



# The Architects of Radial Sound

More than four decades crafting the ultimate sonic experience.

This is our story

# The Genesis of Radial Sound

## A Humble Beginning

In the mid '70s, a devoted admirer of famed Austrian composer Gustave Mahler had a problem. Wolfgang Meletzky found he could only lose himself in the emotional sweep of Mahler's works by attending live concert performances in his native Berlin. The hi-fi equipment in his living room simply couldn't replicate the color, range and emotional flight of the music that he experienced in the presence of the Berlin Philharmonic.

As a young electronics engineer, this contradiction puzzled Meletzky. Why couldn't a home audio system deliver the soul-searing power of a live orchestra, instead of flat, uninspired notes pushed out of a wooden box with little emotional "oomph" or intensity?

## The Challenge

Meletzky recognized that while sitting in a concert hall, the delicate notes of a weeping violin moved outward in all directions as the bow was drawn across the strings. Those sonic vibrations, when combined with the brass, wind, percussion and string instruments of 100 other musicians, bathed concertgoers in a complete immersive experience.

In Meletzky's living room the music was unidirectional, pushed outward through cones and domes using air compression, magnetic coils and paper diaphragms. All were mounted in a geometric housing designed to transform an amplified electrical signal into sound pressure waves for the ears to detect. The result was shrill high frequencies, a hollow midrange, and a tubby bass striving for depth.

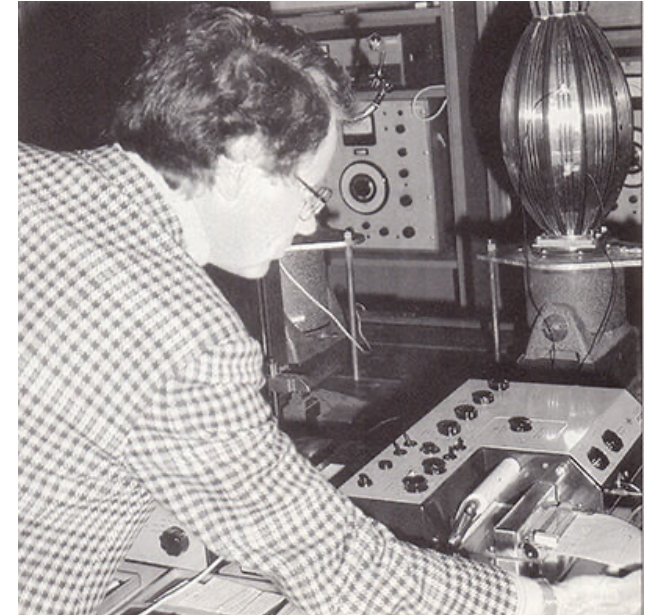
Making matters worse was the need for a listener to sit at the apex of a "stereo triangle" to hear the optimum results from two speakers beaming at a single sweet spot. Why, Meletzky wondered, couldn't he move around his living room and enjoy the exact same sound experience from a different angle. And what if there was more than one listener in the room? Shouldn't they all be able to enjoy the same aural experience from any location in the room? There had to be a better way.

# Proof of Concept

There was, indeed, a better way. But it took months of trial and error and countless disappointments to find it. Meletzky's personal hours were consumed by volumes of audio research papers, meetings with experts in the field of acoustics, and investigating the ideal structural and material inputs needed to design the ultimate speaker which, to that point, existed only in his mind.

It was during a moment of builder's frustration that Meletzky had a Thomas Edison "ah-ha" moment. He suddenly visualized a loudspeaker without the hard lines of a rectangle, but rather in the form of an elongated sphere, evenly radiating music outward in all directions, much like a light bulb emits light. It took many more months of trial, error, setbacks and additional failures before Meletzky, with the help of two audiophile friends, created a never-before-seen loudspeaker that delivered the concert experience of his dreams.

He called it the *Radialstrahler*, a revolutionary transducer that spread concert hall sound throughout his living room, delivering the same raw, emotional shivers he felt at a live performance. Determined to promote his revolutionary design, Meletzky, along with his friends and future partners, Bienecke, and Lehnhardt, founded the company MBL to share their newly invented Radialstrahler with the world.





