



# **SAXOPHONE MOUTHPIECE EVALUATION V7N2**

**By John Alexander**

## JAZZ IMPROV'S SAX MOUTHPIECE EVALUATION

### *Jody Jazz*

Jody Espina at Jody Jazz in New York sent us five tenor, four alto, and three soprano pieces – what a great way to while away many hours playing all of these mouthpieces. Included were his samples of his ESP series, his Classic series, his HR\* series, and his new DV series. All Jody Jazz pieces except the HR\* series come with a Deluxe Rovner Dark ligature and cap. Please check the Jody Jazz website at [www.jodyjazz.com/index.html](http://www.jodyjazz.com/index.html) for more information and availability in your area.

First, a word about the DV series: DV stands for Da Vinci, as in *The Da Vinci Code*, the best-selling book by Dan Brown. After reading the book, Mr. Espina was inspired to experiment with the mathematical relationship known as Phi (pronounced *fi*, as in the *fly*). From the GoldenNumber.net website “Phi ( $\Phi = 1.618033988749895\dots$ ) is simply an irrational number...but one with many unusual mathematical properties”. This number is also known as The Golden Mean, The Golden Ratio, and The Golden Section. It is found in nature (e.g., in the proportions of the human body); in art and architecture (e.g., Leonardo Da Vinci’s *The Last Supper* and The Parthenon) and in music (e.g. musical scales as examples of the Fibonacci number series). Jody found a way to incorporate the Golden Mean in the construction of the DV mouthpiece.

One of the first things you will notice in this radical new mouthpiece design the deep cut-out or U shape in the table. The first thing I noticed when I put a reed on it and played it was the huge sound especially in the lower register. The sound really does jump out of this piece, possibly due to the cut-out allowing for a quicker reed response and fuller reed vibration. The DV has a high baffle with a bright sound, but has enough overtones so that the sound is not harsh or brittle. The DV NY, for tenor only, has a lower baffle, a darker sound, and is comparable to a metal Otto Link.

Jody Espina has created a revolutionary new mouthpiece design with the DV, and has several patent applications in the work for it. It could be

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considered the “Cadillac” of saxophone mouthpieces. The workmanship is flawless, from the CNC (computerized numerical control) machined blanks to the gold plating and hand finishing. It is an expensive piece, at \$495.00 for the tenor and \$450.00 for the alto, so you are making a real commitment when you purchase one of these pieces. For that kind of money, I would give these pieces very careful consideration. If possible go to a bricks-and-mortar retailer, or order from an online source, that will allow you to try out the piece for a good length of time, perhaps a couple of weeks. If you do, then I think you will be able to make an informed choice and you will be most pleased with the DV mouthpiece.

As the other Jody Jazz pieces, the ESP is a metal piece with a removable baffle or spoiler which, when inserted, brightens the sound and increases the volume and projection; it's almost like having two mouthpieces in one. The tenor and alto pieces play very well and are suitable for almost any gig situation. However, due to the small chamber size in the soprano piece the spoiler has to be placed in exactly the right place or the air flow will be restricted.

The Jody Jazz Classic is made from a polycarbonate alloy with a synthetic and also includes the removable spoiler or baffle. The Classic is great for a hard-blowing rock or blues gig where you really need to get above the rhythm section. I suppose that it's due to the composition material, but these pieces sound a little higher or lighter than a metal or hard rubber piece. Not that that would be a bad thing; on the contrary, it might be just what you need to project over a loud stage volume.

The HR\* is Jody Jazz's line of hard rubber pieces, and in our collective opinion they do about everything right. The sound is warm with projection, the resistance is just enough, and the response is very good. If you are a hard rubber enthusiast you will love these pieces. If you are a young player who is just developing his sound these pieces, whether alto, tenor, or soprano, would be great pieces to “grow into”. I think that they would be forgiving enough so that you could sound pretty good where you are right now, and very good once you develop your sound a little more. I have seen a lot of young players who think that a metal mouthpiece is going to cure all of their ills and make them sound

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like their metal mouthpiece heroes. They usually end up sounding very bright, nasal, loud and out of tune because they haven't opened up enough and aren't supporting the air properly. Check out the HR\* when you go mouthpiece-shopping. I think you will be very pleased.

