

Acoustic System Resonators

by Chris Thomas

Just because you can't imagine how something works it doesn't mean to say that it doesn't. That's my story anyway. Remember this, because you need to approach the Acoustic System resonators with an open mind.

Each of these consists of a small hardwood block that attaches to the wall with a sticky pad and atop each of these different woods on a three-pronged metal claw sits a dedicated cup with four elongations. The positioning of these resonating cups and where the blocks are mounted is crucial to their effectiveness.

Each cup must be orientated in a specific direction and tilted ever so slightly towards the wall. I used 3 different resonators. A Basic (Maple and Copper) fitted low on the wall between the speakers, a Gold (hard Maple and Gold) just about tweeter level and Platinum, again with a hard maple base which was sited half way between the Gold and the ceiling.

OK, now you will want to know how these are supposed to work.

Well, the manufacturers explanation won't really be of much use because they explain that "Scientific explanations are very complex." True I say but then, "They have to define the relationship between low-level overtones, diffusion effects and psycho acoustic perception." Yes, I imagine that would be a difficult thing to define. What they are trying to say is that these things work, take a listen and make your own mind up. Again I agree with them. My room has a fireplace between the speakers that has accumulated all sorts of audio and guitar detritus. Wooden blocks, floor protectors, plug adaptors, converters, glass and metal bottlenecks, Allen keys, bottles of magic liquids, the list goes on. Every one of these is resonating and reflecting or absorbing at different frequencies so... Oh, you know what? Forget all this, because here I am trying to apply my limited knowledge of the way the world works to these tiny resonating cups when all that really matters is can I hear any system improvements?

I wasn't at all sure at first as I suppose I was preoccupied with these little bowls stuck to the wall and anyway the manual says that after installing them for the first time I need to wait between 2 and 48 hours for them to start delivering because of "room pressure regulation, as the resonator is a passive device". I could go off on one again here but I won't. I shall remind myself

what I said in the first sentence. You've stuck with me this far, so here goes. I began to notice that the system was better focussed and sharper. The soundstage was better defined and the bass was tighter and better controlled. Notes seemed more sure-footed and pitch perfect. These things dawned over the next weeks so I left the singing bowls in place until I had gotten used to both them and the system. Then, three months later, I took them down and over the following days I felt that the music has softened and become less articulate. The system had slipped from its performance peak and now vocals were more smeared and the bass had certainly softened up. I was surprised but my ears were telling me things I couldn't ignore. Psychoacoustics? Possibly, but then cynicism is perhaps the easier path to take.

I think that with the Acoustic System Resonators you must ignore your whole reasoning of cause and effect and go with your ears. Do they work? I say yes. Why do they work? I say, don't go there. What I do know is that, given the choice of them being on the wall or back in their boxes, I want them firmly back on the wall. Just be prepared for a lot of questions from visitors. When they ask and they will, I just hand them the instructions and sit back with a Cheshire Cat grin. It's much easier that way. +



TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Basic: £145 per resonator

Gold: £660 per resonator

Platinum: £1,315 per resonator

Acoustic System products available from:

Metropolis Music

Tel: +44(0) 1435 867 438

URL: metropolis-music.co.uk