Publicly introduced in 1979 at IFA Berlin, the largest global trade fair for consumer electronics at the time, the Radialstrahler completely disrupted the audio scene with an entrance and reception like no other. It truly delivered on the promise of quality, craftsmanship, and sterling sound expected from a product stamped with the words – Made in Germany.

And, as the saying goes, the rest is history!

Continually improved, enhanced and enriched since its inception, the Radialstrahler's show-stopping presence and exquisite sound reproduction remain to this day. Recognized worldwide for its ability to produce what Leonard Bernstein described as an "ethereal constellation" of notes, MBL's most recognizable and sought-after loudspeaker stands at the forefront of audio excellence.





# MBL Chronology

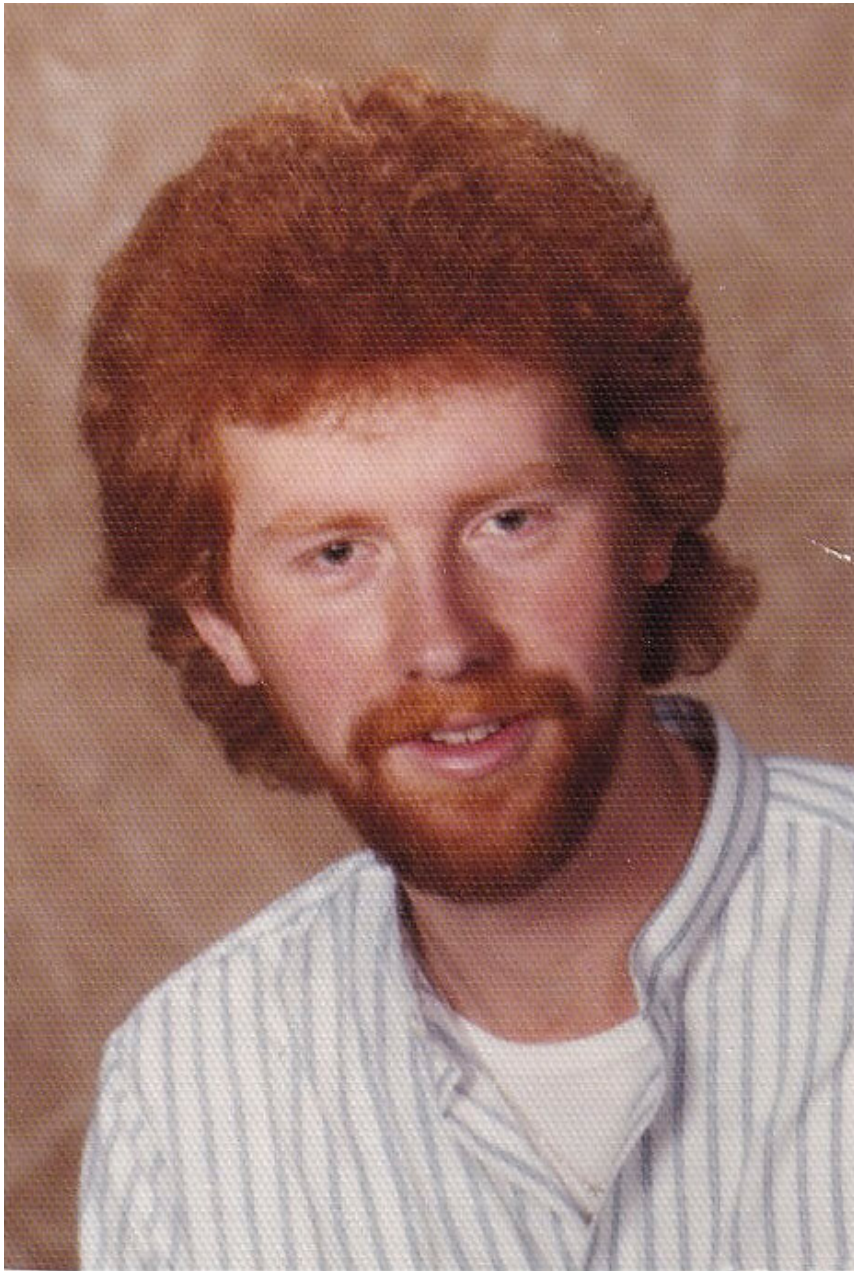
## 1979 - The Beginning

The original MBL 100 Radialstrahler bursts onto the global electronics scene. Its unorthodox “rocket” shape and stabilizing fins captivate the audio world, while its crystal clear, room-filling sound holds listeners spellbound. This loudspeaker was the catalyst behind the founding of MBL Akustikgeräte, a launch that left an indelible mark on the burgeoning high-end audio industry.