# Mouthpiece Evaluation Sheet

Date 11/9/06

Mouthpiece Brand Jody Jazz Model Classic Alto 6 with Spoiler 

Reed Used Vandoren Java 2.5

Ligature Rovner

Horn Selmer Mark VI

## Response/Articulation

Low Register 8

Middle Register 8

High Register 8

Altissimo 8

Dark to Bright, 1 to 10 8

Air Flow/Resistance, High to Low 8

Workmanship 9

Ergonomics/Mouth Feel 6

Volume/Projection 8

Best Suited for What Type of Gig Rock, Blues

## Comments:

This piece is made from a polycarbonate alloy with a synthetic rubber mix. With the baffle the sound is bright and loud, good for a hard-blowing rock or blues gig. The sound seems to center toward the upper part of the sound spectrum. The low register seemed prone to breaking up when pushed. The mouth-feel is a little bit square.

# Mouthpiece Evaluation Sheet

Date 11/9/06

Mouthpiece Brand Jody Jazz Model Classic Alto 6 without Spoiler 

Reed Used Vandoren Java 2.5

Ligature Rovner

Horn Selmer Mark VI

## Response/Articulation

Low Register 7

Middle Register 7

High Register 7

Altissimo 7

Dark to Bright, 1 to 10 7

Air Flow/Resistance, High to Low 7

Workmanship 9

Ergonomics/Mouth Feel 6

Volume/Projection 8

Best Suited for What Type of Gig Rock, blues

## Comments:

This piece is made from a polycarbonate alloy with a synthetic rubber mix. The sound is still bright and loud without the baffle but with a little less edge and a little more warmth. The response seems more even without the baffle. The sound is a little less prone to breaking up in the low end. The mouth-feel is a little big.

# Mouthpiece Evaluation Sheet

Date 11/9/06

Mouthpiece Brand Jody Jazz Model Classic Sop 6\* with Spoiler 

Reed Used Vandoren Java 2.5

Ligature Rovner

Horn Selmer Mark VI

## Response/Articulation

Low Register 8

Middle Register 8

High Register 7

Altissimo 8

Dark to Bright, 1 to 10 8

Air Flow/Resistance, High to Low 8

Workmanship 9

Ergonomics/Mouth Feel 7

Volume/Projection 7


Best Suited for What Type of Gig All types; very flexible piece

## Comments:

This piece, made of a polycarbonate material with a synthetic rubber mix, has a removable baffle or spoiler that brightens the sound and increases volume and projection. It is flexible enough for most gig situations. The feel in the mouth is slightly smaller than average. The baffle closes off the upper register slightly. The overall sound is a little higher or lighter than a metal or hard rubber piece.

# Mouthpiece Evaluation Sheet

Date 11/9/06

Mouthpiece Brand Jody Jazz Model Classic Sop 6\* without Spoiler 

Reed Used Vandoren Java 2.5

Ligature Rovner

Horn Selmer Mark VI

## Response/Articulation

Low Register 8

Middle Register 8

High Register 7

Altissimo 8

Dark to Bright, 1 to 10 7

Air Flow/Resistance, High to Low 8

Workmanship 9

Ergonomics/Mouth Feel 7

Volume/Projection 7

Best Suited for What Type of Gig All types; very flexible piece

## Comments:

This piece, made of a polycarbonate material with a synthetic rubber mix, has a removable baffle or spoiler that brightens the sound and increases volume and projection. It is flexible enough for most gig situations. The feel in the mouth is slightly smaller than average. Without the baffle the sound is slightly darker but more focused. As with the other Classic pieces, the sound is a little lighter or higher than a metal or hard rubber piece.



