



Jacobs Music: The End of an Era



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Jacobs Music, established 124 years ago, selling pianos from their location on Chestnut Street in Philadelphia since 1937, has been purchased by Steinway & Sons. The deal took place during the end of the summer months and was finalized on October 6, 2024. The dollar amount for the deal remains undisclosed. The music store had four locations: one in Philadelphia, PA, one in Ephrata, PA, one in Cherry Hill, NJ, and one in Princeton, NJ. According to various articles from MSN, Philadelphia.Today, and the Philadelphia Business Journal, the Philly and the Princeton stores will remain open through the holidays but close briefly in the new year to rebrand as Steinway & Sons dealerships. The Cherry Hill and Ephrata stores will close permanently with plans to reopen in the area at new

locations under the new Steinway ownership. The new locations have yet to be determined.

The Rinaldi family has been operating the Jacobs Music chain since 1976, with Chris Rinaldi as the most recent head of the company and Bob Rinaldi as COO. Bob has agreed to continue on with Steinway & Sons after the rebranding. Jacobs has prided themselves as a Steinway & Sons authorized dealer for many years, so it is not surprising that the manufacturer has decided to acquire the chain of music stores. They will continue to offer Steinway brand products such as Boston (made by Kawai), Essex (made by Pearl River), Roland keyboards, and of course their flagship line, Steinway & Sons (made at the Steinway factory in Queens, NY.)



I used to work more closely with Jacobs Music when I was the technician for Settlement Music School in Philadelphia. There was a long standing relationship between the two before I arrived on the job. I had the pleasure of meeting Bob Rinaldi and one of the head concert technicians for S&S, Greg Sikora, during my time at Settlement. There were many opportunities for Steinway & Sons training that were offered to me, but 2020 and COVID hit and all that was either put on hold or cancelled completely. I separated from Settlement in September of 2020 as a result of COVID and severed my ties with Jacobs at that time. We compete in terms of technical repair and tuning.

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One major memory I have about the store also occurred in 2020, June 1st to be exact. It was on the news and I saw pictures on various forums about how the Philadelphia location was broken into by rioters and looters and some of the easy-to-carry digital pianos were thrown out onto the street and covered in graffiti. Other heavier acoustic pianos were also damaged, causing financial loss to the company. Not only was it a loss of product, but destruction of beautiful instruments.

It will be interesting to see how Steinway & Sons, one of the last remaining if not the last remaining piano manufacturer still on US soil, will go forward with ownership of the stores. I wish them the best in the new year.

*photos from jacobsmusic.com