

Theo Wanne

Chief Creative Architect

For ten years, which spanned through his high school years, Theo was an apprentice as a custom bicycle frame builder in Bellingham, WA at DaDa Bicycles. Their specialty was brass fillet brazing, which requires intense finish work, but creates very smooth and beautifully scalloped joints between tubes. This brazing process required a lot of hand-work.

And as the apprentice in this business Theo did most of this work. Over time he became very good at it made very beautifully crafted bicycle frames. Fillet brazing as a technique for custom bicycle building has faded in use now. The hand work involved is simply too time consuming and not cost-effective.

Theo also learned frame design, jig building, shop set-up, and other various welding techniques including TIG, MIG, Arc welding and Oxy-Fuel brazing. Likewise he gaining a familiarity with various materials and casting procedures. Custom frame design incorporated personal ergonomics along with stressor flow. This became very beneficial in helping Theo's uncover the effects of airflow and individual blowing styles on the resultant sound from a saxophone or clarinet mouthpiece. Eventually he found remarkable similarities between the two fields of study.

Through his ten year college stint, Theo bought and sold vintage saxophones from private individuals, small music stores, repair shops, pawn shops, etc. During this time he discovered a common predicament. He had trouble finding a saxophone mouthpiece that unleashed his musical soul. His friends in the vintage sax business recommended he try a vintage Otto Link mouthpiece. Eventually he found an original 7 Florida metal link to play. While being very close to the sound he was looking for, it responded poorly do to being tossed around over the years.

This is when he Theo met Bob Carpenter of Seattle. Bob is retired and, along with being a beautiful person, is an expert mouthpiece refacer. Through the goodness of his heart Bob taught Theo the fundamentals of mouthpiece refacing.

Due to Theo's history of working with bicycle frames he picked up the art quickly.

The flame was lit. Theo spent his life savings on every vintage saxophone mouthpiece he could find. He bought thousands of mouthpieces! His friends and family thought he was totally crazy, but fortunately had some trust in him too!

Theo studied and studied every mouthpiece he could. He spent innumerable hours figuring out why each one sounded its particular way. He then validated his findings by duplicating each mouthpieces design in another mouthpiece until the two mouthpieces sounded exactly the same. This was to prove to himself he indeed understand what made each mouthpiece unique. He made charts of the various facing curves, chamber sizes, floor and side wall shapes, documenting the effects each has on sound.

Eventually Theo opened Saxophone Mouthpiece Heaven and started selling the mouthpieces he had collected as well as doing custom mouthpiece refacing.

Shortly there-after Theo moved to Philadelphia with his business and started working at Gustafson Music. He found it quite an honor to have Bret Gustafson teach him saxophone repair. Theo considers Bret to be a true master repairman. But as Theo's mouthpiece work caught on in the world market, Saxophone Mouthpiece Heaven eventually became a full time business in its own right. So Theo left Gustafson music to create a shop on his own. With the help of his assistant Frank Machos and Dave Tondi (who has become a world-class refacer in his own right) Saxophone Mouthpiece Heaven flourished.

Theo's refacing work started to get very popular, and soon he had a two-year long back log of work and could only accept a small fraction of the work offered to him.

Theo's philosophy has always been to 'learn as you go'. He provided the sound his customers were looking for by adjusted their mouthpiece in front of them. He absorbed their feedback, and adjusted their mouthpieces until their dream



sound became reality. With many of the top saxophonists in the world as customers, Theo had an amazing opportunity to learn just what the musicians of today are looking for. Over time he found patterns in what musicians want and so created custom models and CAD drawings of these designs. These designs are now the cornerstone of the new mouthpieces being manufactured by Wanne, Inc.

In order to best craft these new designs, and provide the best possible mouthpiece for his customers, Theo eventually turned his full attention to making the new mouthpiece models through the corporation, Wanne, Inc. His brother Tom, who has a degree in physics, computer science, and a Masters degree in business, also became his business partner, and CEO, of Wanne, Inc.

Since Theo is only interested in creating the absolutely highest quality mouthpieces possible, this endeavor has taken some time. He is pushing the boundaries of technology with his new mouthpieces and has five patents pending. Theo is overseeing every detail in the new mouthpiece production personally in order to create the Rolls Royce of saxophone mouthpieces! [🔗](#)

Tom Wanne

CEO

Tom Wanne is an energetic entrepreneur with a strong dedication to achieving results. He is a business innovator who projects a positive attitude and powerful vision. Tom previously ran a successful financial consulting business for ten years. He is respected in the business community for his ability to create inspiring work environments and innovative strategies to achieve measurable results.

Tom earned a Physics with Applied Computer Science degree from the top nationally-ranked engineering school, Harvey Mudd College. While attending graduate school, Tom helped manage

and market statistical software for Infometrix, Inc. in Seattle, WA. After earning his MBA from Seattle Pacific University, Tom accepted the position of Vice President – Investments at Dain Rauscher in Bellingham, WA. While there, he guided his business to large asset growth and a focus on higher-level services for high net worth clients and business owners. Tom then made the move to Senior Vice President – Investments at Piper Jaffray & Company of Bellingham, WA, where his team further focused on providing comprehensive macro-strategic financial planning until his departure in 2004. [@](#)