# Mouthpiece Evaluation Sheet

Date 11/9/06

Mouthpiece Brand Jody Jazz Model Classic Tenor 7 with Spoiler 

Reed Used Vandoren Java 3

Ligature Rovner

Horn Selmer Mark VI

## Response/Articulation

Low Register 6

Middle Register 7

High Register 9

Altissimo 7

Dark to Bright, 1 to 10 9

Air Flow/Resistance, High to Low 9

Workmanship 9

Ergonomics/Mouth Feel 6

Volume/Projection 9

Best Suited for What Type of Gig Rock, Blues

## Comments:

This piece is made from a polycarbonate alloy with a synthetic rubber mix. With the baffle the sound is bright and loud, good for a hard-blowing rock or blues gig. The sound seems to center toward the upper part of the sound spectrum. The low register seemed prone to breaking up when pushed. The mouth-feel, like the EPS, is a little big.

# Mouthpiece Evaluation Sheet

Date 11/9/06

Mouthpiece Brand Jody Jazz Model Classic Tenor 7 without Spoiler 

Reed Used Vandoren Java 3

Ligature Rovner

Horn Selmer Mark VI

## Response/Articulation

Low Register 7

Middle Register 7

High Register 8

Altissimo 7

Dark to Bright, 1 to 10 8

Air Flow/Resistance, High to Low 9

Workmanship 9

Ergonomics/Mouth Feel 6

Volume/Projection 9

Best Suited for What Type of Gig Rock, blues

## Comments:

This piece is made from a polycarbonate alloy with a synthetic rubber mix. The sound is still bright and loud without the baffle but with a little less edge; still suitable for a hard-blowing rock or blues gig. The response seems more even without the baffle. The sound is a little less prone to breaking up in the low end. The mouth-feel is a little big.

# Mouthpiece Evaluation Sheet

Date 11/2/06

Mouthpiece Brand Jody Jazz Model DV 7 Alto 

Reed Used Vandoren Java 2.5

Ligature Rovner

Horn Selmer Mark VI

## Response/Articulation

Low Register 8

Middle Register 8

High Register 9

Altissimo 8

Dark to Bright, 1 to 10 9

Air Flow/Resistance, High to Low 9

Workmanship 9

Ergonomics/Mouth Feel 8

Volume/Projection 8

Best Suited for What Type of Gig Loud, amplified jazz or rock gig

## Comments:

As with the DV tenor, this piece has a high baffle, a deep cut-out in the table, and an open chamber. It is loud and bright, but has enough overtones so that the sound is not brittle. It also responds well at a lower volume, although sub-toning is a little difficult. It would be an excellent piece for any medium to high volume situation.

# Mouthpiece Evaluation Sheet

Date 11/2/06

Mouthpiece Brand Jody Jazz Model DV 7\* Tenor 

Reed Used Vandoren Java 3

Ligature Rovner

Horn Selmer Mark VI

## Response/Articulation

Low Register 8

Middle Register 8

High Register 9

Altissimo 8

Dark to Bright, 1 to 10 9

Air Flow/Resistance, High to Low 9

Workmanship 9

Ergonomics/Mouth Feel 8

Volume/Projection 9

Best Suited for What Type of Gig Loud, amplified jazz or rock gig

## Comments:

This piece has a high baffle, a deep cut-out in the table, and an open chamber. It is loud and bright, but has enough overtones so that the sound is not brittle. It also responds well at a lower volume, although sub-toning is a little difficult. It would be an excellent piece for any medium to high volume situation.

# Mouthpiece Evaluation Sheet

Date 11/2/06

Mouthpiece Brand Jody Jazz Model DV NY 7\* Tenor 

Reed Used Vandoren Java 3

Ligature Rovner

Horn Selmer Mark VI

## Response/Articulation

Low Register 8

Middle Register 8

High Register 8

Altissimo 6

Dark to Bright, 1 to 10 6

Air Flow/Resistance, High to Low 7

Workmanship 9

Ergonomics/Mouth Feel 8

Volume/Projection 7

Best Suited for What Type of Gig Straight ahead jazz; big band

## Comments:

This piece is the low baffle version of the DV model and is similar to a metal Otto Link. It has a dark, full sound and responds well at all volume levels. The altissimo didn't respond quite as well for me as did the other registers and would require some acclimation. The deep cut-out on the table of the piece seems to quicken the response so that the sound jumps out a little more quickly.

