

# *The Patricia Walkup Memorial Piano*

*A superb 1884 Steinway & Sons Model D Concert Grand Piano  
Case crafted of Indian Rosewood • Original old growth spruce soundboard  
Meticulously restored over eight years during the 1990's to its original condition.*

*at the*

*Cadillac Hotel  
380 Eddy Street  
San Francisco, California*



*Dedicated to the uplifting power of music for the residents  
of the Cadillac Hotel and the Tenderloin*

## *From the Castle to the Cadillac*

The piano began its life in 1884, at Kenilworth Castle in Holyoke, Massachusetts. The castle was built by paper baron Edward C. Taft who had his home modeled after Gladstone Castle in England. For a little over 70 years this was home to the Steinway Model D. The provenance for this piano comes with it. The instrument has lived a good life – and been part of the “good life” as well.

The piano was shipped by water in December, 1884, from the Steinway factory in Queens, NY, to the Simpson Piano dealership in Springfield, MA. When construction of Kenilworth Castle was completed in 1885, the piano was transported by wagon from Springfield to Taft’s new castle in Holyoke, which overlooked the Connecticut River. The piano was purchased for Taft’s daughter, Lucretia, at a time when paper merchants and manufacturers were still enjoying great prosperity. That was soon to end.

The boom period for paper manufacturing finally came to a halt. In 1894, prices for paper dropped dramatically and stayed down for the next three years. Several paper manufacturer’s folded – and the Tafts who had been renowned for lavish entertaining, saw their fortunes begin to disappear.

Lucretia (Taft’s daughter) married William D. Flagg, whose family was in the lumber business. They occupied Kenilworth Castle in 1897, after Edward Taft’s death. Lucretia’s husband died in 1941, but she continued to reside at Kenilworth until her death in 1957. The Castle and its contents fell under the administration of the Hadley Falls Trust Company, trustee for her estate. The bank had difficulty in finding a buyer, so many of the furnishings were sold off.

The last object to leave the castle was the Steinway Model D. In 1958, the piano was purchased by Mr. Clark Lyon, an attorney in Holyoke, for his wife who had it fully restored in the 1990s – and used it briefly until her death. After the death of Mr. Lyon (ca. 2001), the piano was inherited by his daughter, Trudy Hart of Stowe, VT. Around 2003, Ms. Hart decided to offer the piano for sale – on consignment with Brenton Evans Pianos of Indian Orchard, MA. The piano was kept on display at Mr. Evans’ Indian Orchard location for about 3 years. It was then moved to his New Haven, CT showroom in mid-2006. The piano was used for recitals of artists in the New Haven area and Yale University for several months. It left New Haven for its new home in San Francisco on June 14, 2007. The piano arrived at the Cadillac Hotel on June 21, where it will be played to inspire and uplift the residents of the hotel and the Tenderloin for another 120 years.



*Kenilworth Castle in Holyoke, MA.  
Home to the Steinway D between 1885-1958.*



*The piano’s last day in the New Haven  
Showroom on June 14, 2007.*



*Leaving New Haven for its new home  
in San Francisco.*

## *Donated to The Cadillac Hotel*

In April, 2007, the piano was purchased by Lee Walkup of Cheshire, CT, and donated to the Cadillac Hotel in San Francisco in memory of his sister, Patricia Walkup, who passed away in 2006. The piano was carefully shipped from New Haven to San Francisco in June, 2007. It arrived at the hotel on June 21.

The Cadillac Hotel was the first non-profit “Single-Residence Occupancy” (SRO) hotel West of the Mississippi. It provides supportive housing for approximately 160 tenants and is an official San Francisco landmark. Built the year after the 1906 earthquake, the Cadillac was home to wealthy visitors in the first part of the 20th century. The hotel even had its own furrier.

