

KEF

LS50 Anniversary Monitors - \$1499/pair



PROS

Amazing sound, stereo imaging and technology.

CONS

Price.

Monitors are the one place a studio can't skimp, and making the jump from home studio to professional grade just got better with a pair of KEF's flagship LS50s.

They're quite simple and elegant, no switches for any audio altering choices, just a set of posts for cable connections. They're un-powered, meaning a separate power amp is needed.

Behind the copper colored speaker cone hides the driver and tweeter, stacked one on top of the other; it's an interesting design concept. It also combines standard magnets in the driver, but a Neodymium one in the tweeter. Aluminum speaker cones rounds things out. On the back, there are two air ports. There are no mounts for speaker stands, but on a console or Pro Tools desktop, they work just fine.

The sound quality is excellent, and with a street price of \$1499 a pair, it should be. This is audiophile money and audiophile sound. Plenty of great musical frequency responses abound, regardless of the type of music, however they seem to favor "natural" sounding mixes, ones without a lot of processing. There is plenty of low end as well, and overall it sounds less like a standard monitor and straddles the line between neutral studio mixing and pure hi-fi enjoyment. There is plenty of tonal depth and character to the individual instruments, regardless of playback volume. These would sound great in any studio, and would be just as at home as the heart of a great home stereo system. -Chris Devine

FEATURES

Design: Two-way bass reflex

Frequency range: (-6dB) 47Hz - 45kHz

Frequency response: (43dB) 79Hz - 28kHz

Crossover frequency: 2.2kHz

Amplifier requirements: 25 - 100 W

Sensitivity (2.83V/1m): 85dB

Maximum output: 106dB

Weight: 7.2kg

Dimensions: 302 x 200 x 278 mm

Builder Profile

Doepfer Musikelektronik

Analogue Renaissance

www.doepfer.de/home_e.htm

[English version]

Doepfer is a German audio hardware manufacturer specializing in synthesizers and MIDI controllers. Dieter Döpfer began the company in 1979 and it has since grown into one of the most respected electronics makers in the world. In 1995, Doepfer released the A-100 modular system, a format allowing musicians to connect small, inexpensive modules in whatever way they want to create a unique synthesis system. Doepfer's original module format caught on with other designers and has led to a renaissance of modular synthesis among many electronic musicians. The format, now commonly known as the 'Eurorack system', has become the industry standard and has spawned a multitude of companies designing compatible modules. Doepfer has been at the forefront of new analog systems that create sounds still unmatched by their software counterparts, while still being able to interact with computer interfaces via MIDI and USB. All products are manufactured in Germany.



Dark Energy II - \$625

Doepfer's Dark Energy II is an all analogue, monophonic stand-alone synthesizer. Beloved for its rich sound and sonic range, the Dark Energy II specializes warm, round bass, blippy leads, and bouncy rhythmic lines. This synthesizer is great for sonic exploration with FM, AM, and PWM control; two routable LFOs and an ADSR envelope; 12 dB multi-mode filter (lowpass, notch, highpass, and bandpass); and patch inputs for CV use. Controllable via USB or MIDI, it is easy to get started with but infinitely deep to dig into. The Dark Energy II is made with high-quality potentiometers and is built into a sturdy black metal case with retro-inspired wooden side plates. -Garrett Frierson