



C. BECHSTEIN

Academy

Step into the world of C. Bechstein



C. BECHSTEIN



Seduction

“I fell in love at first touch.”

Bechstein fascinates great artists the world over. In this catalogue, you'll discover some of these outstanding pianists of several generations, photographed by Deniz Saylan.

Dudana Mazmanishvili is one of them. She has performed with great orchestras at such renowned stages as Munich's Gasteig and New York's Carne-

gie Hall, and earned international fame through her recordings. A gorgeous and highly talented lady who loves everything beautiful, especially the C. Bechstein sound. A woman at ease with great composers such as Bach, Schubert, Liszt and Rachmaninoff. An artist who strives for expression without compromise. Especially when it comes to acoustic excellence.





“A part of me is missing when we are apart.”

C. Bechstein Academy: your link with tradition. Made in Germany

A fascinating sound. Loved the world over ever since the visionary piano-maker Carl Bechstein built his first instrument.

The origin of the C. Bechstein sound dates back to 1853, to the golden age of the piano. The great pianists and amateur musicians of the time loved their C. Bechstein instruments from the start for their dignity, serenity, precise action and clear, colorful voice.

On a C. Bechstein you can play any kind of music, from jazz to chamber music, from rich romantic pieces to multifaceted modern works. Your C. Bechstein even enables you to render the perfect transparency of Bach's compositions. Its noble and gorgeous voice radiates a fascinating beauty. Never hard or sharp, it features the same modulation potential as a talented human voice.

C. Bechstein instruments embody the great European musical tradition. They blend the spirit of the modern age with that of

the time when the greatest classical musicians composed their legendary works – on their C. Bechstein pianos.

C. Bechstein Academy range

In the Academy range, C. Bechstein's R&D center has revived the tradition of yesterday's pianos with their distinctive voice: sublime, calm, perfectly balanced and naturally powerful. More subtle and sophisticated than ever, the C. Bechstein Academy instruments arouse the enthusiasm of the most discriminating music lovers and professional pianists the world over.

The special action of the C. Bechstein Academy pianos is so perfect that it seduces even the most demanding musicians. Whether you are a beginner or a professional pianist, the Academy range is everything your ears and your fingers could want.



Sensitivity

“A fascinating sound experience.”

A piano should be absolutely reliable. Dependability is crucial because your instrument is your partner, whether you're playing at home or on stage.

You can rely on your C. Bechstein. Thanks to the unequalled excellence of its action, it becomes an extension of your own hands, letting you express yourself freely and spontaneously. Music is our top priority at C. Bechstein.

A prizewinner in numerous international piano competitions, Denys Proshayev knows that performing is hard work, and that a pianist must always give the best of himself. He knows his competitors are unforgiving and his playing must always be flawless. Every concert is a challenge for mind and body to deliver a perfect performance. Denys loves his C. Bechstein. For its depth, its sensitivity and its perfection.





“A reliable partner.”

The passion for the piano is catching. A C. Bechstein Academy piano is a pleasure – and an addiction

The flow of energy. Pleasure for all the senses. Emotion and intelligence. Bechstein opens a world of musical expression.

C. Bechstein instruments deliver an impressive dynamic range, from delicate pianissimo to thundering fortissimo. Their rich voice gives you the liberty you need to express all your emotions. Their highly precise keyboard and action boost your virtuosity, enable you to control every nuance – and make you happy. The acoustic assembly of a C. Bechstein piano incorporates a particular tension that is carefully created and controlled during the manufacturing process. The flow of energy through this assembly is a magic formula that enables you to create a sound of exactly the volume and color you want.

Your C. Bechstein is a friend for a lifetime, an investment in a happy future. Enjoy a legendary brand, an instrument with a wonderful timbre and an elegant, subtle action.

C. Bechstein has been favored by great artists and intimately involved in Berlin's cultural life ever since the company was founded in 1853. Moreover, C. Bechstein's history is German history in miniature: until World War II, the production site was located in central Berlin near the prestigious Unter den Linden boulevard; after 1945, it was relocated to West-Berlin, a block away from the Wall; in 1999, finally, the world's first C. Bechstein Center opened in Berlin near Kurfürstendamm. This is where the company's headquarters are located, where strategic decisions are taken, where pianists come to choose their instruments. C. Bechstein's heart has never left Berlin.

