

Courtesy of TransAudio Group

**AVP**  
IMPORTS



# **SIX-TIME GRAMMY AWARD- WINNING MIX ENGINEER KEN “DURO” IFILL SWITCHES TO ATC SCM45A NEARFIELD MONITORS**



LAS VEGAS, NEVADA – AUGUST 2019: For over 25 years, Ken “Duro” Ifill has been mixing the living history of urban hip-hop and R&B. His client list includes Jay-Z, NAS, Pharrell, Erykah Badu, Will Smith, Beastie Boys, Usher, and on and on, and through a singular focus on making everything he works on as cool as possible, he has won six Grammy Awards. These days, Duro splits his time between the studio, where he still

engages his first and enduring passion (mixing!) and Senior VP of A&R at Republic/Universal Records. After twenty years on the same monitors and two years in dissatisfied flux, Duro recently upgraded to **ATC SCM45A** three-way nearfield monitors.

“I discovered ATC working at Q-Tip’s studio (A Tribe Called Quest),” Duro explained. “He had a pair of soffit-mounted ATC SCM150ASL Pros and some other well-respected nearfields. The first thing I fell in love with on his ATCs was the imaging. As a mix engineer, I don’t think of things as just left or right. I think in three dimensions, which makes imaging especially important. I’ll put things, say, to the left-rear or center-up. Even beyond that, I’m thinking in actual depth. Say, for example, is something three feet back on the left or is it six feet back? I quickly stopped using Q-Tip’s nearfields entirely and just mixed everything on the ATCs. I loved how the volume didn’t affect the mix. I could mix quiet or loud and still have the same stable relationships and all the bass information. The top end was smooth and not at all fatiguing. It was a really enjoyable and productive mixing experience.”

Around the same time, Duro was acquainting himself with a new set of nearfields in his own studio that he had committed to before the Q-Tip ATC experience. They came after two decades on the same monitors. “I was having reliability issues with my new nearfields, but because I had made a pretty sizable investment in them, I wasn’t ready to abandon ship,” Duro said. “Then I went back to Q-Tip’s studio and he had upgraded to the biggest monitors that ATC makes – soffit-mounted mains with dual 15s (ATC SCM300ASL Pros)! I said, ‘man, you must really love these things!’ When I got back to my studio and still had the same unresolved reliability issues, I said forget it. I decided to just get the ATCs that I was wanting.”

Based on the size of the nearfields he has always preferred mixing on, Duro went with the ATC SCM45A three-way monitors, which use two 6.5-inch low frequency drivers, a three-inch soft dome mid-frequency driver, and a one-inch high-frequency driver. Although he has only had them for a short time, Duro already completed Kiana Ledé EP *Myself* using the ATC SCM45As. “The translation on the ATCs is great,” he said. “But even beyond the balance between the instruments, the more nuanced texture of the sounds translates. The same way that two vocalists can hit the same note and still sound different... it’s kind of analogous to what I’m talking about.” That translation of texture allows Duro to reliably mix not just for balance, but also for the emotional edge that separates a good mix from a fantastic mix. Thoroughly pleased, Duro is convinced he now has the monitors that will see him through the decades to come. A huge thanks go out to Dan Physics at Alto Music in New York who was instrumental in his quest to acquire the ATCs.