

Harpsichord & fortepiano

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A BRIEF CHAT WITH HENK KLOP

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.