

ATC SCM 11



£850

SOMETIMES HI-FI FORCES you to make a choice: between accuracy and entertainment. This *Group Test* demands you make such a decision. There are speakers here that'll do a better job with flawed recordings than these – those that'll round off the rough edges and make the sound more

“No other speaker renders Mahler's *Symphony No.6* with such utter precision”

palatable – but the ATCs don't do that: they give the music to you straight. These SCM 11s remain faithful to the recording: warts and all. You'll hear the flaws all right, but they won't be exaggerated, either.

A neutral tonal balance is just one part of the equation. Class-leading resolution is another. No other speaker in this test renders the instruments in Mahler's *Symphony No.6* with such precision, or can unravel the intricacies of Radiohead's *Electioneering* with such ease. Think of all the hi-fi qualities we normally talk about: timing, dynamics,

FOR

Brilliant all-round sound; transparent; unfussy about positioning; rugged build

AGAINST

Not at their best at low volume levels; need a powerful amp

VERDICT

These ATCs set a sky-high standard for the rest of this group to try and match

scale... the list goes on. In each area the ATC is either the best, or positioned just behind the champ in that discipline.

The result of such all-round musical talent is speakers that'll play all types of music with equal ease. They're not particularly fussy about positioning, either. A sealed cabinet – the only one in this test – helps the low-end stay controlled close to a wall, and gives the SCM 11s the kind of tuneful, articulate bass most ported speakers can only dream of. Yes, some rivals have more bass – and we're not just talking about floorstanders – but better-quality bass? No.

ATCs take you away to ecstasy

Build quality is as rugged as you might expect from a manufacturer so closely linked to the pro-audio market (where equipment is used and abused, yet still expected to work year after year).

Flaws? These speakers shine brightest at medium volumes and above. At low settings they lose too much life for our liking. They're also insensitive, so need at least 100 watts per channel to motor.

That's all we can moan about. Don't buy anything else near this price without trying the SCM 11s out first. We love 'em!

The ATCs reproduce sound more clearly and faithfully than any other speakers in this test



TEST RESULT

Look no further: this stunning pair of stereo speakers from **ATC** provides realism and detail like few others

NO PRIZES FOR guessing that the Wharfedales finish bottom of the pile. They're not bad, just uninspiring, and in this group that isn't good enough.

Miles ahead come Acoustic Energy's AEs. These are terrific little speakers that perform astonishingly well considering the age of the design. Want a piece of hi-fi history while getting modern standards of performance? Here you are.

Next comes a trio of closely matched performers. The Dynaudios, ProAcs and Triangles are all excellent, and any preference for one over

the other is purely down to taste rather than outright ability. Try them out and see if any in particular float your boat.

However, first audition must go to ATC's excellent SCM 11s. These monitors raise the bar when it comes to transparency, dynamics and resolution at this price. We go so far as to say most speakers at double the money would struggle to better the ATC's performance. That's why they win this test. Just make sure the rest of your system is good enough.

"The SCM 11s raise the bar when it comes to dynamics, transparency and detail..."



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WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION
GROUP TEST WINNER

ATC SCM 11



£850



NOW ADD THESE



CD PLAYER
ROKSAN M-SERIES



£ 1100

This CD player is sometimes overlooked for the sonically flashier Cyrus CD8x, but in this case this Roksan is exactly what the ATCs need. It's detailed, full-bodied and delivers dynamics in an organic and unforced manner.



AMPLIFIER
ROKSAN KANDY L.III



£ 650

The uprated Kandy is more than up to the job of powering the ATCs. Its 120 watts per channel works with the speaker's low sensitivity, and its class-leading resolution is good enough to show off the ATC's talents.

STANDS
PARTINGTON SUPER DREADNOUGHT



£ 180

These are the minimum we'd recommend for the SCM 11s, with the mighty £400 Heavis from the same brand sounding even better, if budget permits.

TOTAL SYSTEM £2780

FACTS AND FIGURES

PRICE RANGE	ACOUSTIC ENERGY	ATC	DYNAUDIO	PROAC	TRIANGLE	WHARFEDEALE
£650 - £850	AE1	SCM 11	FOCUS 110	STUDIO 110	ALTEA ESW	EV02-30
SPECIFICATION						
PRICE	£ 845	£ 850	£ 850	£ 750	£ 795	£ 650
TYPE	Standmount	Standmount	Standmount	Standmount	Floorstander	Floorstander
SENSITIVITY	88dB/w/m	85dB/w/m	85dB/w/m	88dB/w/m	91dB/w/m	89dB/w/m
IMPEDENCE	8 ohms	8 ohms	8 ohms	8 ohms	8 ohms	6 ohms
POWER-HANDLING	200w	200w	150w	150w	100w	125w
BIWIRABLE	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
DIMENSIONS	30x18x26cm	38x21x25cm	31x17x29cm	38x20x24cm	107x31x37cm	92x23x40cm
FINISHES	Black	Cherry	Maple, rose	Ash, black, cherry, maple, mahogany	Bordeaux, champagne, cognac	Black ash, maple cherry, rosewood
HOW THEY RATED						
SOUND	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
BUILD	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
COMPATIBILITY	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
VERDICT	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★