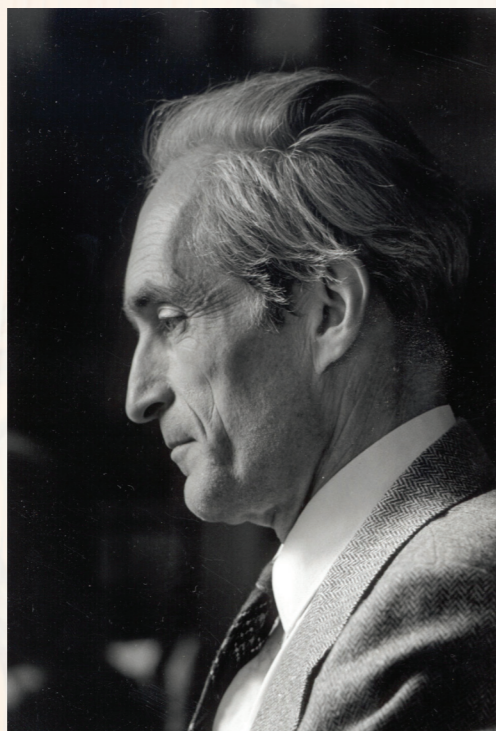


# Gustav Leonhardt

## The Father of Early Music

30 May 1928 - January 16 2012



Gustav Leonhardt is considered the leading figure behind the revival of Early Music and period performance during the twentieth century. He was born in s'Graveland (north Holland) on May 30th 1928, and died on the 16th January this year. News of his passing spread like wildfire around the Early Music world, mostly via social networks. Within a few short hours, students, colleagues and friends had written personal tributes and memories all over the net.

Leonhardt studied harpsichord and organ with Eduard Mueller at the Schola Cantorum Basiliensis, before

going on himself to become professor of harpsichord at the Vienna Music Academy from 1952 - 1955, and at the Amsterdam Conservatory from 1954.

Leonhardt led a distinguished performance career and was in demand as a performer all over the world. His last ever UK concert was in London, at the Lufthansa Baroque Festival of Music in May 2011.

Many of today's great harpsichordists have studied under Leonhardt, including Ton Koopman, who featured in our first issue last January. *Musica Antiqua* is pleased to be able to publish reflections on Leonhardt's own beginnings into Early Music, alongside a very personal memory by former student and friend, Ketil Haugsand: one of the leading harpsichordists of the subsequent generation, and professor of harpsichord in Cologne, Germany.

On the MA website, we have a page dedicated to the memory of Leonhardt. We welcome additions to this page, the construction of which was greatly assisted by harpsichord tuner and supplier, Claire Hammett.

## Reflections on the end of an era

by Ketil Haugsand

former student of Gustav Leonhardt (1970 - 1975)

A curriculum vitae of Gustav Leonhardt is easy to find - a quick Google search will provide readers with most facts about this man, a man without whose life and existence, our musical world would not have sounded or developed as it has.

Here, I would like us to spend some time for a deeper reflection on this towering figure, by trying to shed light on some of the foundations and inspirations of Leonhardt's own interest during his early days - an interest which can be considered as the very beginnings of the true Early Music Revival, and based on historically informed performance practice.

Gustav Leonhardt is arguably the most significant Early Music figure in the 20th century.

His importance and legacy as a harpsichordist, teacher and musical leader is immense - his artistic format, culture and refinement truly towers above everyone in the field, and we sense that his passing marks the end of an era, the full impact of which we are yet fully to appreciate.

Yet, it took years for the music world, even many within the Early Music world, to acknowledge the significance which lay behind Leonhardt's humble and private, yet strong and noble being. He never boasted, nor spoke harshly, and yet, with his unerring integrity, one never misunderstood what he meant, what he stood for, and what he felt was right or wrong.

The development of the Early Music movement from the late fifties, through the early sixties and onwards until today, consisted of a very important group of people, both independently active, and in collaboration with Leonhardt. In the immediate

circle around him and his wife Marie - in Vienna, Amsterdam and London - we find other immensely great personalities, such as Alice and Nikolaus Harnoncourt, Anner Bijlsma, Frans Brüggen, Jaap Schröder and Alfred Deller; later, also Wieland, Sigiswald and Barthold Kuijken - all making up an indispensable part in shaping how the world would feel at home with baroque music.

Musical life and the performing arts were in strong need of a rediscovery after the endless tragedy of war and disaster in nineteenth-century Europe, many new ideas were in the air, literally, and in particular, a new wind

