArmond magnetic pickup and piezo pickup; and a Maegen Wells archtop with a Lollar Johnny Smith-style mini-humbucker pickup. Also, I used an Ear Trumpet Labs Edwina microphone to check the mic channel and sent the DI out to my Universal Audio Apollo Quad interface, connected to a pair of Mackie HR824 speakers.

I started listening to the guitars with the amp set flat. The Collings sounded great through the Giulia X—extremely natural, with a fairly accurate

take on the low end, and crisp but not shrill highs. I applied a little bit of high end, for that crystal-clear contemporary sound, and only when I maxed out the control did it get a piercing effect. Set up with flatwound strings, the Recording King sounded pretty dark with the DeArmond, but adjusting the amp's midrange control and adding a touch of boost cleaned things up nicely. At the other end of the spectrum, using the guitar's piezo pickup I got an unwanted icepick sound, but I was able to tone it down by simply attenuating the treble a pinch.

My Wells archtop is a clear, open-sounding instrument, and the Lollar mini-humbucker is pleasantly bright. By rolling the tone back on the guitar and engaging the Warm button, I went from a clear, modern guitar sound to a smoky Wes Montgomery–like jazz tone that was fat and buttery.

The Edwina mic sounded full and accurate on the guitars; there was a bit of feedback at higher volume levels, but I was able to suppress it with the EQ controls. One could feasibly use a vocal mic with this amp, too. There is plenty

of power on tap here, certainly more than enough for a rehearsal or small gig—though perhaps not enough if your band has a drummer who is a basher. On a bigger stage, you could use the Giulia X as a monitor or preamp and send that signal to the house. The DI sound is pretty much what I heard through the speakers and is buzz-free.

My only complaint about the Giulia X is that while the reverb sound is adequate, I can hear individual repeats in the effect and it sounds fairly metallic at higher levels. But tucked back into the mix a smidge it does the job. And the amp's 1/4-inch insert comes in handy if one would want to use a more deluxe reverb effect pedal.

THE TAKEAWAY

Overall, the Schertler Giulia X is great-sounding, inspiring, fun, and easy to use, with plenty of power for rehearsals and small gigs. Relatively easy on the wallet and definitely easy on the back, it's perfect for anyone looking for a cool and versatile grab-and-go amplifier. Highly recommended!

AC

SPECS

AMP 70 watts pure analog power; XLR and 1/4" instrument inputs; XLR DI out; 1/4" line out

SPEAKERS 1" dome tweeter; coaxial 5.5" woofer

OTHER Reverb; three-band EQ; Warm button; 10v and 24v phantom power; 10 2/3" x 7" x 11"; 16.5 lbs

MADE IN Switzerland

PRICE \$1,188

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