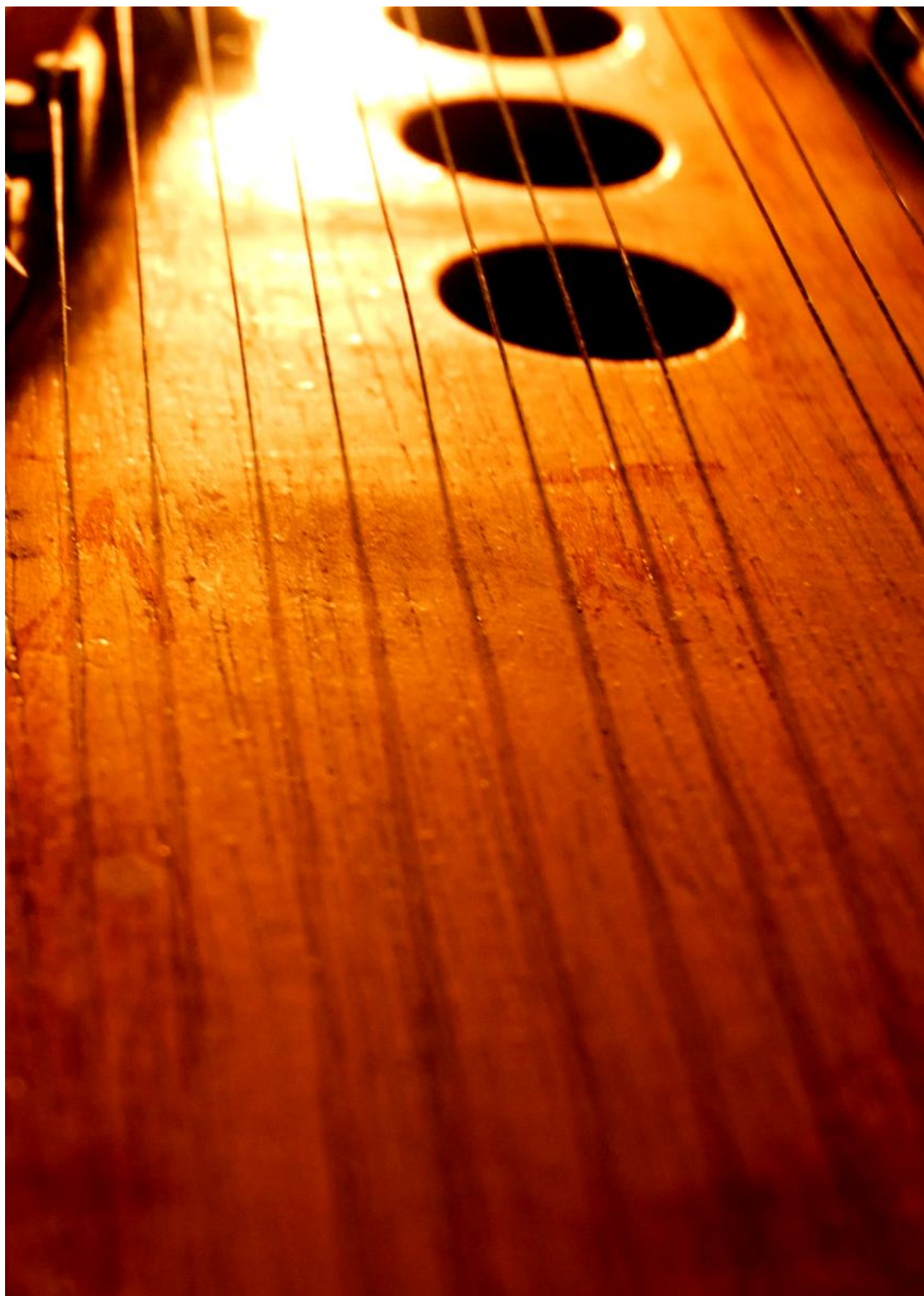

Hand-made microtonal instruments

In 2001 I began to build simple microtonal musical instruments. I started with a zither, then I tried a slit drum, a psaltery, a set of steel tube marimbas, four long gongs, more zithers, another psaltery, more slit drums, a giant mbira. I later added cut glass bowls, found percussion, aluminium cymbals and gongs. I was, and still am, particularly interested in just intonation tuning systems.

