December 11, 2018

To whom it may concern,

As you may have heard, Steinway & Sons no longer licenses the use of its trademarks or logos (either past or present iterations thereof) to Decals Unlimited for the creation of decals for use on the soundboards and fallboards of Steinway pianos. There were many reasons for this decision, most notably the fact that these decals were being used on restored/rebuilt Steinway pianos that were being rebuilt without genuine Steinway soundboards or wrestplanks/pinblocks, and sometimes without a single genuine Steinway replacement part.

We have found that there is an enormous amount of misinformation on the differences between a genuine Steinway piano and an old Steinway rebuilt with non-Steinway parts on the web, in piano forums, and other places. This misinformation is often propagated by the very same rebuilders that are marketing and selling off the good name that Steinway has established for quality over the course of 165 years of building pianos. We cannot allow our company name (and reputation) to exist on a piano that looks brand new, but in many cases sounds nothing like a Steinway.

Effective immediately, it is no longer legally permissible to purchase Steinway decals for application on a Steinway piano through Decals Unlimited. In addition, Steinway has not authorized any other party to sell Steinway decals, and any such decals are considered counterfeit. Steinway will not be selling decals through our Parts Department or any other Steinway channel.

Furthermore, it is a violation of our trademark rights for someone to market or sell a restored/rebuilt piano as a “Steinway” piano unless: (A) the piano uses ONLY genuine Steinway replacement parts or (B) the non-Steinway replacement parts used are incidental to the function of the piano and any such non-Steinway parts used are specifically disclosed to the consumer. In either case, it must also be specifically and fully disclosed to the consumer that the piano has been rebuilt and by whom. Steinway & Sons takes its reputation and this matter very seriously, and will enforce our rights with respect to any pianos marketed or sold in violation of the above to the fullest extent of the law.

We are asking anyone who comes across a piano that they feel may be using counterfeit Steinway & Sons decals, or which is being marketed and sold as a “Steinway” piano in violation of our trademark rights to report the violation, including the piano and its location, by sending a message to violations@steinway.com. We have come across far too many purchasers of rebuilt Steinways that do not realize that the key components of that piano were not manufactured by Steinway & Sons, so we are taking these steps to better inform and protect the consumer. Thank you for your attention in this matter of great importance to our company.

Sincerely,

Todd Brecher
Acting General Counsel
Steinway Musical Instruments, Inc.