The masterpiece C. Bechstein Concernt pianos and the premium C. Bechstein Academy instruments have been developed and made in Seifhennersdorf, Saxony, since the early 1990s.

Uniqueness



“Music for the heart.”

C. Bechstein Academy pianos: top class, even a class of their own. A sound for discriminating pros. Pianos with a personal, clearly outstanding profile. A sound for DJ Elbee Bad, the pioneer of New York’s house music who recorded legendary tracks of the past twenty-five years under various pseudonyms. A nonconformist, the “Prince of Dance Music” smashes the barriers between mu-

sical styles. His passion for innovation and two years of singing with Luciano Pavarotti and the choir of New York’s Metropolitan Opera led him to a new joint project with the P.O.D. Orchestra, during which he not only mixed at the turntable, but also directed a string quartet. Elbee Bad cultivates a note of uniqueness – and appreciates a C. Bechstein Academy’s every key.



The piano manufactory as laboratory

*The happy marriage of tradition and pioneering vision.
A harmony between the human senses and high technology.*

C. Bechstein continuously improves its instruments. No other German piano manufacturer has achieved comparable success in a market dominated by Asian businesses. At C. Bechstein, a comprehensive team of specialists – engineers, wood technicians, voicing specialists and concert tuners – work hand in hand with great performers and piano teachers to produce exactly the instruments that users long for.

Tradition and innovation: the intelligent association of state-of-the-art technology and painstaking processing of exquisite materials breathe new life into engineering designs that have proved their excellence over decades.

The C. Bechstein Academy pianos were initially developed to meet the demands of music conservatories. Sturdy and powerful, with an excellent action and a beautiful voice, they immediately won the hearts of international teachers and

students alike. Such instruments made in Germany by expert piano-makers rooted in the European musical tradition clearly stand apart from Asian mass production.

ISO certification: the state-of-the-art CNC machines used to make the basic parts of C. Bechstein Academy uprights and grands guarantee the utmost precision and hence an excellent overall sound quality. More precise than the human eye, computer-controlled machines drill holes at exactly the right places in the cast iron frames. More accurately than human hands, they saw and mill the wood of the bridges and back frame. But man applies the final touch and gives each piano its soul, voicing the hammerheads by hand and by ear, so that the instrument acquires a voice that is harmonious and well balanced in all registers.

At Bechstein, craftsmen pass on their expertise from one generation to the next. For a lovely sound can only be born of love.

