



## THE STEINGRAEBER FAMILY – 200 YEARS OF PIANO MAKING HISTORY

- 1800 Gottlieb Steingraeber is born
- 1801 Christian Steingraeber is born († 1873)
- 1820** **Gottlieb Steingraeber founds his piano workshop in Arnshaugk, Neustadt an der Orla.** Christian Steingraeber works as an organ builder in his own workshop in Rudolstadt, Thuringia. In around 1830 they consolidate their workshops at Arnshaugk Castle, Neustadt an der Orla to form the company "Steingraeber". A branch in Halle is opened not long after (c. 1836 at the latest)
- 20.8.1823 **Eduard Steingraeber**, son of Christian, is born. He trains as an apprentice in the Steingraeber piano workshop together with his brothers Karl, later a foreman at Steinway New York, and Bernhard, later a piano manufacturer in Bamberg
- 25.1.1830 Theodor Steingraeber († 5.4.1904), son of Gottlieb Steingraeber, is born. He later founds the **Steingräber Verlag Leipzig**
- 1846 Eduard Steingraeber works in the famous piano workshop of **Nannette Streicher in Vienna**. Whilst there he comes into contact with **Franz Liszt** and subsequently becomes technical supervisor for his concerts
- 17.3.1852 Eduard Steingraeber receives his diploma as Master Craftsman
- 17.8.1852** **Founding of the "Pianofortefabrik Ed. Steingraeber" in Bayreuth.** It receives its business license in March 1853
- 01.1.1858 **George Steingraeber** is born († 1932 as a harpsichord maker in Berlin)
- 21.10.1866 **Burkhard Steingraeber** is born († 1945 in Creußen, near Bayreuth)
19. Jhdt. Growth in the course of the 19th century into the largest piano manufactory in Bavaria, with various appointments as purveyor to the Court, including "Royal Bavarian Purveyor to the Court"

Awards Bestowed at Exhibitions Both Worldwide and Nationwide:  
Paris 1867, Hamburg 1869, Cheb 1871 und 1881, Vienna 1873, Nuremberg 1882 und 1896

- 1868 Publisher Theodor Steingraeber publishes the Gustav Damm Klavierschule under the pseudonym Gustav Damm. It appears for the first time in Leipzig and is published innumerable times in different languages until the middle of the 20th century
- 1871 The "Liebhardt'sche Palais", a highly ramified building from the margraval period (1754), is acquired as the new company headquarters. It remains the company headquarters to this day, situated in the Friedrichstraße, Dammwäldchen, Dammallee and Steingraeberpassage areas of Bayreuth
- 27.4.1872 Richard, Cosima and Siegfried Wagner move into their new apartment, Dammwäldchen 4, opposite the Steingraeber Factory
- 1873 A Grand Piano 200 is built in the Rococo style for the Rococo Salon, where it stands today. Known as the "Liszt Grand Piano", it was played regularly by Liszt himself along with his friends d'Albert, Stavenhagen, Zichy and many others between 1878 and 1882
- 5.7.1875 **Richard Wager** commissions Steingraeber for the manufacture and supply of a piano
- 1876 Founding of the Bayreuth Festival, with Steingraeber becoming supplier to the Festival. Today the first stage piano can be seen in the Wahnfried National Museum
- 8.8.1881 Richard Wagner commissions Eduard Steingraeber to build the "**Gralsglockenklavier**" ("Bells of the Holy Grail") for the four "bell tones" in Parsifal. The instrument was in use officially until 1981, and once more in the Parsifal Children's Opera at the Bayreuth Festival in 2015
- 1885 German imperial patent for the invention of a new "Piano Pedal Function" for grand pianos, available today as the "Mozart Rail®". One was especially fitted to Engelbert **Humperdinck's Steingraeber 200** (1893)
- 17.6.1886 A "Pianino VI No. 4,477" is dispatched to Lisbon. It is the first documented "distance sale"
- Juli 1886 Delivery of the Grand Piano 200 No. 4,328 (today the C-212) to **Franz Liszt**, his last Steingraeber piano
- Autumn 1886 Steingraeber goes on strike, demanding a 10-hour working day!
- 1892 The sons of Ed. Steingraeber, George and Burkhard, join the company and its name is changed to **Steingraeber & Söhne**
- 7.5.1896 The first "**Concert Grand 265**" receives a gold medal at the "Landesgewerbe Ausstellung (National Trade Exhibition) Bayern". Today's E-272 was developed from this model