## 1982 - A Chance Encounter







Jürgen Reis, an engineering student (and avid guitarist in a German rock band) discovers the MBL Radialstrahler at the IFA Berlin Tradeshow. With his program of study focused on electro-acoustics, the budding engineer is mesmerized by the concept of radial sound dispersion from the Bauhaus structure of the Radialstrahler. Upon graduating, his passion for acoustic purity turns into a full-time career when he's hired as a development engineer at MBL. His first accomplishment is using his engineering prowess and ground-breaking analysis of acoustic data to deliver a heightened listening experience from the Radialstrahler. Meletzky is so impressed with the improved sound that he ultimately promotes Reis to Chief Engineer. Great things are to follow.

## 1986 - A New Arrival

MBL introduces the 6010 preamp - *Der Vorverstärker* - which takes many by surprise as component production had never been part of the company's product strategy. The design and development of *Der Vorverstärker* emerged from an internal project led and motivated by the boundary-pushing drive of Reis. Determined to optimize the audio signals delivered to the Radialstrahler, Reis envisioned a preamp with individually adjustable input and output stages, a built-in pink noise generator, and a digital level meter, all constructed from the finest available components. With plans in his head, he retreats to his MBL



workshop and simply builds it from scratch. (The process was actually far from simple.) Soon after, the German audio press responds with rave reviews, and MBL dealers quickly embrace and promote the beauty, warmth and enhanced sound quality delivered by what they call the “Dream Preamplifier.”

## The Evolution of Excellence

That same year, the MBL 100 Radialstrahler evolves into the MBL 101. The modest change in model number belies the complete overhaul of the Radialstrahler, including the change out of aluminum segments in the tweeter and midrange drivers for proprietary, cutting-edge carbon fibre elements that provide improved dispersion and timbre. Combined with a newly developed 3-way crossover, it is now possible to eliminate the equalizer used in the previous model, which was needed to smooth out the frequency response. The resulting sound? Exquisite, with life-like punch.



## 1993 – A Family Made Whole



With a universally acclaimed preamp and a unique-to-the-world loudspeaker, it becomes apparent that something is missing. In 1993, the MBL 9010 amplifier is introduced. Conceived, designed and produced to assume its rightful place between the MBL preamp and Radialstrahler, the 9010 measures in with a blacksmith-anvil weight of 90 kilograms. Housing three Mu-Metal shielded toroidal transformers and a direct push-pull input stage, the über-robust configuration works seamlessly with an isolated gain cell technique to deliver 800 watts at 4 ohms – exceeding the benchmark standards expected from Germany's leading audio manufacturer.

## MBL Worldwide





By this time MBL has not only distinguished itself as a global leader in the production of loudspeakers, it's also established an international presence as an electronics manufacturer. Beginning with the MBL 101's sensational debut at CES in Las Vegas, demand for MBL products steadily expands from Europe to North America and Asia, winning the hearts and ears of enthusiasts in 44 countries on both sides of the equator.



1995 – 1997

## The Drive to Succeed

CD purchases have now eclipsed sales of vinyl, and overtake the humble, but still widely used cassette tape. Yet audio purists recognize that digital recordings do not always sound the same as their analogue counterparts. A wide array of CD drives and digital-to-analogue converters in the marketplace deliver vast discrepancies in sound quality. From its headquarters in Berlin, MBL views this as both a challenge and an opportunity, and responds with the award-winning Reference CD Transport. Two years later, the matching D/A converter arrives giving MBL a complete sound solution from initial source to Radialstrahler serenity.