*“Piano-makers put their heart
and soul into their instruments.”*



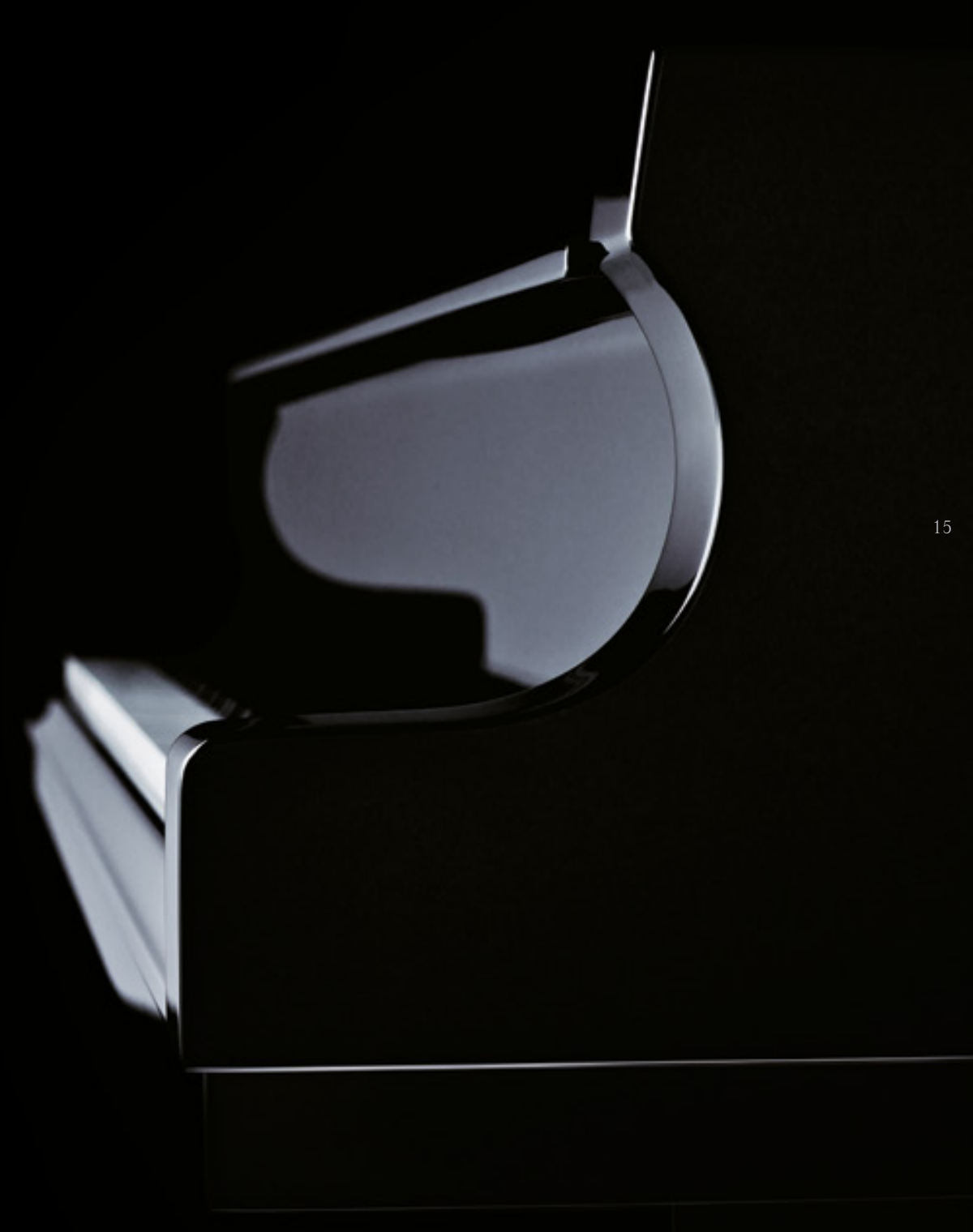


Another example: the Gililov Quartet. Chamber music is a great art; every musician must master his instrument perfectly and be able to play in spontaneous interaction with the other instrumentalists. Every chamber musician must be not only an excellent soloist, but also a perfect ensemble player. Moreover, each member of the group must be dependable, committed to giving his best always.

The musicians of the Gililov Quartet are high-ranking artists, some of them former members of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra. This famous chamber music quartet is highly discriminating of sound quality – and favors C. Bechstein pianos. Sensitivity to one another, the ability to yield, then take the lead at the right moment: aren't these characteristics of great musicians? C. Bechstein is proud to be part of such an ensemble.

The key to success

“Harmonious and warm.”



“Energetic and lovely.”



A great brand – that will always be German

*C. Bechstein Academy upright and grand pianos are second
to none in the premium class. Compare them and see!*

The power of enthusiasm and the willingness of every employee to give his best led to success: C. Bechstein of Berlin, in German ownership once more since 1986, is again Europe's outstanding manufacturer of top-flight instruments. That's not all: the new major shareholder, a Berlin-based entrepreneur family, is running and expanding the business with a great sense of responsibility for the **German production site**.

In 2012, Stefan Freymuth and the previous owners, Karl Schulze and his wife Berenice Küpper, established the Carl Bechstein Stiftung, a foundation aimed at promoting piano playing among young people, because they believe that music is a creative activity that contributes to the development of a harmonious personality.

