

# Harpsichord & *fortepiano*

Vol. 18, No. 1    Autumn, 2013

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Musical Instrument Research Catalog  
(MIRCAt)

# A BRIEF CHAT WITH HENK KLOP

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*By the Editor*

**H&F:** Do you yourself come from an organ making/cabinet making background?

**HK:** Organ making. I learned from my father

**H&F:** Did harpsichords come first or organs?

**HK:** Same time. I started in 1985. Since 1961 my father made harpsichords and since 1980 also organs.

**H&F:** Can you tell us about a particularly interesting project you've worked on?

**HK:** There are many interesting projects. In fact all are. In the early '90s we made a continuo organ for the *Thomaner Chor* Leipzig. Last year we made one for Kings College Chapel.

**H&F:** Where does most of your business come from – what kinds of instruments?

**HK:** continuo organs

**H&F:** Where geographically?

**HK:** All around the globe. At the moment we got orders from the US, Australia, Brazil, Iceland, Japan, and Western Europe.

**H&F:** How much time do you spend on maintenance of existing instruments that you have made?

**HK:** 5-7% of our time for maintenance, another 5% for hiring.

**H&F:** You have excellent name recognition in the keyboard world. Do you still find it important to exhibit and why?

**HK:** Yes, it is important to exhibit. Mainly for meeting old friends and talking with professional musicians.

**H&F:** What skills are the most important that to be handed down in a workshop?

**HK:** Woodworking in combination with artistic feeling for sound

**H&F:** Any particular to father-son?

**HK:** Everybody must develop himself.

**H&F:** Any advice you would give someone interested in making/building/restoring historic keyboard instruments?

**HK:** Like baroque music. It is impossible to make an instrument from a period if you don't like the music. That's why we quit with fortepianos.

**H & FP:** What is similar and what is different in making harpsichords versus organs? Can you say more?

**HK:** Some pieces can be played on both instruments. A continuo organ is more a harpsichord then a church organ, so musically they are very close. Only the way you technically make them is different.

**H&F:** What sorts of buyers do you see? Has there been any change or development in what customers have been seeking during your time in this field?

**HK:** All sorts of buyers: church musicians, teachers, church committees, amateur players, and professional performers.



Technicians making guidepins for a wind chest



Photo of Jan Willem Gerritse making a harpsichord interior

Photos by Jonneke Oskam, 2005.