

Klipsch

R-41PM powered loudspeaker system



THE POWERED SPEAKER

market – where a stereo amplifier is built into one of the loudspeakers – has become an increasingly popular area with those seeking desktop music systems. US brand Klipsch is embracing the versatile sector, and the R-41PM is a small powered design that's closely related to its R-41M passive loudspeaker.

A two-way standmount configuration, it has a 102mm copper-spun graphite mid/bass driver partnered by one of the company's horn-loaded tweeters that sees a 25mm aluminium dome mounted in the throat of a square Tractix horn. A rear-mounted port aids bass response, although this isn't exactly seismic as the frequency response quotes roll off at around 76Hz. The loudspeakers are powered by a 2x 35W-rated internal amplifier that's placed inside the right-hand cabinet, which is then output to the left speaker via a run of supplied cable.

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The selection of input options is surprisingly comprehensive, with digital optical, analogue RCAs, a 3.5mm mini-jack socket and Bluetooth with aptX support all present and correct. A mono pre-output is provided for a subwoofer and Klipsch has usefully included a USB-B port for connection to a computer. More unusually, there's even a moving-magnet phono stage, which can be switched into circuit via a toggle on the rear or the unit, giving the R-41PM the potential to be a serious hub for an impressive selection of source components.

Well connected

The styling is classically Klipsch, and the result is an eye-catching little speaker with a good sense of proportion. The fit and finish is



good for the asking price and comes supplied with cables and a system remote control.

Considering that each cabinet stands just 250mm tall and boasts fairly average amplifier power figures, the R-41PM sounds surprisingly big. Listening to Nils Frahm's *All Melody* streamed from Qobuz via the USB connection from a laptop is a genuinely enjoyable experience. The piano has a pleasing sense of scale and texture and there is far more bass weight than one might reasonably expect from a cabinet of this size.

The upper registers are also impressive. Klipsch's experience with horn loading tweeter design clearly shows in the wide dispersion and general absence of harshness until you wind the volume up to the sort of unneighbourly levels where it tends to harden up a little. Vocals are well handled and have the texture and detail that is enough for Aretha Franklin's fabulous turn

in *Every Little Bit Hurts* to sound convincing and tangible.

The phono stage is a pleasant surprise, too. It won't worry dedicated designs priced around £100 and over, but it is generally quiet and has a relaxed and refined presentation that gels well with the driver complement. There is also enough gain to work with most of the cartridges that you are likely to connect to it. The only slight disappointments are that the USB input struggles to work happily with my Melco N1A NAS drive (*HFC 397*), and time spent with different Bluetooth devices isn't always convincing when it comes to stability.

The bigger picture

Judged as the larger part of a music setup for £400, there is a lot to like about the R-41PM powered loudspeaker system. It has character and is musically entertaining and flexible enough to work well in a variety of situations. **ES**

DETAILS

PRICE

£400

TELEPHONE

01235 511166

WEBSITE

henleyaudio.co.uk

OUR VERDICT

