

**102 AWARD WINNERS IN 27 CATEGORIES**

# WHAT HI★FI?

# AWARDS 2016

**THE FINEST KIT YOU CAN BUY**



STEREO SPEAKERS • TURNTABLES • SMARTPHONES •  
HEADPHONES • STREAMING SERVICES • TELEVISIONS •

Awards 2016 £4.99 [www.whatif.com](http://www.whatif.com)  
9 770309 333260 3 1 >

haymarket

# BEST STANDMOUNT £1200-£1500

## ATC SCM11 £1200



**We don't know** which will come first: U2's split or the *What Hi-Fi?* Awards issue where something other than ATC SCM11 takes a prize, but we'd hedge our bets at the former.

Over the multiple reviews we've written of the speakers' incarnations in the past decade, they've faced more competition than budget airlines have, yet still manage to undermine any rival they go up against. Just when you think a new £1000-odd standmounter is really getting to the core of a piece of music, the ATCs come out of storage to prove they can peel away another layer and deliver even greater transparency.

### Changing gears

They aren't the bubbliest speaker out there or capable of the deepest bass (partly due to the closed-box design), but their unrivalled levels of subtlety and resolution seal the deal.

They draw you into the ambient instrumentals that open Band of Horses' *Dull*

**"For the money, they seem to do everything right – and they look the part too"**

*Times/The Moon* from the first dragging synth note, their big, spacious presentation full of lush textures and sweeping dynamics. They're capable of picking out each intertwining musical strand, and their 15cm mid/bass driver and 25mm soft-dome work to deliver in an integrated and coordinated manner.

The echo attached to the meandering vocal is captured, and there's the weight, attack and agility across the frequency range to change gear as the track transitions from swooning orchestration to an energetic rock jam vibe.

### Totally enamoured

Frankly, the ATCs fit the mould of any track we feed it, from *Atoms for Peace* to *Massive Attack*, via *Eminem*: at every turn the ATCs demonstrate an extraordinary level of precision.

The whole frequency range is superbly controlled, yet it never gets too analytical. As easy as it is to pick out all the separate elements of a track, these speakers manage to knit



**Another prize for the ATC SCM11s – but still no news on U2's split**

everything into a cohesive, musical whole.

It's hard not to be totally enamoured by the ATC SCM11s. For the money, they seem to do everything right – and their solid curved cabinets look the part too. When it comes to speakers, or even hi-fi kit in general, there are few better ways to spend £1200.