Apart from a later quartet of bowed zithers which have spruce and cedar tops with quality hardwood sides and bridges, my first materials were locally grown Douglas Fir, recycled furniture, steel tubes and aluminium sheets from a local engineering shop. I agree with Lou Harrison that building your own instrument is simply the most satisfying of musical projects.

Compositions and projects that make use of these instruments include *Acousmatic work (2004 - 2008)*, *Zenconcrète*, *Music Born of Solitude*, *The Canalisation Project*, *Maxwell's Music*, *Koobi Fora Ash*, *Huisinis* and *s-wave*.



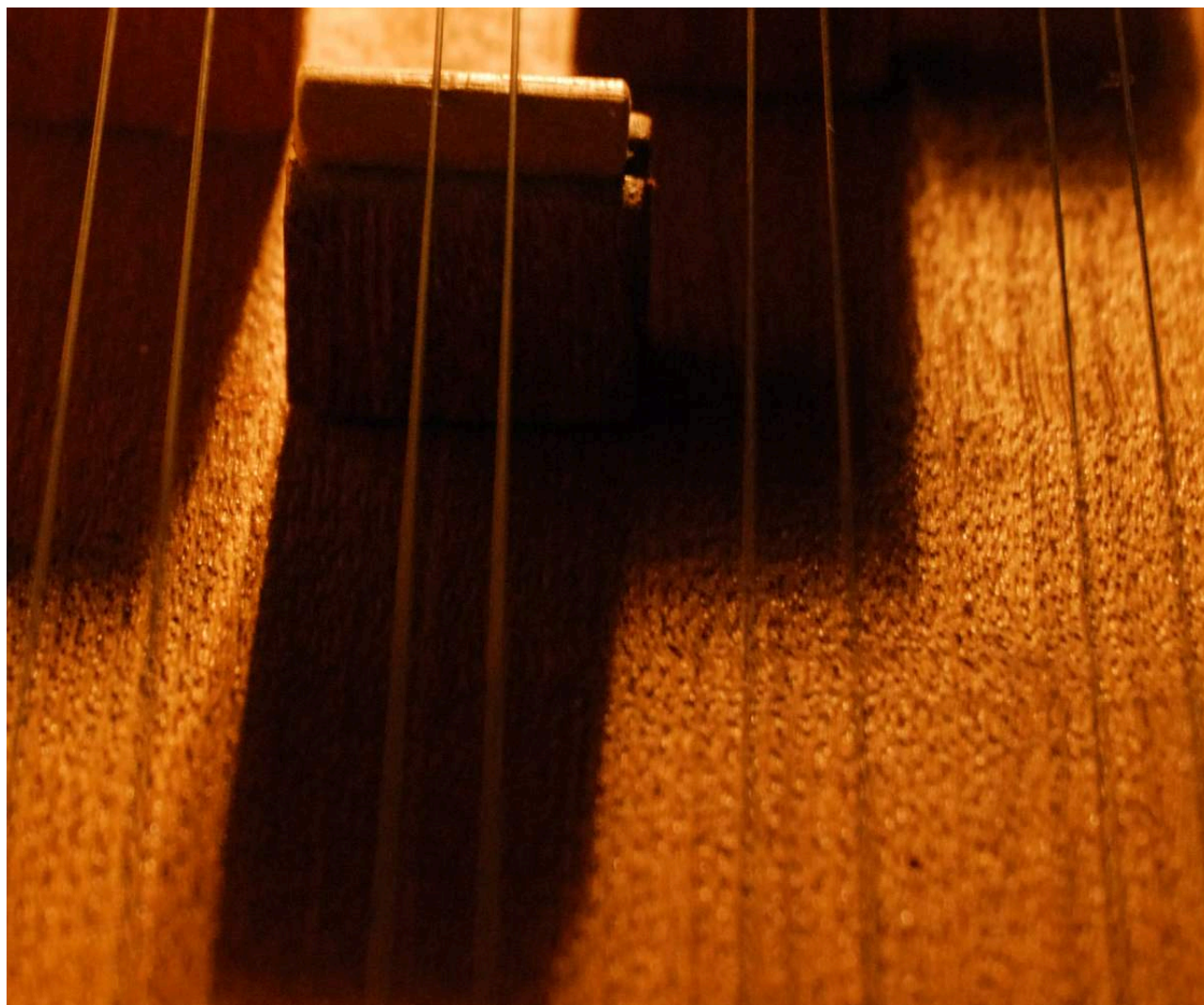
bowed psaltery: exotic ply top, cherry sides, ply bottom