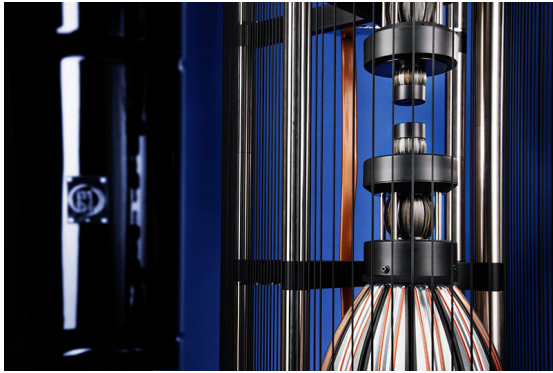


MBL also introduces the Radialstrahler model "D" in 1997. With this evolutionary step, the MBL 101 becomes a 4-way system with multiple improvements including an integrated subwoofer that allows lower frequencies to extend down to 32 Hz.



The introduction of a second range of electronics, the Noble Line, gains swift customer acceptance and quickly develops into the best-selling component series for MBL.

2007 – The 101 X-Treme Flagship



After an extensive testing and development phase, MBL turns the world of omnidirectional transducers upside down. Literally! The introduction of the 101 X-Treme reveals a fantastic new arrangement of MBL's instantly recognizable Radialstrahler melons. By inverting and stacking a single 101 system in a nose-to-nose mirror configuration with a second 101 beneath it, MBL successfully creates a D'Appolito arrangement that improves dynamic response and enhanced floor-to-ceiling interaction. Even more impressive are the six-foot tall lacquer-finished speaker columns containing six lateral 12-inch (30 cm) woofers – each with built-in amplifiers that deliver 380 watts of spine-thrumming power to the array of subwoofers. The painstaking craftsmanship and quality built into each pair of 101 X-Tremes limits their production to a maximum of 12 systems per year.

## 2008 – A Winning Succession

With the successful introduction of the 101 X-Treme, MBL founder Wolfgang Meletzky decides to retire from the company and led over a span of almost three decades. MBL's new owner and CEO, successful entrepreneur Christian Hermeling, brings fresh perspective and ideas to one of the world's most prestigious audio companies, backstopped by his own passion for classical music.



## 2009 – A Classic Partnership

Through a bold corporate initiative, MBL establishes a long-term collaboration with the world-famous Concerto Köln, a Grammy winning ensemble renowned for performing music from the 18th and 19th centuries on period instruments. The union of musical equals, both dedicated to creating authentic sound, thrives to this day.



## 2011 - Broadening the Appeal

Three years after assuming the helm of MBL, Hermeling initiated the introduction of the Corona Line, now renamed Cadenza. Simple, clean and elegant in design, it offers state-of-the-art aural technology at a competitive price, broadening the reach and appeal of MBL's legendary audio products.



## 2016 - The Noble Class Redux



The introduction of MBL's second generation of the Noble Line establishes a new milestone in the company's distinguished history. It now includes MBL's proprietary LASA amplification, unity gain preamplification, True-Peak-DAC, and in-house designed Roon streaming module. Designed from the ground up, the electronics series heralds a new era of audio excellence both within and outside of MBL.

