

Eon Art: An important acoustic laboratory

Arianne Aubert Bonn

CHANDLER: - There is a location in Chandler where science, precision, control, verification and an artistic touch are located under the same roof. Eon Art, produces high-end amplifiers and speakers. According to the shareholder and co-owner Stéphane Hautcoeur, it is the largest acoustic laboratory in the country.

At the entrance of Eon Art, visitors are greeted with posters of high voltage electricity symbols. Behind the closed doors, science is at work. Between two and fifteen people work to design, test and produce amplification systems and speakers with accuracy and quality exceeding market standards.

“Every product is signed by the people who worked on it. It’s a commitment, in terms of quality, to sign your products with your own name,” says Mr. Hautcoeur.

Made for true music enthusiasts, the products are sold at a retail price of \$25,000 to \$50,000, but the sound that emanates from it is an experience in itself.

“Music is an emotion. With



Photo: A. Bonn

Stéphane Hautcoeur in his laboratory, with some of his high-performance cards.

such sound quality, we are able to capture the movement of the musician. We hear him move around the room, catch his breath, and turn the page of his score,” says Mr. Hautcoeur, emotionally describing how his product offers a realistic rendering. A listening session confirms his words; in a room that stands out from the rest of the building, the walls are covered with a disc collection. There’s a cozy atmosphere and loungers.

Mr. Hautcoeur is not only a

music lover. He is also a man of science. Wearing a smock, he roams through the factory-laboratory, explaining how, at each stage of design, nothing is left to random.

“We have an infinitely small margin of error with all the tests we do, but at the very end, the last adjustments are done by ear. It still has its place, despite the science,” he says.

Between the assembly halls and the control laboratories are the design and research labora-

tories where advanced equipment and powerful computers calculate the algorithms on which the sound cards will be built. Eon Art has its own laboratory but also conducts research and design for other companies. “This is what allows us to make the research equipment profitable,” says Mr. Hautcoeur.

In addition to state-of-the-art amplifiers, loudspeakers that eliminate unwanted noise are also built. “The vibration of

a speaker produces sound at the front and back of the membrane. However, we eliminate this parasitic sound at the back under a principle inspired by a lobster cage. The vibration penetrates through a hole in a second chamber and breaks on a pyramid of wood that changes the trajectory of the waves and prevents them from coming out,” he explains.

Mr. Hautcoeur is proud to say that at Eon Art they don’t have difficulty finding skilled employees: “There is no school program that teaches exactly what is done here. So we train our people ourselves. They are given an above-average salary, which makes them want to stay and even outside our team, many people volunteer to help us because they want to learn.”

When asked who buys these products, Stéphane Hautcoeur answers: “The real music lovers. Some are depriving themselves of cars to afford one of our systems. Others simply have more means.”

Stéphane Hautcoeur also develops systems for luxury yachts. “On ships worth millions, there were car sound systems. It was time to remedy the situation.”

TOWN OF NEW RICHMOND: Public consultation about the arena’s future

Gilles Gagné

NEW RICHMOND: – The Town of New Richmond will soon hold three consultation meetings about the future of its arena, including a March 13 meeting specifically organized for the anglophone community.

The first meeting will take place on March 11 for the users and the third one on March 18 for the part of the population that has not been able to attend the meetings held so far.

Until now, the municipal administration has held a preliminary meeting on November 12 for the public, during which all the options were presented, and three private meetings in January for the business community, the elderly and the community organizations.

The arena was built in 1969, 50 years ago and has not benefitted from a major refurbishment since. The coolant product used to maintain the ice at the ideal temperature, gas R-22, will no longer be made in Canada.

“Selling and producing Freon R-22 will be forbidden in Canada as of January 1, 2020. It will only be possible to

buy that product as long as available quantities last. We can presume that it will be possible to get some supply for the whole 2020 year and that is what we aim for. After that, it will become more problematic,” explains Town of New Richmond director general Stéphane Cyr.

The arena upgrades would require an investment of \$7.3 million. Among other things, the cement slab is leaking and the roof needs to be changed. The federal government has not yet announced a program for arena upgrade projects such as New Richmond’s. It is however an electoral year in Canada and many are expect-

ing an arena funding program. The program currently offered by the Quebec government could only contribute \$800,000 to the New Richmond project if it is not improved.

If the town of New Richmond is the only investor, it would mean a 10% increase for taxpayers in New Richmond. Mayor Éric Dubé has often said that “this option is unthinkable.”

Approximately 48% of the arena users are from the neighbouring communities, mainly Gesgapegiag, Cascapédia-St-Jules, Caplan, Saint-Alphonse and Maria. The municipal administration would like to reach agreements with those

communities in order to share a portion of the annual expenses.

The closest arenas are located in Carleton and in Caplan. The Bonaventure arena will be rebuilt over the next year, between June 2019 and May 2020, an \$8.3 million venture.

The programs Bonaventure

took part in for their upgrades are no longer available. Those federal and provincial programs paid for two-thirds of the total cost. Approximately 215 people use the New Richmond arena on a regular basis.

All the March meetings being held at the Adrien-Gauvreau community centre and will start at 7 p.m.



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Consultation Meeting
on the future of the
New Richmond Sports Complex Arena
with the anglophone community.

March 13, 2019
7 p.m.
at the
Adrien-Gauvreau Community Centre.