- 21.10.1898 **Lilly Steingraeber** († 1976), daughter of Käthe and Burkhard Steingraeber, is born. She will go on to design piano cabinets and, together with her husband Heinrich Herrmann, take over the management of the company from her father
- 1898 Steingraeber & Söhne moves into its new factory building at Dammwäldchen, Bayreuth
- Juli 1900 **Opus Nr. 10.000**, a salon grand piano highly decorated with Meissen porcelain, is completed and delivered to Arkansas, USA
- 1.12.1901 Imperial Patent Certificate (**Kaiserliche Patenturkunde**) issued for Burkhard Steingraeber's "Grand Piano Action with a New Type of Repetition Spring"
- 14.12.1906 Eduard, "Royal Bavarian Councillor of Commerce and Court Pianoforte Manufacturer", dies aged 83
- 1907 **George Steingraeber** goes to Berlin and where he becomes a "rediscoverer" of harpsichord making. One of his concert harpsichords can be found in the **MIM (Museum of Musical Instruments), at the Philharmonie in Berlin**. He donated his valuable collection of historical keyboard instruments to various museums such as the Deutsches Museum und Stadtmuseum München, Fruchtkasten Stuttgart, Germanisches Museum Nürnberg. He died in Berlin in 1932. Steingraeber & Söhne is continued by Burkhard Steingraeber
- 6.11.1911 **Heinrich Schmidt** († 1980) is born. He is the nephew of Lilly Steingraeber and Heinrich Herrmann. He becomes an orphan at the age of eight and grows up in the Steingraeber-Herrmann family
- 1919 **Opus Nr. 20.000** is completed, a Concert Grand Piano Model VI
- 1920 Management of the company is taken over by Burkhard's daughter **Lilly Steingraeber and Dr. Heinrich Herrmann**, her husband. In 1928, Heinrich Herrmann († 1932) gains his doctorate on the subject "The Regensburg Piano Manufacturers Späth and Schmal, and their Tangent Grand Piano"
- 1932 Heinrich Herrmann's nephew, **Heinrich Schmidt**, joins the company, and is in charge from the end of the Second World War until 1980. Until 1962 he was authorised signatory for the family
- 1944/45 Towards the end of the war Steingraeber receives a Commission Order: Piano wood is to be used for ammunition boxes
- 1948/49 Production drops to between three and eight instruments per year in the years leading up to 1948! Heinrich Schmidt ensures the company's survival by manufacturing radio cabinets for Grundig in Fürth
- 1951 Heinrich Schmidt and Magdalene Thiem marry; **Magdalene Schmidt** manages the 'Künstlerhaus Steingraeber' as joint partner. The marriage results in two children: Ellen (born 1952) and Udo (born 1956)
- 1960–1962 Heinrich Schmidt completely re-modernises the factory in the Dammallee
- 1966 **Opus Nr. 30.000** is produced, a small piano Model 107
- 1968 **Lothar Thomma** becomes the sole external employee of the Steingraeber construction team and is still active today
- 1972 **Heinrich and Magdalene Schmidt** become sole proprietors of the Family-Owned Limited Partnership. Steady production of grand pianos, which had been interrupted since 1940, recommences
- 1980 Their son **Udo Schmidt-Steingraeber** takes over management of the company after the death of his father. He learned piano making in the family business, and studied both law and theatre in Munich. Under him, Steingraeber & Söhne continues to be run as a Family-Owned Limited Partnership
- ab 1981 onwards, **new designs** gradually replaced existing upright and baby grand pianos. The new models have always borne reference to the historical models made by Eduard and George Steingraeber, and were brought up to date using new discoveries and innovations. Ideas for alternative keyboard actions complement an otherwise strictly classical approach
- 1982 New construction of **Concert Upright Piano 130**. From 1988 onwards, it is winner in the highest category of all piano trials in Paris
- 1982 Founding of the **Steingraeber Hoftheater** with author and director Uwe Hoppe, and the Studio-bühne Bayreuth
- 1983 Further development of the **Chamber Concert Grand Piano 205**. Partial new design
- 1984 First participation in a trade fair in Asia: Singapore
- 1985 New construction of Salon Grand Piano 162 (**known today as the A-170**). From 1995 onwards, it is winner in the highest category of all piano trials in Paris
- 1985 First participation in a trade fair in the USA: NAMM Show New Orleans
- 1986 New design of **Concert Upright Piano 138**. Winner in the highest category of all piano trials in Paris
- 24.06.1988 Prof. Helmut Bieler from the University of Bayreuth and Steingraeber found the new music concert series „**Zeit für Neue Musik**“
- 1989 New construction of **Study Piano 122**, a piano with new, innovative soundboard system

