

Press Release

C. Bechstein Gleams Golden

*The Voice of an Artist Clothed in Rococo Luxury:
Possibly the World's Most Precious Grand Piano*



Berlin, 20 March 2013. C. Bechstein, one of Germany's most historic and at the same time most modern piano-makers, celebrates its 160th anniversary with a unique achievement: a luxurious, sumptuously ornamented instrument made by master craftsmen and artists using the most exquisite materials.

This incomparable piano glows with a regal aura. Rich gold leaf, delicate woodcarving, and elegant miniature paintings after the style of Watteau embrace an outstanding acoustic design. Inside the elaborate Louis XV case beats the young heart of a modern C. Bechstein grand piano: the CB B 212 model, a masterpiece of acoustic engineering and craftsmanship, made for the most discriminating professional artists.



The regal C. Bechstein Golden Grand Piano in the Ovid Gallery, New Chambers, Sanssouci Park, Potsdam.

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C. BECHSTEIN
PIANOFORTEFABRIK AG

“The Golden Grand Piano recalls a glamorous era in the company’s history when we filled orders for crowned heads and famous artists. It also demonstrates the brand’s return to its legendary strength,” said Karl Schulze, CEO of C. Bechstein Pianofortefabrik AG, Berlin. “We have built it after the specifications of a 19th-century masterpiece made by Carl Bechstein himself for the royal court of England. This instrument is the epitome of craftsmanship and creativity – a fitting homage to the *grand seigneur* of piano-making.”

In three years of work on the Golden Grand Piano, the C. Bechstein staff have demonstrated skills that few craftsmen still master today: precious woods were selected, patiently cured and delicately shaped; filigree ornaments carved of solid walnut were richly finished in gold leaf; special lacquers were produced from traditional recipes and applied layer by layer to create the miniature paintings.

The touch of this unique instrument is just as luxurious as its ornamentation: the perfectly balanced action responds to every nuance of the pianist’s playing. For all its majestic appearance, the ultramodern Golden Grand Piano submits completely to the musician’s control, expressing every intention in the rich colours of the famous Bechstein sound.

Custom-built pianos by C. Bechstein today adorn stately homes, luxury yachts, and corporate headquarters. Before the Golden Grand Piano is delivered to its owner, it will travel to spectacular sites: Sanssouci Palace, the former residence of King Frederick the Great; and the Imperial Palace in the Forbidden City in Beijing – places dedicated to enduring art and culture, not to passing fads and fashions.



The regal C. Bechstein Golden Grand Piano in the Ovid Gallery, New Chambers, Sanssouci Park, Potsdam.

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Luxurious to the touch as well as to the eye.

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A brand that has commanded attention for 160 years.

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Rococo magnificence: the Golden Grand Piano.

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Paintings after Watteau encircle a splendid acoustic assembly.

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Assembly of what may be the most precious piano in the world.

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Technicians don soft gloves to insert the keyboard.

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Delicate carvings in finest walnut.
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C. Bechstein's leadership: Karl Schulze and Berenice Küpper.
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Gilding with 24-carat gold leaf.
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A smile for miniature paintings with the romance of Watteau.
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All of these illustrations can be found in high resolution in the photo gallery at www.bechstein.com

160 Years of C. Bechstein Pianofortefabrik, Berlin

In 1853, the master piano-maker Carl Bechstein, aged 27, opened a workshop in the cultural centre of Berlin. He cultivated friendships with the great composers of the day, listened to their ideas and created instruments that would allow them to express their dreams in a new piano sound. Many famous pieces of piano music date from this time.

C. Bechstein grand and upright pianos adorned the music rooms of great composers and pianists, and the Berlin piano-maker grew famous in his own right. Soon Carl Bechstein was appointed to supply instruments to the courts of kings and emperors. For Queen Victoria of England, he created a golden grand piano in the Louis XV style, decorated with miniature paintings after Watteau.

In the 19th century, the piano was an indispensable part of life. But of the countless European piano builders – there were nearly 300 in Berlin alone – only a few would stand the test of time. Bechstein, however, produces almost as many instruments today as it did in the golden age of the piano.

Since then, the company's history has been one of many high points, but with some lows as well. When the German master piano-maker Karl Schulze bought Bechstein in 1986, the ailing company was in need of a stable financial footing before it could position its brand in the top market segment once again. Today, Bechstein is Europe's most important manufacturer of quality grand and upright pianos.

The production site located in Seiffhennersdorf, Saxony, sets worldwide standards. Engineers, acoustics specialists and concert technicians, using choice materials and state-of-the-art technology, constantly refine the complex manufacturing methods for the C. Bechstein masterpieces. In 2013, Bechstein underscores its commitment to upholding the legacy of its founder, Carl Bechstein. With masterful craftsmanship and advanced technology, the company's piano-makers have re-created the precious golden rococo grand piano once built for the court of Queen Victoria.

About the Company

C. Bechstein Pianofortefabrik AG, founded in Berlin in 1853, is a German manufacturer of top-quality acoustic upright and grand pianos. With 340 employees, Bechstein today produces three product lines for professional artists, institutions and private music lovers. The instruments are distributed through a worldwide network of selected retail partners and through Bechstein Centers in Germany. With its headquarters in Berlin, its German production site in Seiffhennersdorf, Saxony, and its subsidiary C. Bechstein Europe in Hradec Kralové, Czech Republic, the C. Bechstein company is among Europe's major manufacturer of upright and grand pianos.

Please visit www.bechstein.com for more information.

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