It was briefly owned in the 1960’s by GAP founder Don Fisher who removed some of its historic detail. In 1977, the Cadillac was bought by the non-profit Reality House West, led by Leroy and Kathy Looper. Thirty years later, Leroy and Kathy Looper are still actively involved in the day-to-day operations of the hotel. For over three decades the Cadillac has provided affordable housing and support services for thousands of low-income single adults who would otherwise have no place to go.

The original Grand Ballroom was leased for many years by Newman’s Gym, a legendary training facility for boxers. When its owner, Don Stewart passed away in 1995, the Loopers leased the space to a federal *Head Start* program which promotes school readiness and provides health and social services for children up to three years old. This is in keeping with the Looper’s efforts over many years, to maintain the residential character of the Tenderloin. There is not enough space here to describe the Looper’s life of giving. Leroy is known as “The Father of the Tenderloin”. He and Kathy have dedicated their lives to letting people who are down on their luck – know that someone cares about them.

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## *Patricia Walkup*

Patricia Walkup was an effective community activist in San Francisco. She led a successful grassroots campaign through three ballot initiatives to replace the double-decker Central Freeway in the Hayes Valley District of San Francisco – with the beautiful tree-lined Octavia Boulevard and Green which now bears her name (Patricia’s Green in Hayes Valley). She was also the founder and president of the Hayes Valley Neighborhood Association for many years, working successfully to rid the neighborhood of drug dealing, crime and prostitution. And she was a strong advocate for affordable housing and maintaining the diversity of the neighborhoods in San Francisco.

When Patricia first moved to San Francisco in the early 1970’s, she volunteered three days a week at the Cadillac Hotel. Under the expert guidance of Leroy and Kathy Looper, Patricia learned the “ins-and-outs” of the non-profit business and how to work with the political structure in the City to get things done.

As a child growing up in Kilgore, TX during the 1950’s, Patricia took piano lessons from Rildia Bee Cliburn, mother of Van Cliburn – world-renowned concert pianist. When Van won the First International Tchaikowsky Competition in Moscow (1958), Patricia was 12 years old. Van’s instant fame, New York tickertape parade, and cover of Time were extraordinary events for someone from a small oilfield town in East Texas. Patricia’s fortuitous association with the Cliburns inspired in her a love for music and an insight into the big world outside her town. And Van’s accomplishments showed her that anything is possible through hard work and persistence. Patricia often said, “Ordinary people can accomplish extraordinary things”.

This is why the placing of this magnificent instrument at the Cadillac Hotel is such an appropriate memorial to her memory. Hopefully the power of the great music to be played here will be uplifting – and an inspiration to the residents of the hotel and the Tenderloin. (For more information visit: [www.patriciawalkup.org](http://www.patriciawalkup.org))



*The Cadillac Hotel at Sunset*



*Patricia Walkup 1946-2006*

## *The Piano*

The piano was meticulously restored over a period of eight years during the 1990's by Richard Blaise of Hampshire Piano — now located in Holyoke, MA. The soundboard is this piano's original. It's made from old growth spruce which has a much tighter grain than wood grown and used in pianos made today. The Indian Rosewood veneer was taken from a tree that was probably 400 years old. This beautiful, dramatically grained wood has been meticulously sanded with 600 grit sandpaper and then carefully stained to highlight the the stunning pattern in the grain.

In the next stage, a special compound was applied to the surface to fill all of the pores in the wood. This was the first stage in creating the smooth “closed pore” lacquer finish. After the pore filler had dried it was wet sanded by hand between each of its 6 to 10 coats of clear lacquer. Each coat of lacquer was applied in a light spray and then hand rubbed with the grain of the wood. When a good solid finish had been created, the entire piano was rubbed with extra fine steel wool, followed by rubbing compound and pumice powder.

The result of this painstaking work is a beautiful, soft, satin-gloss lustre finish. A hand rubbed finish like this, not only looks good, but will provide the piano with excellent protection for a great many years. This piano has survived for 123 years and sounds as good as the day it was made. It has the potential to live for another 120 years.



*For more information about the Patricia Walkup Memorial Piano, please contact:*

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