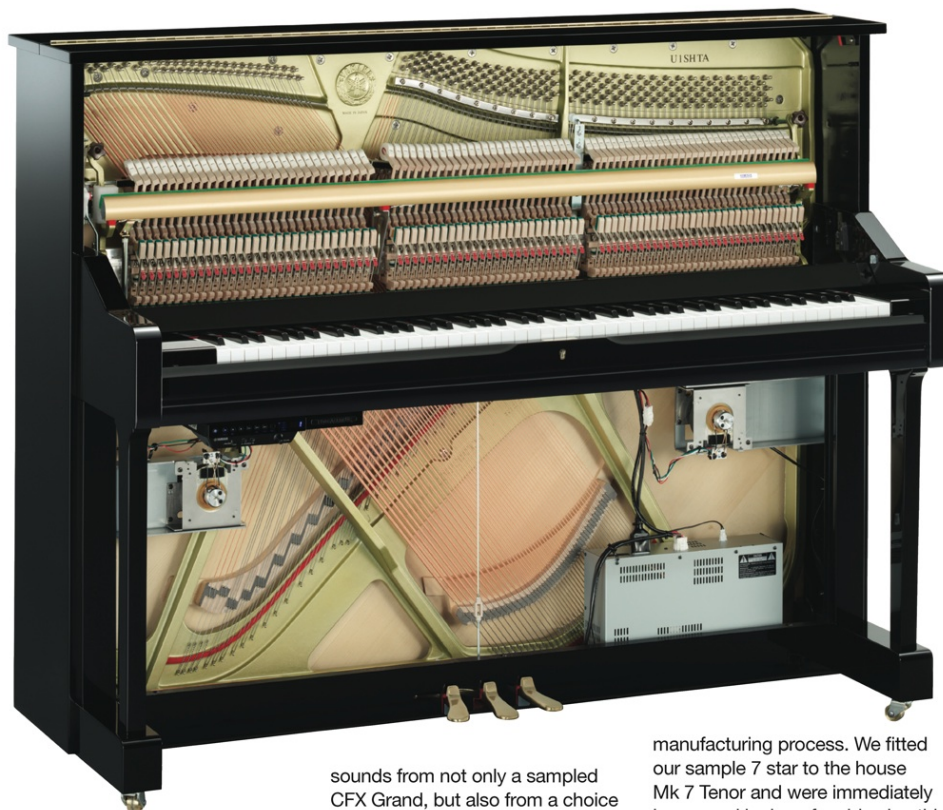




# // Instrument News & Reviews

David Gallant checks out the latest jazz-related instrument and technology launches



## Yamaha TransAcoustic Piano

In the search to produce a more 'realistic' acoustic tonality from digitally produced sound samples, Yamaha's R&D department has spent the last few years and no doubt millions of Yen developing their ground breaking TransAcoustic piano. Based on their highly successful U1 upright, the TransAcoustic uses a similar mechanism to the 'Silent' series, where it is possible to stop the hammers striking the strings and instead play back digital samples. With this in mind, Yamaha have developed the digital TransAcoustic module and fitted a pair of electronic transducers to both the treble and bass sections of the piano, with a sound bar between the transducer and the piano's soundboard, so making the vibrating soundboard act like a speaker cone. This natural acoustic sound is further enhanced by the vibrations of the soundboard being transmitted to the strings and the piano's casing. The onboard control module allows the player to adjust the volume and select

sounds from not only a sampled CFX Grand, but also from a choice of electric pianos, Hammond organ, marimba, and harpsichord. Most intriguingly perhaps, you can mix the digital and acoustic properties of the instrument, such as playing back pre-recorded tracks while you perform, to create some truly extraordinary soundscapes. It wouldn't be too far fetched to suggest that Yamaha's TransAcoustic technology has all but reinvented the traditional instrument for the 21st century musician and given a whole new meaning to the term 'playing the piano'.

For more info go to [uk.yamaha.com/transacoustic](http://uk.yamaha.com/transacoustic)

## JodyJazz GIANT Tenor Sax Mouthpiece

This is a metal mouthpiece with a difference. The exterior styling and shape looks every bit like a hard rubber mouthpiece, yet it's made from aerospace grade anodised aluminium, a material that not only offers a very clean and pure tone, but also allows for extremely high tolerances in the

manufacturing process. We fitted our sample 7 star to the house Mk 7 Tenor and were immediately impressed by how free blowing this GIANT mouthpiece is. It has good sub tones, offers plenty of control and that small amount of resistance is just perfect for easy articulation. There's projection aplenty and the large round, open chamber helps to produce a full, rich and warm sonic response with an evenness of tone that is also consistent in the high register. While there is clearly that slight 'edge' typical of any metal mouthpiece, it's nowhere near the bite and relative harshness of our current house metal. If you're looking for a mouthpiece that not only gives you the 'best of both worlds', i.e.: metal and hard rubber, but also allows you the freedom to 'individualise' your sound, then this JodyJazz GIANT is definitely

where it's at. It comes with a Rico H ligature, stylish JodyJazz TS1 Cap and a deluxe royal blue drawstring pouch. For more info go to [www.jodyjazz.com](http://www.jodyjazz.com)

## Packer JP251SW Trumpet

As we have come to expect from the Packer stable, the 251SW is well crafted, solidly built and beautifully finished. The 'one piece' rose brass bell comes with a standard flare and bell ring, there are Monel valves and a specially designed leadpipe by Smith-Watkins specifically developed to maximise the performance of this particular horn. Fitting the supplied 5C mouthpiece, the 251SW is free blowing and those Monel valves are super smooth: it's a breeze from the top right down to the bottom F sharp. And that purpose built leadpipe really does help, creating an amazing degree of freedom, allowing the player to shape their sound and bend notes. Easily driven, the 251SW offers plenty of power and has a good dynamic range. The sound is bright, with a lot of depth and body and there is a lovely sweet, warm tonality – further accentuated when we fitted our own 3C. Shipped in a semi-rigid case that's a 21st century update on the original rectangular model, it has a shaped styrofoam plush-lined interior, a 3/4 zip, a full face zippered pouch pocket, a back harness stashed behind a velcroed storage flap and two top mounted 'D' rings carrying a shoulder strap. Oh yes, and we particularly liked the two rubber grab handles on the top and end panels (do go on... Ed). There's really nothing that we didn't like about this horn, and with a street price of just £454, it's easy to see why this little beauty is deservedly top of its class.

For more info go to [www.jp musical instruments.com](http://www.jp musical instruments.com)

