

Recently, I had the pleasure of playing with Jody Espina of Jody Jazz mouthpieces. His DV NY mouthpieces have been my go-to for alto, tenor and baritone for years, producing a big, dark, resonant tone. Well, now Jody has a new creation: the Hand Hammered. This mouthpiece begins life as an extra wide brass blank with thick rails; it is then hand hammered by a cymbal hammering artisan, before being faced at the Jody Jazz factory. The concept behind this is that hand hammering changes the resonance of the brass, making it warmer. It has a small rollover baffle, straight sidewalls and a large chamber. Also available is a hand hammered Power Ring ligature which I used on the test play.

My test play of the Hand Hammered tenor 8* was brief, but literally left me losing sleep. The piece was big in every way: physically wide and heavy, and tonally huge. It was not quite as dark as my DV NY but played much louder with great resonance. Most significantly, it had consistent tone colour at all volumes. When I push a mouthpiece to loud volumes, I find it brightens the tone. The Hand Hammered stayed dark and rich from subtone to full volume. And what a subtone, easier and fatter down to low Bb than my DV NY. I would call this a dark piece, between the DV NY and Custom Dark, but at loud volumes it retained better tone colour than both.

The Hand Hammered is a limited release of 300, individually numbered tenor pieces, finished in rose gold plating. It comes at a price: US\$1000 for the piece only, with the hand hammered Power Ring ligature sold separately.

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JODY JAZZ HAND HAMMERED TENOR SAXOPHONE MOUTHPIECE

