

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Steinway goes beyond its classical roots with limited-edition Lenny Kravitz grand piano

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Lenny Kravitz designs limited edition piano for Steinway. Image courtesy Steinway & Sons

By NORA HOWE

American piano company Steinway & Sons has launched its newest limited-edition grand piano in collaboration with legendary musician Lenny Kravitz.

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An icon in both the music and design worlds, Lenny Kravitz has teamed up with world-renowned piano maker Steinway to design the company's newest grand piano, the Kravitz Grand Limited Edition Model B Steinway. For this project, Mr. Kravitz and his team completely deconstructed the traditional Steinway model, reimagining the instrument and creating a piano unlike any before.

"It is truly a pleasure working with an individual like that, someone who has both of those talents design and musicianship," said Ron Losby, president and CEO of Steinway.

In this Q&A, Mr. Losby discusses how the Steinway and Lenny Kravitz relationship came to be and how this collaboration honors the heritage of the piano company while creating a unique and extraordinary piece. Here is the dialogue:



Ron Losby, Steinway President and CEO. Image courtesy of Steinway & Sons

How does Lenny Kravitz, described as a modern renaissance man' embody the Steinway brand?
Much like the Renaissance, Lenny is as intellectual as he is creative. He wears many hats but it's his experience as both a musician and designer that made him such a great partner to work with.

He embodies the Steinway brand because as a musician and a designer, he wants and pursues the best. As the builder of the world's finest pianos, Steinway can relate to that very much.

In what ways specifically does the Kravitz Grand veer away from the classical Steinway piano roots?
The Kravitz Grand veers away from the classical Steinway piano roots in a number of ways, from the hand-carved motifs on the piano rim, the inner lid, and music desk that required over 200 hours of carving by Steinway artisans to the block-style piano legs.

Has any other collaborator dissected the piano aspects in the same way as Kravitz Design did for the Kravitz Grand?
We have had many spectacularly designed special pianos at Steinway, but this piano is truly unlike anything I've seen in my 33 years with the brand. We chose Lenny because of his designs, which cover such a broad spectrum, but also because as a musician, he respects the instrument musically as well.



Kravitz Grand Limited Edition Model B Steinway. Image courtesy of Steinway & Sons

What was the inspiration behind African and Paris art themes chosen for the piano design?
Lenny recently re-designed his Paris home for a second time, which incorporated a lot of the same artistic details African themes utilized in paintings, sculpture and fabric design from the Paris art scene of the 1920s. He wanted to design a piano that would fit perfectly into his Paris home and it resulted in a work of art.

Is charitable action, like donating part of the proceeds to the Harlem School of the Arts, going to be utilized throughout the company moving forward?

We have a variety of ongoing charitable programs already but certainly will consider donating sale proceeds in the future if there's a case for it. With the Kravitz Grand, donating part of the proceeds to the Harlem School of the Arts made sense because both Lenny and Steinway have a history with the school that will be continued.

Steinway utilized local crafters in Queens to help craft the piano. Do you suspect sourcing local craftsmanship continues to be a trend for luxury productions?

I like to think so, and that Steinway's leading the charge in that regard. Local craftsmanship has always been important to the brand and continues to be an important touchpoint.

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