- 1989 „**Leubald**“, last première of a work by Richard Wagner, performed at the Steingraeber Hoftheater in an abridged version by Uwe Hoppe
- 1993 **Cordelia Schmidt-Steingraeber**, née Prella, and Udo Schmidt-Steingraeber marry. The marriage results in two children: **Alban (born 1994) and Fanny (born 1997)**, the 7th Steingraeber generation
- 1994 **Opus 40.000** is finished, a “Profi Studio” Model 130
- 1995 **175th anniversary** celebrations of the founding of “Steingraeber” in Neustadt an der Orla, including a major exhibition in Bayreuth
- 1999 **Innovation Award** for the piano market's first ceramic-coated keyboard
- 1997 Magdalene Schmidt's company shares are transferred to the children Alban and Fanny Schmidt-Steingraeber. To this day, together with their father, they are sole partners of the Family-Owned Limited Partnership
- 1997–2002 Further development of the Concert Grand 265 into the **Concert Grand E-272**. Prototype 1 is finished in 2001. Unlike its peers, the E-272 demonstrates commitment to the classical ideals of transparency, polyphony and richness of timbre. In 2006, "Le Monde de la Musique" wrote the following about Steingraeber's individual approach on the occasion of a comparative trial between 11 different concert grand pianos: **"... As for the interpretation of Bach, Mozart and Beethoven, it would be scarcely possible today to find a better instrument ..."**
- 24.07.2002 **150 years of Steingraeber & Söhne in Bayreuth**: A celebration with 400 Guests of Honour and a festive concert given by Cyprien Katsaris in the Margravian Opera House. Among the well-wishers are Daniel **Barenboim**, Alfred **Brendel**, Kurt **Masur** and **Federal President Johannes Rau**. Steingraeber commissions a theatre work for the anniversary and author Uwe Hoppe writes the one-person play **Der Walkürenritt - oder man müsste Klavierspielen können** (The Ride of the Valkyries - or You Have To Be Able To Play the Piano)
- 2001–2004 Development of the new concert grand **Pleyel 280** together with Alain Roudier **Alain Roudier**
- 2004 **250th anniversary of Steingraeber Haus** and preliminary completion of the renovation of all the main building's historical areas. The former "Liebhardt'sche Palais" was the final work of margravian court architect **Joseph Saint-Pierre** and his assistant **Carl Philipp Gontard**; the interior decorator and stuccoer was **Baptist Pedrozzi**
- 2006 Construction of the first "PHOENIX-Grand Piano" based on English inventor Richard Dain's patent
- 2007 New construction: **Semi-Concert Grand Piano D-232**
- 2007 **Rating 1A** in the USA: The Pianobook explains its ranking in detail, limiting the level of the highest award to only 5 manufacturers. In alphabetical order these are: Blüthner, Bösendorfer, Fazioli, Steingraeber & Söhne, Steinway-Hamburg
- ab 2007 The new **Steingraeber Grand Piano House** is being built in the historic carriage house: three showrooms, an artist's apartment and a chamber music hall come together to create the "Künstlerhaus" (Artists' House)
- 2008 The new wing (Grand Piano House) receives the "Seitensprünge" **design award**
- 2008 World's first **carbon-fibre soundboard**. World's first **SFM®** (Steingraeber-Ferro-Magnet®) piano action.
- 2008 **Two Bavarian State Prizes: In March, the new "PHOENIX"** energy transmission system, and in September a **Bluetooth pedal for wheelchair users**. The Steingraeber magnetic pedal from the 1980s (DGBM 30074.8) undergoes further development
- 2008 Construction of the “UTZON” grand piano for the Bagsværd Kirke in Copenhagen, in accordance with a design created by Jørn Utzon, architect of Sydney Opera House
- 2009 New construction of the **Chamber Concert Grand Piano C-212** following on from the Liszt Grand Piano 200
- 2009 Developments at the Steingraeber manufactory: **Optimisation of environmentally friendly technologies** (photovoltaics, environmentally neutral filtration systems) and participation in "UMWELTPAKT BAYERN" (Bavarian Environmental Pact). The carpentry workshops are extended to a manufacturing capacity of 90 grand pianos and 70 pianos
- 2011 New construction: the **Salon Grand Piano B-192**, as little brother to the C-212
- 2012 The entire New Steingraeber Model Range is ready:  
**Grand Pianos A-170, B-192, C-212, D-232, E-272 and Upright Pianos 122, 130, 138**
- 2012 New Steingraeber-Renner **Aluminium Action**
- 2012** The **E-272** is increasingly in demand and is delivered to the Konzerthaus **Wien**; in **London** the E-272 is in use at both Kings Place and Cadogan Hall; further E-272 grand pianos are delivered to the Teatre Sucre in **Quito**, the Getty Hall in **San Francisco** and the new concert hall at the Musikhochschule **Karlsruhe**
- 18.1.2013 The E-272 is used in concert at the **Royal Festival Hall London**
- 19.1.2013 Concert by Bayerischer Rundfunk on the occasion of the Richard Wagner Memorial Year, performed on the **Ed. Steingraeber Opus 1 from 1852**, including a recording for CD and a transmission for television

