

RAVENSCROFT PIANOS

A PASSION FOR PIANOS



Scottsdale's Michael Spreeman is fulfilling his dream one custom, handcrafted piano at a time at Spreeman Piano Innovations, LLC.

Spreeman Piano Innovations was born from the professional demands of a renowned jazz musician, a disheveled concert piano, and a man with an unsurpassed passion for pianos.

A 32-year piano technician and rebuilding veteran, Michael Spreeman could only fantasize about building his own pianos from scratch. It was a costly, out-of-reach venture for a single father of two.

That all changed in 1992 when jazz pianist and composer Bob Ravenscroft commissioned Spreeman to locate, redesign and rebuild a piano that would “release him from the limitations of his 9-foot concert piano,” recalled Spreeman, whose small firm based in Scottsdale, Arizona is now redefining the high-end custom piano market.

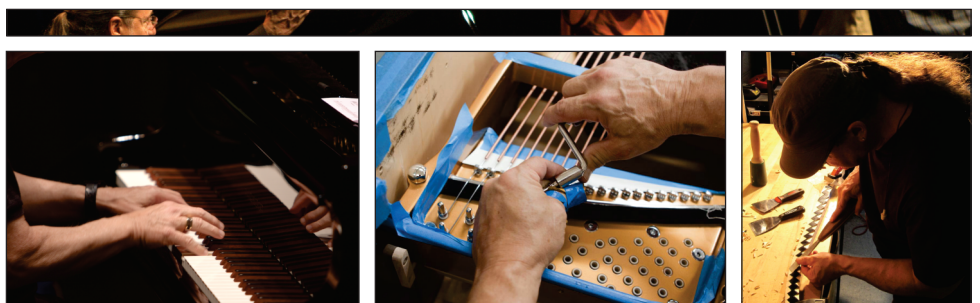
The retired 1926 concert grand that Spreeman found and completely transformed became the first Spreeman concept piano. “It invites me to explore new, unrestricted ways of playing the piano,” Bob Ravenscroft said of Spreeman's inaugural foray into custom piano building. It was an experience that altered Michael's life and career and set the stage for the birth of Spreeman Piano Innovations more than a decade later.

QUALITY, PRECISION CRAFTSMANSHIP AND PERFORMANCE

Step into Spreeman Piano Innovations, based in Scottsdale, Arizona, and find a three-man team creating what is considered by a growing number of musicians and technicians to be one of the finest pianos made today. No assembly line here. Each piano is handcrafted, with Michael involved in every phase of the quality production – including his precision voicing work critical to the sound of the piano.

Exquisite exterior cabinetry and cast iron frames are created to Spreeman's specifications by one of the oldest, continuous manufacturing operations in Germany. The entire production of one Ravenscroft piano can take a full year, including the selection and integration of soundboard wood sourced from the same forest in Northern Italy used in Stradivarius violins.

“Our Ravenscroft pianos are made with some of the world's preeminent piano components and woods and months of handcrafted precision here in our Scottsdale-based production studio,” explained Spreeman with a smile as his crew completed the very first Ravenscroft 275 – a nine-foot concert piano – available for sale to the public.



“It's only fitting that our piano line is named for the man who inspired me to follow my dreams and who inspires countless audiences every time he takes the stage,” Spreeman added.

A LIFELONG LOVE AFFAIR

Michael Spreeman prefers to let his pianos speak for themselves. And everyone from concert pianists to piano enthusiasts loves what they hear – and don't hear.

Like most high-end piano makers, Spreeman Piano Innovations has built much of its reputation on the sound of its one-of-a-kind instruments. Spreeman's unique ability to customize the Ravenscroft sound, look, and feel to meet a customer's specific requirements, however, sets the independent builder apart. “It's called voicing when we actually alter the tonality of the piano. A high-end piano technician is a lot like an Indy 500 mechanic. You've got to be at the top of your craft,” explained Spreeman, who says he grew up playing his favorite instrument.



“When I was learning how to walk I would always gravitate toward the piano. It's been a lifelong love affair,” more so as a technician than a player admits Spreeman who has worked for 32 years with some of the biggest names in classical, rock, and jazz music – everyone from Elton John, the Rolling Stones, the Eagles, and James Taylor to Herbie Hancock, The Phoenix Symphony Orchestra, Jorge Bollet, and Louis Barbosa. He served stints as technical representative for some of the biggest names in piano makers, including Steinway, Baldwin and Yamaha, studied with craftsmen and scholars in Italy, and continues to innovate and inspire as a registered member of the Piano Technicians Guild and the German Federation of Piano Makers.

THE LOOK, THE SOUND, THE FEEL

“Pianos are my true passion, so I've been fortunate to build my career and support my family by rebuilding and most recently building pianos,” said Spreeman, whose Ravenscroft pianos have been played by the very best musicians and featured at major conventions and events.

The unique Ravenscroft pianos deliver richness and purity of tone. They offer power and lyric duration that invite the pianist to perform with a broad, dynamic spectrum, an unlimited velocity and as Spreeman puts it, “an ocean of sound.”

“Our end goal is to produce a piano that sounds and feels as good as it looks – a piano that's as much at home playing country and rock as it is classical and jazz,” explained Spreeman, whose no compromise stance ensures his small, quality-minded team will remain just that. “We're handcrafting two to three Ravenscroft pianos a year,” Spreeman said.

Critics, top pianists, and savvy techs have all indicated that the look, sound, and feel of the Ravenscroft piano is unmatched and clearly the product of a team committed to quality. “Every Ravenscroft piano is built with a relentless pursuit of perfection, regardless of whether the instrument is heading to center stage or the living room of a serious enthusiast,” Spreeman explained. “I'm completely fascinated by pianos and the mesmerizing effects the great pianos can have on a discerning owner and audience.”

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