

Baton change in New Organ Building

Dieter Rüfenacht retires on 31 May 2010. He has been Works Manager and member of the Management Board since 1979. His successor will be [Hans-Peter Keller](#). The latter has worked at Dieter Rüfenacht's side for many years and was the first choice of both workforce and the whole management team.

Dieter Rüfenacht – Half a century in organ building

Music is his world. – For about fifty years Dieter Rüfenacht has been a passionate devotee of organ building. His profession has always been his true vocation. His work has greatly



influenced thinking in organ building in Switzerland. Thus, the development of the sound of the Kuhn organs in the direction of the romantic organ is attributable to his influence. Orgelbau Kuhn thereby assumed a pioneering role in the 1980s.

As a distinguished specialist, Dieter Rüfenacht made a name for himself working with countless customers and organ enthusiasts over a wide area - after all, organs which he designed can be heard in many countries in Europe and Asia. Nevertheless, Dieter Rüfenacht has always emphasized that "in our company, organ building is a team effort, every time, and never the work of one individual. I am grateful to all my colleagues for their cooperation and loyalty throughout the years." At Orgelbau Kuhn the whole workforce is grateful and proud to have shared extraordinary

experiences and achievements with Dieter Rüfenacht.

Dieter Rüfenacht will remain a valued member of our company family even after his retirement: for the time being he will be on hand on a part-time basis, and with immediate effect he will also be a member of the Supervisory Board.

A glittering career in retrospect

Both before and during his apprenticeship Dieter Rüfenacht took piano, recorder and music theory lessons at Bern Conservatory. Subsequently he attended the Jazz School in Bern. There, he was especially drawn to harmonics and improvisation. Soon, other wind instruments were added to the recorder: saxophone, clarinet and flute. Today, Dieter Rüfenacht is still a passionate musician, playing the piano and organ, in particular.

On 1 May 1962 he started his organ building apprenticeship at Kuhn. Subsequently he became a journeyman and over the next three years worked for various organ building firms in Canada. Then his path led him back to Männedorf, to Orgelbau Kuhn, where he took up his appointment as organ builder in 1972. He qualified as Master Organ Builder in 1976 in Ludwigsburg. The company's managers at that time quickly became aware of his extensive knowledge of organ building, and of his aptitude for dealing with customers. He became Works Manager as early as 1979 and at the same time was appointed member of the Management Board.

Influenced the avant-garde of the organ world

As a distinguished specialist, particularly in producing concepts for specifications, Dieter Rüfenacht has played a major role in the development of our company in the last few decades. Thus, the development of the sound of the Kuhn organs in the direction of the romantic organ is attributable to his influence. In this respect, in the 1980s Kuhn became a member of the avant-garde of the organ world. Together with his colleagues on the Management Board and the whole workforce he developed a vision of making Orgelbau Kuhn a leading international organ builder. The company's Mission Statement defines the mission as to build unique, high quality instruments and thus contribute to musical and organ culture: "Organ music gives strength, encourages reflection and opens up the human heart

Dieter Rüfenacht will live this mission in the future, too, and increasingly through his own organ playing. We wish him and his family good health, time for the important things in life, and much joy from music.

A brief portrait of Peter Rüfenacht

Year of birth: 1945

1960 – 1966: Musical training at Bern Conservatory, piano and flute

1967 – 1968: Jazz School, Bern, including the study of improvisation

1962 – 1966: Apprenticeship in organ building at Kuhn Organ Builders

Further career

1969 – 1972: Stay in Canada, working in the organ building business

since 1972: at Kuhn Organ Builders

1976: Qualified as Master Organ Builder in Ludwigsburg

1979 – 1999: Works Manager and member of the Management Board

1999 – 2010: Manager of New Organ Building and member of the Management Board

Languages: German (mother tongue), fluent English and French, Italian

Instruments: Excellent player of organ and piano, saxophone, clarinet, flute

Composers he admires: Beethoven, Brahms, Gershwin

Preferred reading: intensive reader of daily press and specialist literature

Organ building dream: Success in artistic and technical performance