

A Rare and Exciting Musical Event



A rare and exciting musical event has just occurred in South Africa with a Fazioli F278 concert grand being flown into the country and delivered to Cape Town. This piano has been purchased by a private buyer, a serious pianist who is realising his dream of owning and playing on an astonishingly fine piano. He also plans to make the piano accessible to pianists and piano lovers for small concerts, or just for the opportunity to try one of these unique instruments. The purchase of this piano is not an indulgence of wealth, but the expression of a great and life-long passion.

Fazioli pianos are the most hand-built pianos in the world with less than 140 grand pianos released each year. Each instrument takes 2 years to complete under the direct supervision of Paolo Fazioli, the inventor, designer and owner of this unique, Italian company.

It is often overlooked that the piano was in fact invented by an Italian, Bartolomeo Cristofori in the early 1700's. Now over 300 years later, another great Italian has revolutionised the instrument and is shaping the future of the piano sound.

There are only 8 Fazioli pianos on the whole continent and all of them are located in South Africa. Ian Burgess-Simpson Pianos is the first dealership to ever represent Fazioli in Africa and are very proud to have brought in this piano, which is particularly unique in terms of its heritage. This instrument comes from the Fazioli concert fleet and is only four years old. It has the remarkable distinction of having been specifically selected for performances by great pianists, including Daniil Trifonov, Angela Hewitt, Louis Lortie and Vadym Kholodenko. It was also used in some major international piano competitions, such as the Scriabin Competition in Grosseto.



Daniil Trifonov



Angela Hewitt



Louis Lortie



Vadym Kholodenko

The import of an instrument like this, as well as the general success of Fazioli in South Africa, in less than 2.5 years since it was launched here, is a tremendously encouraging indication that the music industry, despite the profound challenges it has been facing, remains more than alive and well.



This year is the 40th anniversary of the founding of Fazioli and no piano manufacturer, since Henry Steinway in the late 1800's, has had a comparable impact on the world of the piano in such a short time than Paolo Fazioli. Paolo Fazioli has introduced his unique concepts around touch and tone of a piano and has changed the landscape of the recording and concert world in just 4 decades. Endorsed not only by great classical pianists, but icons of Jazz such as Herbie Hancock and Abdullah Ibrahim. Fazioli pianos are redefining a sound that used to be defined by Steinway.



Herbie Hancock



Abdullah Ibrahim

As these pianos are built in such extremely small quantities (compare 140 instruments annually to Steinway's current production of around 3,500) there has never been a piano of this rarity and stature in the last 100 years. Each Fazioli piano is personally checked by Paolo Fazioli before it leaves the factory in Sacile, Italy.

Fazioli is driven by only one primary concern, which is the quest to produce a piano that can give pianists the greatest possible range of expression that the defining instrument of our time is capable of. Among some of the rare features of these instruments are soundboards built from Italian Red Spruce from the Vial le femme region of the Italian Alps, the same forest from which Stradivari selected the wood for his famous violins. Building techniques and innovative use of materials make Fazioli pianos completely unique within the upper range of fine pianos and Paolo Fazioli has been directly involved in the most minute detail of the design and construction of these pianos from their inception. One such small detail to solve the natural tendency for brass to tarnish relatively quickly, is to gold-plate all of the hinges and fittings of these instruments. There is nothing ostentatious about this, it is purely a practical solution to a problem.

In terms of tone design, Fazioli is inspired by the human voice, as represented by the Italian Bel Canto tradition, with the result that the pianos have a natural singing quality with a unique purity and yet are capable of astonishing power when required. These are literally new frontiers of what the piano, as an instrument, can do and allows pianists, whether amateur or professional, to discover entirely new elements in the music they play.

Despite the way these pianos are built and the huge input of time and materials that goes into them, they are in fact competitively priced to other name brands in the international market. Paolo Fazioli does not want his pianos to be out of the reach of musicians and music venues.

The impact of Fazioli in the professional music world has been so dramatic that their pianos are increasingly selected, wherever available, for use in major performances, recordings and competitions all over the world in preference to the manufacturers that have dominated the industry, particularly Steinway, for the last 100 years.

As a concert technician and restorer of fine instruments, with credentials and experience that have made Ian Burgess-Simpson Pianos a leader in our industry, Ian will personally attest to the view that Fazioli have created a new benchmark in the three-hundred-year history of the piano.





Ian Burgess-Simpson

Owner, Ian Burgess-Simpson Pianos

Graduate - Steinway Academy for Concert Technicians, Hamburg

Registered Piano Technician, Piano Technicians Guild, USA

Our showroom now boasts the presence of the Fazioli F278 concert grand, a new F212 grand and a pre-owned F212 grand among our fine piano fleet. The Fazioli concert grand will only be with us for a short time while we prepare it for delivery. If you would like to visit our showroom, you can contact us on 021 788 9389 to arrange a suitable time.