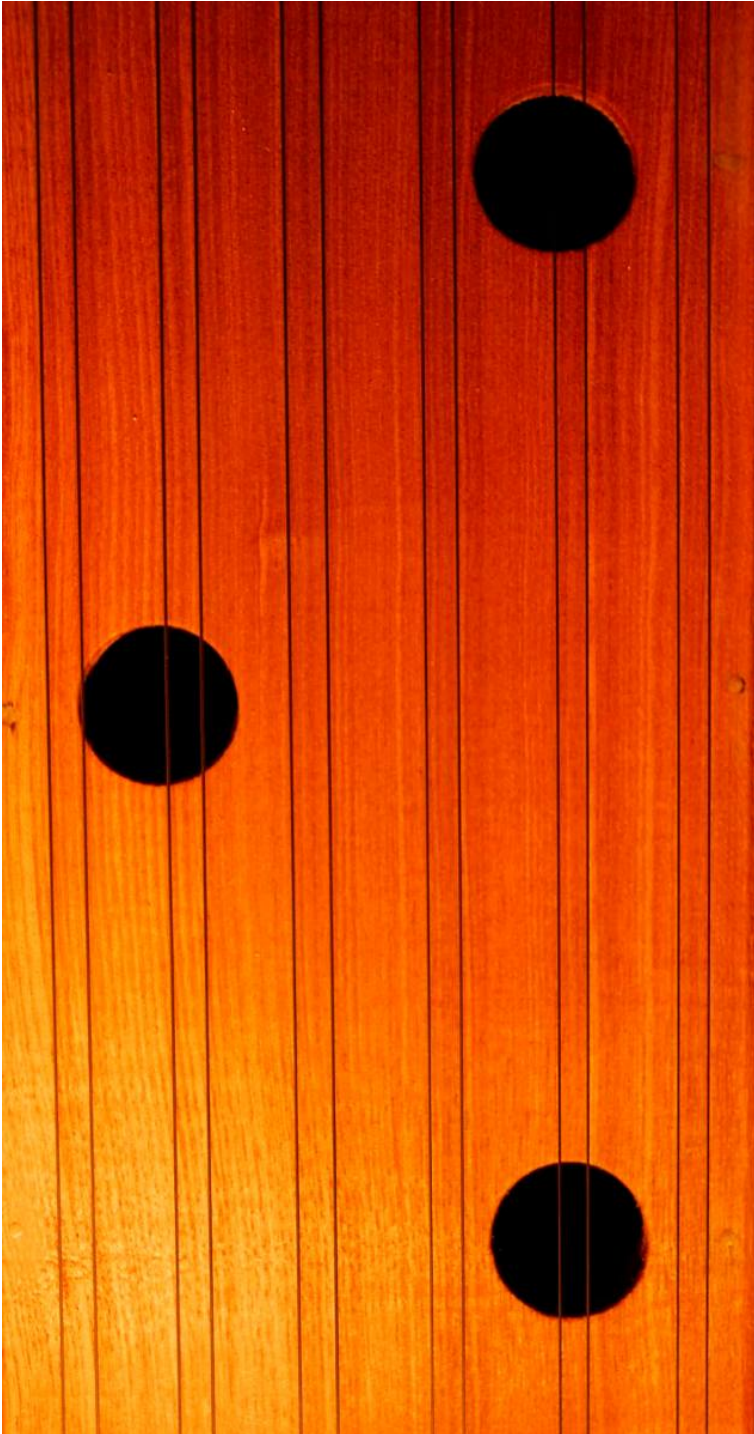
bowed psalteries, matched pair



36" six course zither: douglas fir top, back and sides



36" six course zither (detail)