## The Hear and Now

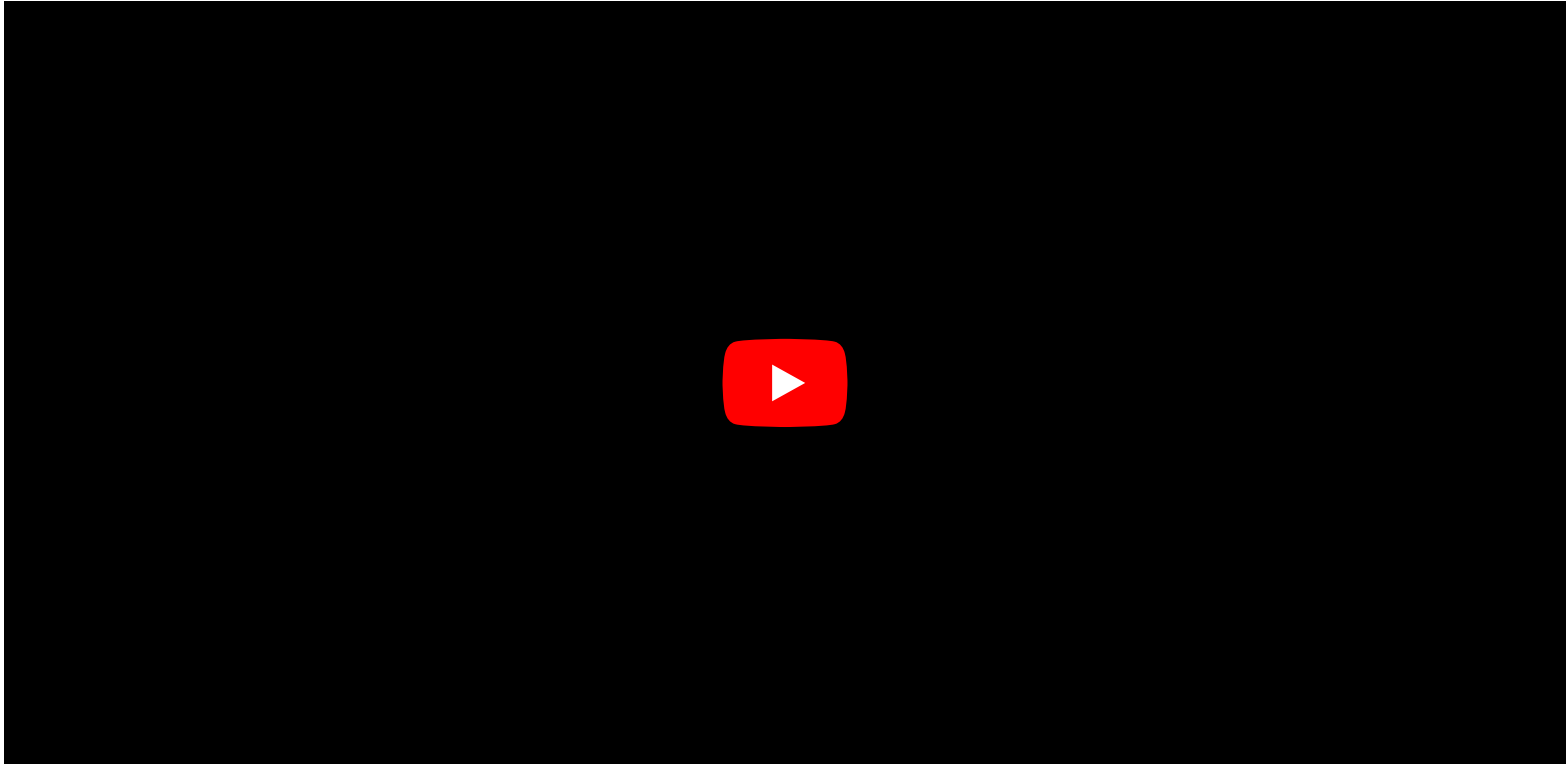




From its humble origins in 1979, MBL today stands as a global leader in the field of high-end audio. With one of the largest and most modern manufacturing facilities amongst its peers, MBL continues to manufacture every one of its components and loudspeakers in-house in a mixture of high-tech and handcraft. The result is an unsurpassed line of flawless audio products.

Six brilliant speaker models featuring one-of-a-kind Radialstrahler technology are complemented by the Reference, Noble and Cadenza lines of electronics, each offering five components that deliver unparalleled sound quality to satisfy the most discerning audiophiles and music aficionados.

MBL's reputation and customer commitment ensure that every product shares the same amazing audio signature, exquisite sound, and unmatched aural experience.





## PRODUCTS

Loudspeakers

(en/loudspeakers)

Reference Line

(en/electronics/reference-  
line)

Noble Line

(en/electronics/noble-  
line)

Cadenza Line

(en/electronics/cadenza-  
line)

Complete systems

(en/complete-systems)

## COMPANY

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Privacy manager

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Warranty (en/warranty)

T&C (en/tc)