In the recent past, C. Bechstein has rejected lucrative takeover offers from Asian groups, because it is clear that the company

can only retain its status as a manufacturer of top-flight pianos by remaining true to its European roots. Nationalism has nothing to do with it: the company is proud of its multi-ethnic staff. The C. Bechstein philosophy is about the preservation of a valuable heritage of craftsmanship with deep cultural roots. This heritage lives in every single staff member's passionate commitment to producing musical instruments that incorporate the virtues of historic German piano-making – instruments that will never be mass-produced.

But what about C. Bechstein's competitors in the premium segment who are not in European hands? What will become of their former “handmade voice” in the context of industrial groups with mass production facilities? Time will tell.

For further information on C. Bechstein's history and tradition, please visit www.bechstein.com.

Craftsmanship, guided by tradition, advanced by engineering

*The primary feature of all C. Bechstein pianos:
a distinctive, beautiful voice.*

Every C. Bechstein piano stands out with its typical, rich and beautiful voice, its sound and dignified character. A C. Bechstein doesn't try to impress at all costs: it charms naturally thanks to its excellent performance and classical serenity. You'll enjoy your C. Bechstein for its perfection and its ability to meet your highest demands.

The harmonious and perfectly balanced voice of all C. Bechstein pianos is the result of many factors: the careful selection of materials, the use of special manufacturing processes, the sophisticated distribution of tension between the various components, the perfect team work between all the technicians and engineers involved. Nothing is left to chance at C. Bechstein – a pioneering company whose success is rooted in over a century of expertise.

One pillar of the C. Bechstein philosophy is to provide each piano with its own individual character. Thanks to the intelligent

alliance of traditional craftsmanship and state-of-the-art technology, we are able to make truly unique instruments: you won't find two C. Bechstein pianos with exactly the same sound profile.

Piano-making is such a complex art that you won't discover all its secrets even during a guided tour of the C. Bechstein production site. During such a tour, however, you'll notice that the C. Bechstein Academy and the C. Bechstein Concert pianos are made in separate workshops.

Although it's impossible to explain all details of the C. Bechstein philosophy in a catalogue, the following pages offer a wealth of information on many factors that contribute to the excellence of our pianos and their enchanting voice.

If you would like to know even more, don't hesitate to ask your C. Bechstein dealer, or watch the videos at www.bechstein.com.



The premium C. Bechstein Academy pianos incorporate many hours of hand labor. Craftsmanship and high technology, individualization and rationalization intelligently complement each other at the C. Bechstein manufactory.

Authorized foundries use sand moulds and special manufacturing processes to make the pianos’ cast iron frames. The company’s R&D department issues clear specifications for the different C. Bechstein Concert and C. Bechstein Academy models, then carefully monitors the quality of the frames delivered by the foundries.



The origin of the C. Bechstein Academy sound

*The cast iron frame and the duplex scales give the
C. Bechstein Academy pianos a richer, more powerful voice.*

