

# Products of the year 2014

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Jason Kennedy

various

2014 was a good year for new kit, both René and I struggled to narrow our selection down to three piece each and many fine products were discovered that didn't make the cut. But the six products below were the cream of the crop, the components that made our music sound more compelling than all the rest. Some have been reviewed on The Ear while others are due for imminent coverage, they all however deserve your attention as the best of their generation.



## ATC P1

I have long been a fan of ATC loudspeakers, both passive and active, they are more subservient to the whims of the music than most loudspeakers and can deliver genuinely wide dynamic range when adequately driven. When I reviewed the SCM19 standmounts earlier in the year I got to borrow a P1 power amplifier at the same time and got a fabulous result with the pairing, but then I carried on using the amp and found that it worked with a wide range of speakers. Not those designed for valve amplifiers I'll admit but those that were designed with minimal coloration and maximal transparency. The more I used the P1 the more I was impressed that an amplifier at its price could do such a good job. It has real grip in the low end for a start, a rare commodity at almost any price, and yet it doesn't have the graininess of most high power transistor amps. It's not as smooth as a class A, nor as nimble as a single ended triode but it has less character than either and lets you hear the full power and glory of everything you throw at it. It is also very competitively priced indeed.

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