- 2013 Jura Margulis presents the **new Sordino® function** at the Freiburg Master Classes
- 2013 The first E-272 is delivered to the **Philharmonie in Berlin**
- 2014 The **“Opera” upright model** is specially designed for stage use at the Bayreuth Festival in conjunction with Tannhäuser conductor Prof. Christoph Maier
- 2014 The new **Mozart Rail®** is presented at the Frankfurt Music Fair
- 2015 The new Steingraeber **“Bells of the Holy Grail”** are introduced. The instrument is a replica of the dulcimer-formed "Steingraeber Bell" from c. 1912, owned by the National Theatre Weimar
- 26.11.2015 Senior Director Magdalene passes away peacefully aged 98 at Steingraeber Haus
- 7.12.2015 **Lyric Opera Chicago** Bel Canto World Premiere, with a custom-made Steingraeber A-170 grand piano
- 2016 Development of the extra-light vibrational acoustic cover for grand pianos, made from honeycomb aluminium and the **“Carbiano”, the first carbon-fibre grand piano** (joint project with Hurstwood Farm Piano Studios UK)
- January 2017 NAMM Show Anaheim: Fanny and Alban Schmidt-Steingraeber together with production manager Alexander Kerstan represent Steingraeber & Söhne at a trade fair for the first time
- 2017 **Alban and Fanny Schmidt-Steingraeber** sign a new partnership agreement with father Udo for the Family-Owned Limited Partnership and participate actively in the company
- 20.5.2017 Liederhalle Stuttgart: Presentation of the **Transducer Grand Piano D-232** at the VdM (Association of German Music Schools) Congress
- 2018 Further development of the Transducer Grand Piano in cooperation with SWR Experimentalstudio Freiburg. The piano is presented at the Musikmesse Frankfurt
- May 2018 **“Future Award”** of the HWK Oberfranken (Chamber of Handicrafts for Upper Franconia) for the Steingraeber Transducer Grand Piano
- Nov. 2018 **“Bavarian Export Award”** awarded to Steingraeber, presented by Minister Aiwanger in Munich
- April 2019 The new **Steingraeber Virtual Recording** System is presented at the Musikmesse Frankfurt in an adSilent piano. For the first time, the piano sound for headphones is generated not by sampling but by “physical modelling”. The system was developed together with Modartt Pianoteq and adsilent
- July 2019 After two years of construction, the **Piano Museum at Steingraeber Haus** is complete. A "sound bridge" now connects the historic Rococo Salon with the modern Chamber Music Hall
- 24.7.2019 The young international star Kit Armstrong plays a **memorable concert** in the Margravian Opera House Bayreuth. In the first part of the concert he performs on an Ed. **Steingraeber 200 “Liszt”** Grand Piano from the year 1889, and after the intermission on the modern **Steingraeber & Söhne E-272** Grand Piano. The concert is an impressive testament to the continuity in sound, quality and longevity of Steingraeber pianos
- August 2019 First delivery to a **Moscow university: Gnessin** University is the proud recipient of three Steingraeber grand pianos. After its first delivery to the Mariinski Theater St. Petersburg in 2015, this is an important step forward for Steingraeber in the challenging Russian market
- 14.9.2019 Reopening of **Fairfield Hall Croydon, London's** third-largest event centre, **completely equipped** with Steingraeber-Phoenix pianos (four grand pianos, four upright pianos) resulting from the collaboration with Hurstwood Farm Piano Studios. Fairfield Hall once again becomes the headquarters of the London Mozart Players, and comprises three halls each with 1,800, 700 and 300 seats respectively.
- 22.5.2020 On Richard Wagner's 207th birthday, Steingraeber will celebrate a **“small jubilee”** of its own. The **200th birthday of the company's founding in Neustadt an der Orla and Rudolstadt** will be celebrated in the Margravian Opera House under the patronage of Mr. Bernd Sibler, Minister of State for Science and Art, along with one of the “Grandes Dames” of the piano world Elisabeth Leonskaja. She will perform Beethoven's last three piano sonatas. In addition to representatives of the state government and the City of Bayreuth, colleagues from the piano manufacturing industry are all warmly invited. **The major convention for the Federation of German Piano Manufacturers will also be taking place in Bayreuth on this occasion**

