

ATC CA2 & SCM10A £2019.00

◆ Preamp/active speaker combo

ATC's tiny SCM10A speaker adopts the same radical styling as its SCM70ASL floorstander. A sealed-box design, fins on the rear of the ten litre cabinet provide cooling for 250 watts of amplification. The laminated MDF cabinet has aluminium extrusions on the front corners and rear cooling, so each weighs 15.5 kilos. Their CA2 partner is ATC's less expensive pre-amp. It has full remote control, five line level inputs, tape loop with monitoring, headphone socket and an optional phono stage. Balanced XLR connections link pre-amp and speakers, so just add source(s)!

It has a distinctly tight and immediate sound, but extended listening revealed a surprisingly subtle side. Timing was notably on the ball, the leading edges of notes precisely defining the beat and provoking involuntary tapping of the feet. There were occasions when the bass over-stretched these speakers and lost some definition, but given the price and size their bass depth was remarkable. The underpinning it provided whenever the music required it was highly entertaining as well as adding genuine space to live recordings.

The speakers' ability to disappear sonically was particularly effective when producing wide and deep soundstages, and the system did a fine job of revealing the advantages of the two high-resolution formats I was using. ATC's entry-level combo offers remarkable value for money. Given decent stands and some good cable, it's a high fidelity bargain.

ATC ☎ 01285 760561 Reviewed in issue

