

# Kali Audio IN-UNF

## £599

**Simon Fellows** cosies up to this compact, ultra-nearfield studio monitor system for intimate desktop spaces

**CONTACT WHO:** Kali Audio **WEB:** [kaliaudio.com](http://kaliaudio.com) **KEY FEATURES** Bass unit with two satellite tweeters. **AMP CLASS:** D, **MID/HIGH RANGE POWER PER CHANNEL:** 60W (continuous), **LOW RANGE POWER PER CHANNEL:** 100W (continuous), **HIGH FREQUENCY DRIVER:** 1-inch textile dome tweeter, **MIDRANGE DRIVER:** 4-inch optimised profile paper **LOW FREQUENCY DRIVER** 4.5-inch high excursion







**T**he largest music production studio in the known universe is the 4,023m<sup>2</sup> Merwas complex in Saudi Arabia. In my own home studio there's barely room enough to swing a cat. Not that our tom Apollo has been doing much swinging since the vet recently brought his fun to an abrupt end recently. For what it's worth.

Kali Audio's IN-UNF monitoring system is unlikely to bring comfort to poor Apollo but if, like me, you work in a small environment, or one where isolation from your co-workers is desirable, it's a rather neat solution.

This is an ultra-nearfield (UNF) setup, so you'll gain most benefit from it if you're just 0.8 meters away, which is roughly the distance most of us sit from our computer screens. It's very compact, simple to install and easy to EQ for small, non-treated rooms. The output is also very focused. Move away, or off-axis, and the sound drops off considerably, making it a tempting proposition too for larger spaces where mixing can be intrusive for those around you.

The IN-UNF is very ordinary in some respects – it's just a familiar, three-way system – yet extraordinary in others. To save space, it comprises a bass unit and two satellite speakers that have been designed to sit on your desk as a package. Place the bass unit horizontally and it doubles as a handy laptop stand. Flip it vertically

and you can place your laptop or monitor directly in front of it. Its twin 4.5-inch woofers fire from the sides, so sound quality isn't compromised whichever orientation you choose.

The high frequency/mid-frequency satellites are spherical speakers that cradle a pair of soft-to-touch silicon pucks, which makes them infinitely adjustable. Kali thoughtfully includes paper templates that make placing the satellites in relation to the bass unit easy. Place your laptop on the bass unit – woofers are horizontally opposed to reduce vibration – plug it in via a 3.5mm jack, balanced TRS, optical or USB-C and you're set.

I had low hopes. \$599/£599 is barely enough to buy a decent sub, let alone a complete system. The sub only reaches down to 47Hz, the satellite speakers are a foot or more away from ear height and it's recommended for small, untreated spaces. What could go wrong!?!

Well, it worked out better than I'd imagined. Kali has optimised the bass unit and satellites for desk reflections, so much so it warns against using the floor or additional speaker stands. Small spaces are notoriously bad for bass build-up, so the lack of lower frequencies adds to, rather than detracts, from the listening experience.

Finally, the IN-UNF features a host of EQ presets that compensate for a wide variety of tricky installs, such as a desk backed up against a wall, walls on both sides of a desk, a

desk in the corner and so on. It's also possible to EQ the highs, mids and lows by +/- 2dB and boost the lows by +4dB. These controls are accessed via DIP switches on the side of the bass unit, which is tiresome, but at least setting the EQ is a one-time job.

Once I'd played around with the DIPs, I was getting surprisingly close to my reference setup, a more conventional stand-mounted pair of monitors with a sub on the floor. The sound quality is good if not exceptional, build is sturdy and the price reasonable. What's not to like?

Placing the bass unit on the desk worked as it doubled as a laptop stand, but the pucks were unwieldy. Otherwise, the Kali IN-UNF is an unusual solution to a common problem. You won't see them at Merwas, but for less expansive spaces needing less expensive solutions they're worth a shot. **FM**

## FM VERDICT

# 7.5

**A unique, inexpensive monitoring system that makes accurate mixing in modest spaces more accessible than ever**

## THE PROS & CONS

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Small monitoring system that makes mixing possible in tiny spaces or where others don't want to be disturbed

**Excellent EQ presets make it easy to dial in the right sound whatever the location**

Good value

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Satellite speakers can get in the way

DIP switches are a faff, but worth persevering with

**Keep away from older laptops with hard drives that are susceptible to magnetic mayhem**