

The JodyJazz DV Alto and the HR* Soprano

Since the inception of *JodyJazz Saxophone and Clarinet Mouthpieces*, founder and president Jody Espina has consistently released superior products. His two recent contributions, the DV for Alto Saxophone and the HR* for soprano saxophone are no exception.

First, it's best to start with a little background on how the DV series was created. DV, which stands for *Da Vinci*, is a design concept that Jody was inspired to explore after reading the best selling book *The Da Vinci Code*. Jody had been looking for a way to modify the dimensions of his current metal mouthpiece design (the ESP series) to enhance the brightness for players that were used to playing Dukoff and Guardala mouthpieces. Jody sought to find a balanced design that expanded the high frequencies in a mouthpiece, without losing the richness of the mid and lower frequencies. After over a year of painstaking experimentation with the mathematical formula that is explored in *The Da Vinci Code*, Jody was able to create the DV tenor mouthpiece. Interestingly, these "Divine Proportions" were used by the ancient Greeks for special listening rooms, which were acoustically designed to eliminate all conflicting frequencies. The placement of the F holes in Stradivarius violins, also employ this principle.

I had played the DV tenor mouthpiece when it was first released and indeed found that Jody's goal was quite successful in brightening the upper frequencies of the tenor without losing the bottom range, but because the alto is naturally a brighter horn, I wasn't sure what to expect. I was very fortunate to try an early prototype for the DV, and upon playing it, I immediately fell in love — with the mouthpiece, that is. The DV alto has superior projection, an excellence in dynamic range, is extremely comfortable to play, and is both warm, bright, powerful, and sensitive at the same time. While Jody experimented for over a year to create the definitive design for the tenor mouthpiece, the alto mouthpiece took him even longer. This might be partially due to the fact that Jody is an excellent alto saxophonist, so he was undoubtedly pickier with this mouthpiece. In short, I love this mouthpiece! (For more information on the Da Vinci Code formula, visit www.goldennumber.net)

Jody's other recent release is also quite worthy of mention. The HR* (which stands for Hard Rubber) soprano mouthpiece is a mouthpiece in the tradition of the great hard rubber mouthpieces of the past. There is one big difference though. This is no stock mouthpiece. Jody Espina personally does all of the hand finishing work himself in his studio to insure that you are purchasing a superior product. I really like this mouthpiece because it is responsive, plays well in all of the registers, and has a sweetness that compliments the naturally bright frequencies of the soprano. It also has a rich darkness and warmth, without the stuffiness associates with hard rubber mouthpieces of the past. Plus, the projection is great. Do yourself a favor and check out both of these awesome mouthpieces today. For more information visit Jody's website at www.jodyjazz.com.♪

— Laura Dreyer

Laura Dreyer has been a dynamic member of the New York jazz scene for more than two decades. Dreyer was a founding member and contributing arranger for the big band DIVA. She remained with the ensemble for six years, playing both lead alto and tenor. Dreyer remains active as a music educator, having served on the faculties of the Jamey Aebersold jazz clinics and is a clinician at high schools and colleges. www.lauradreyer.com.