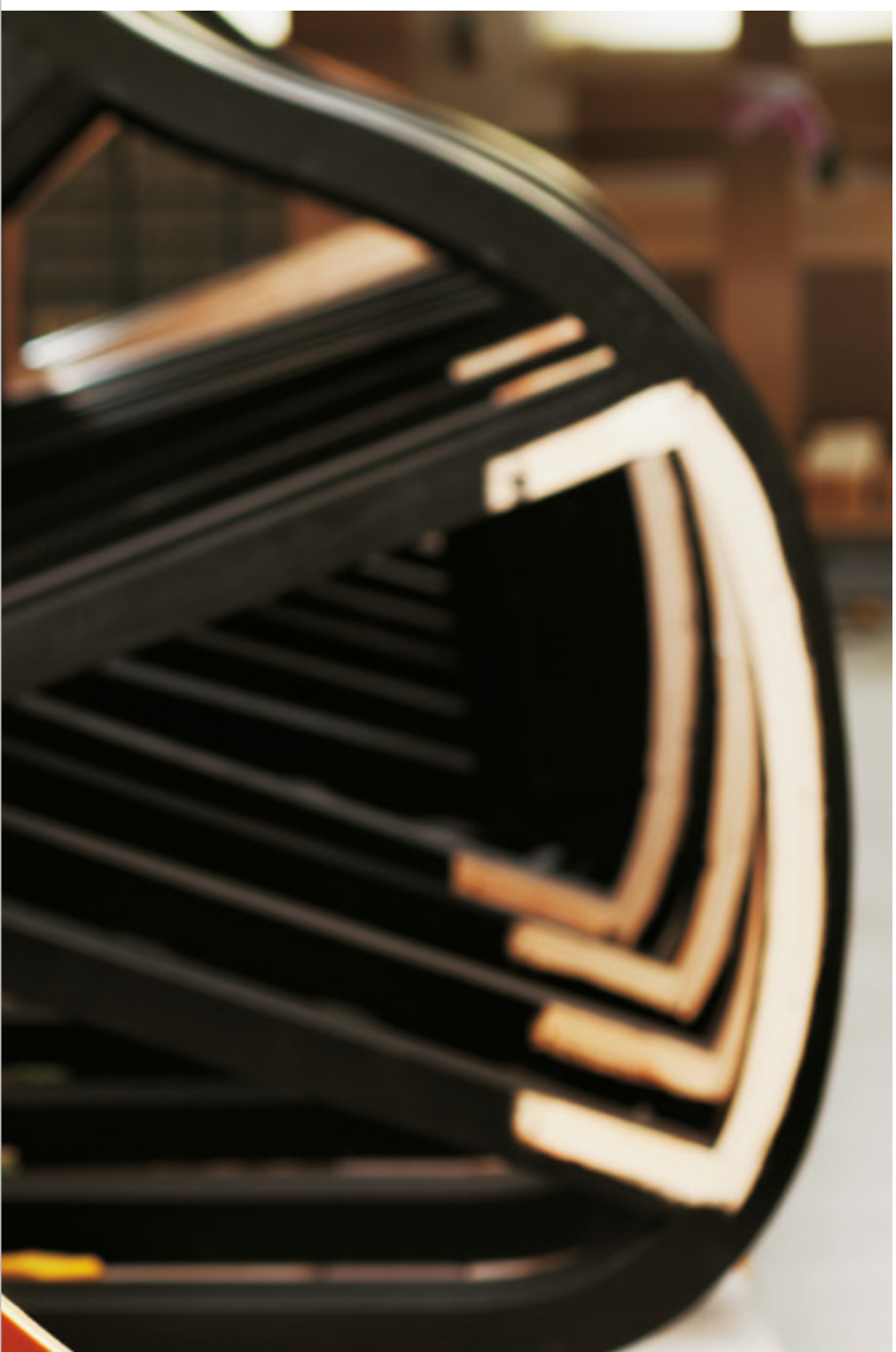
The frame is made of special cast iron designed to achieve the desired sound propagation speed for the rich C. Bechstein Academy voice. The precise measurement of the raw casting determines the part’s individual “topography”. Then CNC tools drill and mill the frame to perfectly position the strings and the pinblock.

The C. Bechstein system of capodastro bars and duplex scales, machined in the cast iron frame, improves the overtones and gives the piano a clearer voice and more powerful trebles, creating an even more substantial sound.

The duplex scales take advantage of the non-speaking length of the strings to opti-

mize the acoustic energy cycle. The strings thus vibrate over their full length with more elasticity and integrally transmit the vibrations to the bridges. As a result, the piano’s voice is more colorful, more dynamic and more nuanced, while the touch is easier and more precise.

The front duplex scale stores additional energy that adds to the volume and color of the sound, and enables you to develop exactly the harmonic partials that correspond to your very personal playing. The rear duplex scale provides clearer and more powerful treble partials, enlarges the sound spectrum and enriches the timbre. The sustain pedal also delivers additional harmonic partials, of course.



*The art of selecting and processing woods:
a wealth of details yields unique results.*

The premium C. Bechstein Academy pianos require extensive periods of rest to acclimate and mature. Two more factors of the exceptional quality of the C. Bechstein Academy sound are the careful selection of the raw materials for the case – laminated beech and high-density priming under the lacquer or the veneer – and the high-precision manufacturing of the braces that compose the back frame, which results in an outstandingly robust assembly.

