

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
9 770309 333260 3 1 >

haymarket

BEST STANDMOUNT £1500+

ATC SCM19 £2000



Despite the numerical leap, the SCM19s are the next step up from the SCM11s (the number refers to the internal volume, in litres, of the cabinets). But size isn't where the differences end. The mid/bass driver is the company's highly developed 15cm unit, which has served in

The dynamic SCM19s
take an Award for a
second consecutive year



its premium standmounts for decades. Sitting above it is a higher-spec version of the SCM11's 25mm soft-dome tweeter, which was made in-house - quite an achievement for a small firm.

The upshot is quick to reveal itself as we put the SCM19s to work - they're a significant step up in every sonic sense.

Convincing

Playing Johann Johannsson's *A Model of the Universe* reminds us why these speakers are taking home their second consecutive Award. The natural and nuanced way they render the varying intensity of piano keys and guitar strums justifies the extra outlay over their sibling.

Leading and trailing edges of notes are crisply

defined without sounding artificially hyped, and the airtight presentation is as tonally convincing as it is dynamically spellbinding.

Real clincher

We also like the SCM19s' ability to render a large-scale soundstage and remain stable even as the piece's complexity increases.

Moving onto Prince's *Love* shows these boxes like to party - and that's the real clincher. They deliver the song's relentless rhythmic momentum with enthusiasm, kicking hard at the low end while delivering the drum machines with attack and determination.

Prince's vocals are handled in a crisp and articulate manner too, and that's balanced with a fine sense of body and natural warmth.

These ATCs are analytical yet never sound clinical or passionless. They remain transparent to the original recording and system electronics. And when it comes to insight and honesty, we haven't heard any better for the money.

"The airtight presentation is as tonally convincing as it is dynamically spellbinding"