

# ASKONAS HOLT

## REINHARD GOEBEL CONDUCTOR

Reinhard Goebel is a living legend of early music and a rousing conductor of modern orchestras and chamber orchestras. He discovered his love of the baroque violin at an early age and has never ceased to meticulously scrutinize bowing and articulation down to the last note – whether playing ancient or modern instruments. He is a fanatic of the thoroughly structured string ensemble and orchestral sound. Since founding his ensemble Musica Antiqua Köln half a century ago, he has been redefining performance practice and set new standards in terms of the brilliance, esprit and eloquence of the music. Over the last two decades, he has also brought this approach to modern orchestras.

For 33 years, his medium was Musica Antiqua Köln – Germany’s most virtuosic and influential baroque ensemble. He produced an impressive number of recordings, setting the highest standards of historical performance practice: perfect concordance, precise, resonant and present, with the appropriate approach to each composer from Biber to Bach, thoroughly shaped in every note from continuo to first violin, and yet incredibly full of verve and excitement. Goebel managed to sound just as present and brilliant in the concert hall as he did on record – a rare exception in the field of early music. Anyone who has heard the “Musica Antiqua” at its best will never forget the “eclat triomphal” of the sound and the “élan terrible” of the tempi.

Already as a chamber musician, the baroque violinist Reinhard Goebel shook up the staid world of the eighties: with his luminous tone and fantastically varied bowing in the “Musicalisches Opfer” and the violin-harpsichord sonatas by Bach, in Telemann and Couperin, but also in Buffardin and Corrette. For Goebel, exploring the byways of music history- which have often enough been the main lines of music history – has always been a boundless intellectual pleasure. This pleasure became the audience’s the more Musica Antiqua mutated into a baroque orchestra: first with Telemann’s “Hamburger Ebb’ und Flut” including a French Overture without any overpunctuation; then with Bach’s Orchestral Suites and the incomprehensible “Brandenburg Concertos”; finally with Telemann’s unsurpassable “Tafelmusik”, Heinichen’s “Dresdner Concerti” and a lot of Italian music between Valentini and Veracini. Big voices such as Anne Sofie von Otter, Magdalena Kožená or Christine Schäfer replaced the baroque singers of earlier recordings to perform Monteverdi and Vivaldi, Bach and Handel with Goebel.

Soon a shift towards a more “traditional sound” became apparent, and since the turn of the millennium Reinhard Goebel has turned to a new medium: the modern chamber and symphony orchestra. What he could no longer express in early music, on gut strings and transverse flutes, because he had already said everything, he now unfolded with the same meticulousness and uncompromising approach in the “big” sound of the orchestra.

Transferring the virtues of early music to modern strings became a new vocation for the passionate violinist. On the podiums of German radio symphony orchestras, he revived Mannheim music by Cannabich and Johann Christian Bach, mixed up Viennese classical music from Salieri to Mozart, uncovered the forgotten Italians and French in Mozart’s shadow. He had new things to say even about Mozart’s best-known works: the violin concertos and the “Idomeneo” Chaconne or “A Little Night Music”.

The number of orchestras that joined him on these tours has grown steadily: Bavarian Chamber Philharmonic and Mozarteum Orchestra, Karajan Academy of the Berlin Philharmonic and Frankfurt Radio

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Symphony. Goebel has also conducted spectacular performances with his new approach to Viennese classical music in France and the Netherlands, Switzerland and Italy. This journey culminated in his major cycle for the Beethoven Year 2020 with Beethoven's contemporaries such as Romberg, Hummel, Voříšek, Salieri and many others. However, Baroque music remains one of his main focuses, transformed into the medium of modern chamber orchestras – for example in his work with the Berlin Baroque Soloists. Even when Reinhard Goebel conducts Bach's St Matthew Passion with modern orchestras, he aims for the true spirit and sound from Biber to Bach to Beethoven.

Reinhard Goebel has always remained true to himself in his search for this ideal. Subsequently, he took over the chair for historical performance practice at the Mozarteum in Salzburg from 2010-2025 – not only for specialists on baroque violins. Both as a professor and as a conductor, Goebel is characterized by passion, a critical mind and relentless precision as well as an abhorrence of dusty conventions that are not grounded in the historical context. He is an intellectual whose fire and sword come in the shape of a violin bow and a score.

Since 2021, Reinhard Goebel has been the artistic director of the Neues Bachisches Collegium Musicum Leipzig, which is composed of musicians from the Gewandhaus Orchestra.

In the 2025/26 season, Reinhard Goebel appears in three concerts at the Gewandhaus Leipzig with the Neues Bachisches Collegium Musicum; he also returns to the Konzerthausorchester Berlin with a Mozart program and to the Kammerphilharmonie Bremen. He is a guest at the Grafenegg Festival (Tonkünstler Orchestra Niederösterreich) and conducts the WDR Symphony Orchestra in Cologne and at the Mozartfest Würzburg. Additional engagements take him to Turin and Tenerife. A special distinction of the season is his role as chair of the jury for the renowned Leipzig Bach Competition.

**OFFICIAL BIOGRAPHY FOR THE 2025-26 SEASON. LAST UPDATED: SEPTEMBER 2025**

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