The case and the back frame, without the soundboard, are acclimated for several months. Such rest phases at specific points in the manufacturing process are important for durability and are part of C. Bechstein tension management system. The tensioned rim is designed to support the acoustic body directly. Moreover, Bechstein makes the inner and outer rims

separately in order to control the different tensions in the different types of wood: German copper beech for the inner rim; multi-layered beech plywood for the outer rim. A perfect balance of strength and flexibility is essential for the acoustic assembly and its resonating heart.

The cast iron plate is bolted onto the solid back posts made of carefully selected pine. As a result, the back frame also contributes to the singing voice of the C. Bechstein Academy pianos.

It's true that ribs, bridges and soundboard are common parts in any piano, just as you'll find an engine, a body and four wheels in any car. But there are crucial differences between different piano brands, just as there are between different makes of cars.



Slow acclimation, tension management, periods of rest: between the various production steps, between measurement and hand sanding, the Bechstein piano-makers let their works quietly mature. And caress them from time to time as they walk by.

C. Bechstein's acoustic assembly: a philharmonic ensemble of perfectly manufactured wooden parts, conducted by a master piano-maker.

C. Bechstein makes its soundboards out of spruce from trees grown very high in the Alps. The wood dries slowly in a climatic chamber for several months before being processed using traditional techniques that have proved their excellence over more than a century. The soundboard has classic dimensions and incorporates advanced tension management technology. The result is extreme sturdiness, efficient energy management and optimum sound propagation.

When the back frame and the rim have been glued together, a coat of priming is applied to the case to balance the tensions. The soundboard is then inserted into the case. This cost-intensive manufacturing process, used on both C. Bechstein ranges, is aimed at creating a controlled closed

system in which the soundboard with its ribs and bridges vibrates ideally and develops its wonderful voice.

The soundboard support block is precisely beveled to ensure that the vibrating membrane will retain its curvature constantly. Moreover, repeated measurements ensure that the membrane retains the required elasticity. The force from the bridges and the strings opposes the upward force of the soundboard. Thus, the board's curvature has precisely specified resonance areas, while optimal tensions preserve its vibration properties over decades without fatigue.

The bridges vibrate in harmony with the soundboard and the strings. The composition of the partial spectrum varies with the player's touch. The crown of the bridges,

their dimensions and precise workmanship reinforce the soundboard curvature. C. Bechstein engineers have developed a special process to shape the bridge caps and insert the pins. The bass and treble bridges of the C. Bechstein Academy pianos are made of solid copper beach. This traditional concept reinforces the rich color and clear basic tone of the C. Bechstein voice and ensures a specific sound propagation speed.

Two last details about the bridges: they are made of wood that has been dried over a year in a climatic chamber to eliminate any subsequent warping; and they are placed on the soundboard with extreme precision to ensure optimum transmission of vibrations from the strings to the board.



The stunning Bechstein quality arises from thorough expertise in all production steps. Careful selection, conditioning and processing of the materials, hand craftsmanship paired with intelligent use of high technology, sophisticated time and tension management, in-depth quality control of work in progress, specialists who are dedicated to their jobs: these are just some of the secrets of the wonderful Bechstein sound.

Dependability results from precisely made basic parts.

Premium quality needs craftsmanship and technology.

The ribs are also made of spruce grown high in the Alps. Their shape, dimensions and weight have been specified to optimize the soundboard's stability, flexibility and vibration. Computerized tools carve pockets in the soundboard support block with high precision. Tensed against the rim, the ribs maintain the curvature and elasticity of the soundboard.

All C. Bechstein pianos are renowned for their ability to retain their tuning for long periods. This is the result of the manufacturing process used for the pinblock, a laminated wood part made of extremely dense, torsion-resistant copper beech.

Precision machining is more than an advancement in piano-making: it's a necessity for high-quality professional instru-

ments. The C. Bechstein engineers have developed special CNC tools that deliver the required precision – another factor in the exquisite C. Bechstein sound.

