

Julian Abraham 'Togar' RECONCILIATION

Large Print Artwork Labels

Refugee Piano

1920

Courtesy Jon Rumney Estate.

This baby grand (built in Berlin in 1920), suggests stability and solidity in a shifting, dangerous world.

My grandfather, Salomon Rummelsburg - a Prussian medical officer - met his future wife, Cecilia Czwirkowska, while stationed in Ukraine during the chaos of World War One. Moving to Berlin to marry, they bought the piano as a symbol, perhaps, of domestic certainty in revolutionary times.

In 1933 they fled, with their children, to England as political and religious asylum seekers. Cecilia then made the extraordinary and dangerous journey back to Berlin, to retrieve, amongst other things, this piano.

For 60 years the 'refugee piano' anchored itself in the living room of our family home. When my father died last year, my brother Mike and I decided the piano should have new life with other people, hopefully musicians or young people who might not normally have access to such an instrument.

For me, our piano represents the power of music, an object symbolising dislocated lives but bringing people together, and we're delighted it can contribute to Julian Abraham Togar's *REXONCILIATION* exhibition.

Text by Peter
Rumney.