

**Subject: Re: Klavierhaus**

Dear Elaine,

Nice to meet you and it sounds like you are in for an adventure in regard to a refurbished Steinway.

Let me share my story with you.

Two and a half years ago, the music institution where I work (the University of Texas at El Paso) desperately needed something better in regard to our two concert instruments. One is a Steinway Concert Grand, Model D and the other is a Bosendorfer Imperial Grand. Like you, I considered trading both in for a new Steinway, but was not happy with that choice in all honesty. We need two concert pianos in our venue.

However, this was the option that most piano rebuilders were giving me, because they didn't know how to deal with the magnitude of our Bosendorfer. Looking back, I think they really wanted both instruments and would only offer me one new one in return. It just wasn't an option for us.

I also was pretty disgusted with our Steinway. It had a very brassy sound after so many years of neglect, in our case, and the just the sheer amount of people who were performing on it made a complete rebuild the only choice.

What I first noticed about *Klavierhaus* was that they were the only company who DIDN'T try to manipulate my wants and wishes — especially considering that I only had a certain budget that came through the University. They were also the only company with clear confidence when it came to rebuilding both the Steinway AND the Bosendorfer.

The process was a long and arduous one—in that regard, I must tell you the truth. They personally came to El Paso to assess both instruments -- “they” being their sales representative (not Peter, but someone by the name of Jim Luce) and piano technician, Sujatri Reisinger. Elaine, when I met Sujatri, I felt that I had met an amazing person who honestly cares about the sound of the piano. He is amazingly crafted in his art of piano making and rebuilding. I think this is why the process took so long. It was a year and three months when we got both instruments back to campus. And I was just so thrilled with the results.

The sound of both instruments was completely changed. And for the better, overall. We did a complete rebuild for both instruments, inside and out. The Steinway became warm yet still brilliant – a real warhorse instrument that handled pieces of extreme difficulty with clarity of articulation. Most performers choose that piano now. The Bosendorfer, in my opinion, lost some of its power that it had before. Sujatri phoned to ask what I thought of the work, of course, and I voiced my concern. It seems that the Bosendorfer company has changed the hammers and this was what I was sensing. We performed on the instruments for about a year (longer that every had hoped) before Sujatri came back to do the final alterations—something that was part of the package.

Elaine, I can't tell you how impressed I am with their work. It is conscientious and they care about what I said. They were willing to work with me on all fronts for something that seemed like an insurmountable goal. And for this reason and for the end product, I am thrilled to say only positive things about them. It was a lengthy process. This is true. But I feel that in something like this, I want them to take their time to do a good job for me. And they did not only a good job, but a GREAT job.

Please do not hesitate to contact me via the telephone or email if you have any questions that pop-up. I am more than happy to share my experience with anybody who asks of it.

Nice to meet you,  
Dena Kay Jones

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Hi Dr. Jones,

I received your contact information from Peter Becker at Klavierhaus in New York. I'm currently in the market for a restored Steinway A circa 1900, and have visited several showrooms in the New York area to try out different restorations of the same model and era. Peter has an A in the lineup for restoration, and has offered to build to spec at a reasonable (though still quite expensive) price. However, before I take the plunge and make such a sizeable investment, I would very much appreciate any feedback you can provide on your experience with Klavierhaus, and whether you are satisfied with your piano purchase. My main hesitation with rebuilding (vs. buying one that is already fully restored and ready to go) is that I don't know how the piano will ultimately turn out. Buying one that is already restored is easier in the sense that I know what I'm getting before making the purchase, but the cost is higher than what Peter is offering to rebuild from scratch.

Any advice / feedback you can provide is greatly appreciated.

Thanks again,  
Elaine Kao