

Review: Roswell Mini K47 Matched Pair

by Rob Tavaglione / published 2018-01-22

Microphone expert Matt McGlynn knows mics like very few do and builds one of my all-time favorites: the Delphos, a transformerless, large-diaphragmed condenser known for nearly flat frequency response, truthful dynamics and a profound lack of character or personality (bad traits with people; very good traits with microphones). Now, McGlynn has updated his young company's bestseller, the Mini K47, with updated circuitry, an improved look and better accessories—perhaps rivaling the Delphos at its game.

The Mini K47 is built around its K47 capsule, a 34 mm, three-micron thick diaphragm that reportedly captures the warmth and response of a particularly legendary microphone surnamed 47.

The surrounding circuitry aims for neutrality, with no transformer in the way of accurate fidelity. The Mini K47 utilizes a polystyrene input coupling capacitor and polypropylene main signal caps, offering lower noise floor and more transparency compared to often poorly chosen budget caps found in many affordable mic models. This simple, clean circuit is un-encumbered by pads or filters, making for a pure signal path.

The newly updated K47s offer a Cutaway shock mount, allowing very close placement to sound sources; a nice microfleece storage sock; and an aluminum storage case, just like big bro Delphos. In fact, the Mini K47 barely differs from the Delphos in description and specs. This begs the question—what's the sonic difference?

Upon opening the K47 boxes, **one point is abundantly clear: This is a lot of mic kit for a mere \$299** direct—a kit that exactly matches the Delphos. The fit and finish look great, but that is to be expected from the ultra-detailed Mr. McGlynn whose team does a thorough check of each mic before shipment, ensuring quality that some affordable mics miss.

The new shock mount garnered excessive attention from me, as they always do; I am one cynical critic when it comes to mounts, because really, is there anything worse than buying a great mic with a crappy mount that haunts you with each placement? The Cutaway design is ideal, the threading is sufficiently smooth and the pivot just passes muster (yes, it holds, but a slight bump



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is enough to unseat it). The top-notch aluminum case and storage sock are on-point and quite welcome at this price point.

First application: the wild-card microphone in a standard drum-mixing setup. This time, the K47 was needed to fill in missing detail from a drummer with lots of snare grace notes and non-“the 2 and the 4” hits. Here the Mini K47 handled the level without overload, showed a nice normal cardioid pattern and presented a detailed and slightly lean frequency balance (via a Focusrite ISA mic amp).

Ultra-predictable me chose acoustic guitar next, as I needed to know more about the mic’s response before tackling other apps, and acoustic guitar always provides. Mounted as a spaced pair (both miking the body, one near bridge and the other near neck), I found the K47s to be well matched, low noise (with 13 dB of self-noise, I got as much noise from hot preamps as the mics) and nicely midrange-focused. With a pair of Delphos mics set up coincidentally for comparison, the K47s didn’t capture the same low depth or low-mid fullness, but instead offered a kind of a mid-scooped pre-EQ’d version of the guitar. I usually prefer to do a little EQ’ing manually, but many people would prefer the “ready to go” balance of the K47s.

The controlled bottom end and slightly flattering low-mids made for some nice electric guitar sounds. You can overload the K47 with level here and wish for a pad, but I was ok with moderate amp levels, no problem. The K47s’ tone was a natural match for chimey sounds, guitar layering overdubs and bringing out subtle detail in thick chord-inversions, due to that “pre-EQ’d” curve that allows overdubs to sit politely in the mix.

As I did some more assorted overdubs with the K47s (backing vocals, percussion, cajon, tambourine, Leslie cabinet, etc.), I felt like I really got to trust the mic for a present and slightly forward sound, with a nicely controlled bottom, a musical dip in the boxy (300 to 400-ish Hz) regions, hot output and a slight taming of dynamics.

A Mini K47 is a useful addition to any mic locker, but I can especially recommend one (or a pair really) for those just building their mic collections. They’ll find the kit to be durable, the mics sonically flexible, and the tonality “mix-ready” with a ready-to-go sound that requires little help. It’s as if the Mini K47s took all the positive cues from their big brother Delphos and delivered them with a slightly smaller, more easily manageable and focused sound. Roswell scores again!

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