

ATC SCM11



£850

WE'VE BEEN RAVING about these standmounters for ages now, including giving them a best buy Award at this price level in our *Awards 2007* issue, so this time, just for fun, we're going to start with some negatives.

For one, the SCM11s aren't at their best at low volumes – they just lose a little too much verve if they're not being pushed. Second, they're rather

“Whatever type of music you're playing, it will be timed beautifully”

insensitive, so need to be powered by a fairly hefty amp, say, upwards of 100 watts per channel. Third, they're somewhat unforgiving of poor recordings. But that's actually related to the best element, perhaps even sole purpose, of the ATCs: honesty.

These speakers are so detailed and neutrally balanced that they convey with almost pin-point accuracy exactly what's on the disc. They'll dig up and place every little element of a complicated recording such as Holst's

FOR

Exceptional detail and insight; neutral, balanced tonality; relatively unfussy about positioning

AGAINST

Need to be pushed to high volumes, and by a powerful amp

VERDICT

Though it may sound like a cliché, honesty really is the best policy, and none are better at it than the SCM11s

The ATCs deliver a brutally honest performance – perfect for great recordings

The Planets without breaking a sweat. They even handle the grand orchestral crescendos well, ensuring the performance is epic when it's supposed to be.

Intimate vocal delivery

Switch to something more intimate, like Tracy Chapman's self-titled album, and the SCM11s' exceptional small-scale dynamics help to present every emotional nuance of the vocal delivery, and the ultra-revealing nature of the speakers lends fullness and texture to picks on the acoustic guitar.

Whatever type of music you're playing – and these ATCs can do any genre you like – it will be timed beautifully and balanced perfectly. The treble frequencies remain in control even at the top of the range, and bass lines are always taut and rhythmic, even when the speakers are placed close to a wall.

What you hear is what they recorded

If you're looking for a speaker that will iron out the flaws of overly compressed recordings or will add character to tracks that don't have it, the SCM11s aren't for you. If, however, you want to hear exactly what's contained on the disc or record – including the acoustics of the room the performance was taking place in – there are no better speakers at the price.



TEST RESULT

We've been saying it for a long time now, but once again these **ATCs** prove unbeatable at this price

THERE ARE A couple of manufacturers who might at first be a bit disappointed to see the scores their stereo speakers have received, but let us be quite clear on this: there is not a single bad product in this *Group Test*.

The truth is simply that time has moved on, and speakers that once were deemed perfect examples of their type have since been outdone by rivals.

This is particularly true of the Acoustic Energys. The slight flaws that they always exhibited have been highlighted by newer floorstanders like the Monitor Audios, which improve on those areas. However, even these aren't perfect, and are outshone again by the Neats, with their new take on floorstanding design.

"Honesty and insight: the most rewarding qualities in hi-fi speaker design"

Four stars seems low in this company

However, it's a standmounter that takes the prize on this occasion, as the ATCs prove once again that honesty and insight are the most rewarding qualities in speaker design. The Jamos instead go for fun and excitement, and are never a dull listen, while the Wharfedales have some exceptional talents – even if there are some frustrations in there, too. Overall, it's the ATCs we'd love to own.

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WHAT HI-FI? SOUND AND VISION GROUP TEST WINNER



NOW ADD THESE



CD PLAYER REGA APOLLO
★★★★★
£ 600

Awards 2007
This Rega is quite simply an astounding CD player for the money. It will feed the ATCs all the detail that they love so much, but can also do rhythm, punch and atmosphere, too. Nothing phases the Apollo.



SPEAKER CABLE CHORD CARNIVAL SILVER PLUS
★★★★★
£ 5.50/m

September 2004
We could have recommended the QED cable here, but we reckon it's just a little lean for the ATCs. The Chord Company cable makes a better choice as it's that little bit more robust and full-bodied.



STEREO AMPLIFIER ROKSAN KANDY MK L.III
★★★★★
£ 650

Awards 2007
Unbeatable in our Awards two years in a row, this is the perfect amp to push the ATCs, as it has all the power they need, plus loads of detail.

TOTAL SYSTEM £2100

FACTS AND FIGURES

PRICE RANGE £700-£1000	ACOUSTIC ENERGY AELITETHREE	ATC SCM11	JAMO C803	MONITOR AUDIO SILVER RS8	NEAT MOTIVE 2	WHARFEDALE OPUS2-M1
SPECIFICATION						
PRICE	£ 750	£ 850	£ 700	£ 800	£ 945	£ 1000
TYPE	Floorstander	Standmounter	Standmounter	Floorstander	Floorstander	Standmounter
SENSITIVITY	89dB	85dB	87dB	91dB	85dB	87dB
IMPEDANCE	8 ohms	8 ohms	6 ohms	6 ohms	8 ohms	6 ohms
POWER-HANDLING	175w	200w	125w	175w	100w	75w
BIWIRABLE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
FINISHES	3	1	2	6	4	4
DIMENSIONS	92 x 23 x 30cm	38 x 21 x 25cm	38 x 23 x 34cm	90 x 19 x 27cm	77 x 16 x 20cm	51 x 23 x 36cm
HOW THEY RATED						
SOUND	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
BUILD	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
COMPATIBILITY	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★
VERDICT	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★	★★★★★