Last but not least, all C. Bechstein Academy upright and grand pianos feature perfectly balanced registers: the bass won't be dominating, and all notes will retain their color even when you play forte.

Come to Seifhennersdorf and enjoy a guided tour of the German production site! You'll discover the complexity of all the steps involved in piano-making and the incredible expertise of the C. Bechstein staff.

Computerized tools have an aesthetics of their own. C. Bechstein uses state-of-the-art technology to achieve sound excellence. German engineering, a century-old tradition of craftsmanship, a passion for precision and detail, patience and mastery of complex production steps: these are the ingredients that bring an acoustic assembly to life.



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Most piano players base their opinion of an instrument primarily on its action assembly. Made to sophisticated specifications and using carefully selected materials, the actions of all C. Bechstein pianos are the non plus ultra.

The new damper design does without metallic rods, using classic wooden tangents instead. This increases both the damper's mass and its friction, which in turn gives you better control. Moreover, the hammer shank now rests on the felt of the repetition levers, while longer keys improve your playing and your comfort.

Of course, such improvements increase the amount of work required to make and assemble the novel parts, but you can feel the difference immediately: the new C. Bechstein action assemblies deliver more precision and nuance, achieving professional standards.

C. Bechstein is the only European manufacturer to have its own hammerhead production facility, which guarantees top quality and makes the company independent from suppliers.

*Exclusive hammerhead production
at the C. Bechstein manufactory.*

C. Bechstein is famous for its uncompromising approach when it comes to optimizing the sound of their pianos. This includes areas where no European manufacturer has ever dared to tread before. In the past, the hammerheads were obtained exclusively from suppliers. Following two years of intensive research and testing, however, C. Bechstein now produces its own hammerheads in-house: a sensation in the industry!

“Even though we’re very conscious that our company is extremely traditional, we consider that innovation is a strength and a must, and we know that it has always been part of our tradition. In order to continue living up to this standard in the future, we have reinforced our team and invested a great deal of money in research and development,” says C. Bechstein Chairman Stefan Freymuth. The successful development of a complete hammerhead production

facility was possible thanks to C. Bechstein’s expertise in engineering, material selection and sound optimization.

By producing its own hammerheads, C. Bechstein – Europe’s outstandingly innovative manufacturer of upright and grand pianos – has set an unprecedented global quality benchmark. In-house manufacturing not only allows the sophisticated processing of the finest materials, but also continuous and direct coordination with tone and voicing specialists. The result is an improved quality of the dynamics, volume and spectrum of dynamic tonal colors that you immediately hear.

The C. Bechstein hammerheads are tailored to the brand and model, optimized in terms of shape and weight, and bear the C. Bechstein logo. Both the white top felt and the blue underfelt are made by the Wurzen manufactory.

C. Bechstein makes its own hammerheads at the Seifhennersdorf manufactory as no supplier is able to meet the company’s extremely high quality requirements. After the tones have been played in the register, a specialist manually voices every hammerhead by stitching on the felt with high precision, which strikes the ideal balance between tension and elasticity. This creates rich, elastic sound dynamics and boasts harmony in the register. Voicing is an art form that requires skilled craftsmanship, a good ear and careful handling of the materials.





Sustainable Support

C. Bechstein Technicians Academy

A German maker of elite upright and grand pianos, C. Bechstein strives continuously to improve the quality of its customer service. The considerable investments undertaken in Germany in recent decades to train skilled personnel are now bearing fruit: the C. Bechstein Technicians Academy and its team of mobile, motivated trainers communicate the company's expertise to a growing network of retailers and technicians worldwide.

Because in-service training is indispensable, the C. Bechstein Technicians Academy offers courses tailored to the

participants' service specialties, so that partners around the world can maintain C. Bechstein instruments in optimum condition. Those who complete the training sessions receive certificates in official recognition of their qualifications as concert or customer service technicians.

C. Bechstein thus guarantees uniform quality standards the world over, upholds its status as an elite German piano-maker, and remains true to its aspiration: C. Bechstein upright and grand pianos satisfy the highest demands.



Credits

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C. Bechstein reserves the right to make technical, finish or measure-related changes on any part of any model without notice.