48" six course zither: douglas fir top, back and sides



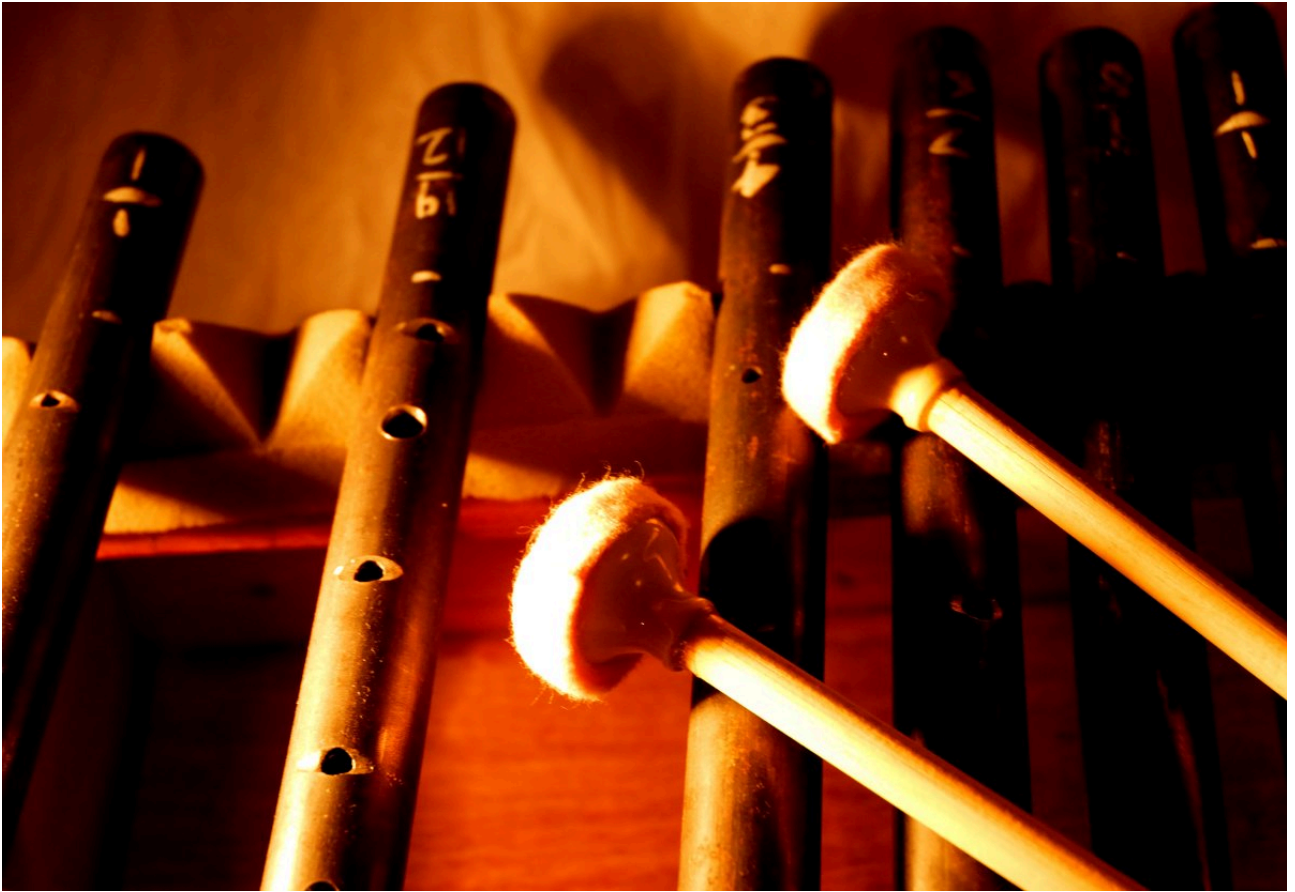
48" six course zither (detail)



five string bowed zither: cedar top, beech sides, exotic ply bottom, oak bridges



five string bowed zither (detail)



steel tube marimba and beaters: hand cut steel tubing, dowel, douglas fir mount



steel tube marimba

photography by Alan Perris