

New pianos place YSU among top music schools

Sixty-eight new Steinway pianos, valued at \$837,000, were delivered to Youngstown State University's Dana School of Music today, making YSU the first public university in Ohio to be designated an All-Steinway School.

"This brings the Dana School to the next level of prominence," said Michael Crist, Dana director. "It puts us in the company of some of the finest music schools in the world."

"We're not only moving up a notch, we're moving up into a different galaxy," said Caroline Oltmanns, YSU professor of piano. "It's breathtaking."

The Cleveland Institute of Music and the Oberlin College Conservatory are the only other music schools in Ohio that exclusively use pianos manufactured by Steinway, a 150-year-old company endorsed by pianists worldwide.

In all, only 40 music schools worldwide are designated All-Steinway Schools, including The Juilliard School in New York, Yale University School of Music and the University of Maryland.

"This is an investment in the future of the school and the future of every student who will use these pianos," said George McCloud, dean of the YSU College of Fine and Performing Arts.

"It's a step that reflects the commitment of YSU and the Youngstown community to assure that the Dana School of Music remains one of the best music programs in the nation."

Oltmanns said she expects the All-Steinway School designation will result in increased interest of students who may want to enroll in the Dana School of Music, and she said it may help attract visiting artists to the school.

"We have excellent faculty, and now we have excellent instruments," she said.

Sally Coveleskie, director of institutional sales for Steinway & Sons in New York, said 95 percent of concert pianists performing in America today play Steinway pianos exclusively, from Billy Joel to Van Cliburn.

"By becoming an all-Steinway school, you not only will attract more students, you will attract the best students," she said. "A serious student needs a serious piano."

The \$837,000 Steinway lease-purchase agreement with YSU includes the purchase of 68 new pianos and the rebuilding of 10 current Steinway pianos at the university. The cost to YSU, after some of the university's current pianos are traded in, will be about \$685,000, which will be paid primarily with student fees, as well as private donations.

The pianos will be placed in classrooms, practice rooms and faculty studios throughout Bliss Hall, which is home of the Dana School of Music. The instruments will be used by the 310 students and 41 faculty in the Dana School of Music, which is celebrating its 135th year.

This is the first time since the 1970s that YSU has purchased pianos, Oltmanns said. The Steinways will replace the university's aging inventory of 92 pianos, most of which are on average about 35 years old. Some of the current instruments will be made available to the public for purchase. For more information, contact the Dana School of Music at 330-941-3636.



Caroline Oltmanns, professor of piano, performs during a news conference celebrating the delivery of 68 new Steinway pianos to the Dana School of Music.