Blüthner

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Blüthner, formally **Julius Blüthner Pianofortefabrik GmbH**, is a piano-manufacturing company founded by Julius Blüthner in 1853 in Leipzig Germany.[1] Along with Steinway & Sons, Bosendorfer and Carl Bechstein, **Blüthner** is frequently referred to as one of the "Big Four" piano manufacturers.[2][3][4]

Blüthner	
Blüthner	
Type	Private
Industry	Musical instruments
Founded	1853
Founder(s)	Julius Blüthner
Headquarters	Großpösna near Leipzig, Germany
Key people	Ingbert Blüthner-Haessler (CEO)
Products	Grand pianos and upright pianos
Website	bluethner.de (http://www.bluethner.de)

Contents

History

Julius Blüthner established his workshop in Leipzig, Germany in 1853. This accomplishment was only achieved after a long and difficult campaign to gain Leipzig citizenship. Julius started his endeavor with himself and three other craftsman. A deeply religious man, Julius spoke the defining words that would allow his company to survive and flourish for the next 158 years, "May God Prevail". The age of any particular Blüthner piano can be determined by matching its serial number to the age table freely available on the Blüthner website.[5]

By 1900 Blüthner had become the largest piano maker in Germany, producing some 5,000 instruments annually. Innovations such as the Aliquot string, a fourth string that vibrated sympathetically and that is tuned in unison as well as the cylindrical soundboard and angle cut hammers, created a unique voice for the Blüthner instrument.

Models

Today Blüthner pianos come in several sizes of grands from 5 ft to 9 ft in size. They also make several sizes of upright pianos. They make pianos with most any style of cabinets and veneers with custom orders.

They also make several models of Haessler pianos in their German factory and two lines of Irmler pianos.

Designer models

The one-of-a-kind Blüthner piano of particular interest was the special lightweight instrument, made for use on the Zeppelin *LZ 129 Hindenburg*. The piano had its harp plate made of aluminum, that saved about 100 kg of weight versus a regular cast iron plate of the same size piano. This was the first piano used in flight, and it was used in an "air-concert" radio broadcast.[6] It was removed in 1937 to save weight so it survived the *Hindenburg*'s infamous crash, only to be destroyed by bombing during WWII.[7] A replica of this piano was also featured in the 1975 film *The Hindenburg* where Reed Channing (Peter Donat) sings. Since the film is set during the airship's final flight, the piano's presence is a historical error.[8]

Blüthner has made many special pianos. They have made a few pianos with the design reversed so that a left-handed person can play the tenor with their left hand and the bass with their right hand. In 2008 they designed and built a special keyboard for a customer in Spain which had the Jankó keyboard design.

Blüthner grand piano

Notable Blüthner artists

Numerous royals, composers, conductors, artists, authors and performers have owned Blüthner pianos. They include Willhelm II, Emperor Franz Joseph I, Johannes Brahms, Gustav Mahler, Liberace, Béla Bartók, Claude Debussy, Dodie Smith, Max Reger, Richard Wagner, Johann Strauss, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Dmitri Shostakovich.[10] Sergei Rachmaninoff commented that "There are only two things which I took with me on my way to America...my wife and my precious Blüthner".[9] Blüthners have been used in popular music. One Blüthner piano owned by the Abbey Road Studios in London was used on some tracks of The Beatles' *Let It Be* (1970) album, most notably, in the hits "Let It Be" and "The Long and Winding Road". One was also used in the film *The Sting* (1973). Another (stunt piano) was destroyed in *Iron Man* (2008).

Sergei Rachmaninoff with a Blüthner piano.[9] Photo ca. 1905

References

1. ^ "Blüthner" (http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/03320?q=bluthner&search=quick&pos=1&_start=1#firsthit), *Grove Music Online*, 2009. Accessed 14 April 2009.
2. ^ [1] (http://www.courtneypianos.co.uk/restored.html), *Courtney Pianos Ltd*, Accessed 30th December 2013.
3. ^ [2] (http://www.thepianoshopbath.co.uk/2013/05/bluthner-pianos/), *THE PIANO SHOP BATH*, Accessed 30th December 2013.
4. ^ [3] (http://www.hendersonpianos.com.au/company.html), *Henderson Pianos Sydney Australia*, Accessed 30th December 2013.
5. ^ [4] (http://www.bluthner.co.uk/bluthner-pianos/age-table/). Accessed 30th December 2013.

6. **^** "History" (http://www.bluthner.co.uk/about/history.html), Blüthner UK Website, 2005. Accessed 14 April 2009.
7. **^** http://www.airships.net/blog/hindenburg-piano
8. **^** http://www.airships.net/blog/the-hindenburg-1975-movie
9. ^ *a b* [5] (http://docs.google.com/viewer?
   a=v&q=cache:yl5jgZQALYIJ:bluthnerpianos.com/Bluethner_for_friends_4_09_en.pdf+rachmaninoff+bluthner+piano&
   hl=en&gl=us&pid=bl&srcid=ADGEESg3TP4f0wwrdVxQ4JrBA8V4iCJAUYqk_dTgUkVb-
   hQCaQPOIKF2FfZJGm4JG9hh9EEquvqDNtSy09EarMwriubJAgqhTds2u8IbQqIK6dsUVnCV6pJW0z6jGEVEMm4JtI
   QDD079&sig=AHIEtbRugQgpFYcJOtgJEcLWsbaQTrZd1Q)
10. **^** "Personalities" (http://www.bluthner.co.uk/notables/personalities.html), *Blüthner UK Website*, 2005. Accessed 14 April
    2009.

External links

- Blüthner (http://www.bluethner.de)
- German Piano Imports (http://www.bluthnerpiano.com)
- Blüthner Pianos London (http://www.bluthner-piano.co.uk)
- Aluminum Blüthner piano on the airship Hindenburg (http://www.airships.net/blog/hindenburg-piano)

Retrieved from "http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Blüthner&oldid=588376665"

Categories: Manufacturing companies of Germany │ Piano manufacturing companies

│ Saxon Royal Warrant holders