



WEST COAST RADIANs

Red Cedar Flat Audio Panels

The audio-panels are built using Western Red Cedar, Pacific Maple and Sitka Spruce boards reclaimed from discarded piles of wood in mill operations and drifting ocean logs on the Sunshine Coast of British Columbia, Canada. After being sliced and smoothly shaped, they are planed, sanded, tuned and finally mounted on a stabilizer wood stand.

An amplifier drives the sound into an audio transducer applied to the rear of each panel, exciting the wood boards and transforming their surface into a distributed-mode loudspeaker (DML). In this way the audio is approaching an omnidirectional presence in the way the sound from the cedar panels is dispersed evenly in all directions.

The diffused radiation patterns of all the frequencies created on the wood panels expands the audio source. Sound then propagates through the wood in the most liberated and natural way while becoming omnidirectional in the far field. The diffused sound is stunningly beautiful and softly filtered by the smooth resonating quality of red cedar or the brighter resonating quality of maple and sitka spruce, which adds to the uncanny character of their physical and sculptural presence.

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*Custom-made Yellow Cedar flat audio-panel
(H: 160cm W: 50-20cm D: 5mm)*

After a visit to a couple of small mill operations on the Sunshine Coast looking for some Cedar boards, I acquired (literally “salvaged” from rotting and burning) a large number of Red Cedar slabs and started working with them while researching and experimenting towards the creation of the resonators that are standing here today.

After a few tests and experiments, I decided to start using these beautiful resonators instead of regular speakers, both as listening devices and a performance instrument for audio diffusion projects and installations. It was the beginning of my adventure with this amazing material, so abundant, yet so endangered by the large and often savage exploitation of our Coastal forests.



While working with these woods – planing, sanding, mounting, tuning and testing sounds – I became more and more inspired by the amazing resonating quality of these forgotten and discarded slabs, and started thinking more about resonance itself, a quality we often associate to sound and space.

On the one hand the word resonance means something like “echo”, or “reverberation”, on the other hand, “the word ‘reason’ is somehow hidden in ‘resonance’”. The French verb *résonner* makes this resonance even stronger – one might even be tempted to invent the word

re[a]sonance here. Thus, a kind of knowledge is involved here. A kind of thinking – maybe not what we would call rational thinking, but a kind of thinking nonetheless. As the Polish philosopher and mathematician Józef Höené-Wronski has it, as quoted by Edgar Varése: ‘Music is the corporealization of the intelligence that is in sound’ (Varése, 1966). Music as the becoming-body of the knowledge of sound – sound thinking.”¹

Sound thinking here is listening, sensing and being in the subtle and sensuous realization of harmonizing our nature within nature. Here, beyond any sentimentality, we appreciate the enhanced and vibrant quality of sound in which we feel embedded and resounding while subverting usual dichotomies of culture and nature, body and mind, artistic and aesthetic.

Musical categories of Harmony and Counterpoint, while they might seem abstruse to some, are here resounding in the pure clarity of the embracing and omnidirectional resonance of the wood resonators. The space is resounding, we resonate within.



¹ Bernd Herzogenrath, Introduction to *Sonic Thinking, A Media Philosophical Approach*, Bloomsbury Publishing Inc., London 2017