# Mouthpiece Evaluation Sheet

Date 11/9/06

Mouthpiece Brand Jody Jazz Model ESP Alto 7 with Spoiler 

Reed Used Vandoren Java 2.5

Ligature Rovner

Horn Selmer Mark VI

## Response/Articulation

Low Register 8

Middle Register 8

High Register 8

Altissimo 8

Dark to Bright, 1 to 10 8

Air Flow/Resistance, High to Low 9

Workmanship 9

Ergonomics/Mouth Feel 7

Volume/Projection 9

Best Suited for What Type of Gig All types; very flexible piece


## Comments:

This piece has a removable baffle or spoiler that brightens the sound and increases volume and projection. It is flexible enough for most gig situations. The feel in the mouth is slightly bigger than average.



# Mouthpiece Evaluation Sheet

Date 11/9/06

Mouthpiece Brand Jody Jazz Model ESP Alto 7 without Baffle 

Reed Used Vandoren Java 2.5

Ligature Rovner

Horn Selmer Mark VI

## Response/Articulation

Low Register 8

Middle Register 8

High Register 8

Altissimo 8

Dark to Bright, 1 to 10 6

Air Flow/Resistance, High to Low 7

Workmanship 9

Ergonomics/Mouth Feel 6

Volume/Projection 8

Best Suited for What Type of Gig Acoustic jazz, big band

## Comments:

Without the baffle this piece has a darker sound but still retains enough edge to project. It would be great for all except high volume situations. The mouth-feel is a little big. The response is even through all registers and at all volumes.



# Mouthpiece Evaluation Sheet

Date 11/9/06

Mouthpiece Brand Jody Jazz Model ESP Soprano 6\* with Spoiler



Reed Used Vandoren Java 2.5

Ligature Rovner

Horn Selmer Mark VI

## Response/Articulation

Low Register 7

Middle Register 7

High Register 6

Altissimo 6

Dark to Bright, 1 to 10 7

Air Flow/Resistance, High to Low 8

Workmanship 9

Ergonomics/Mouth Feel 7

Volume/Projection 7

Best Suited for What Type of Gig All types; very flexible piece

## Comments:

This piece has a removable baffle or spoiler that brightens the sound and increases volume and projection. It is flexible enough for most gig situations. The feel in the mouth is slightly bigger than average. The chamber is so small that the baffle has to be placed exactly correctly or it will restrict the air flow. Even when placed correctly the baffle seems to restrict air flow in the upper register.



# Mouthpiece Evaluation Sheet

Date 11/9/06

Mouthpiece Brand Jody Jazz Model ESP Soprano 6\* without Spoiler 

Reed Used Vandoren Java 2.5

Ligature Rovner

Horn Selmer Mark VI

## Response/Articulation

Low Register 7

Middle Register 7

High Register 7

Altissimo 7

Dark to Bright, 1 to 10 6

Air Flow/Resistance, High to Low 8

Workmanship 9

Ergonomics/Mouth Feel 7

Volume/Projection 7

Best Suited for What Type of Gig All types; very flexible piece

## Comments:

This piece has a removable baffle or spoiler that brightens the sound and increases volume and projection. It is flexible enough for most gig situations. The feel in the mouth is slightly bigger than average. Without the baffle the sound still projects but is more centered and has a nice core. The upper registers responds much better.

# Mouthpiece Evaluation Sheet

Date 11/9/06

Mouthpiece Brand Jody Jazz Model ESP Tenor 8 with Spoiler 

Reed Used Vandoren Java 3

Ligature Rovner

Horn Selmer Mark VI

## Response/Articulation

Low Register 8

Middle Register 8

High Register 8

Altissimo 8

Dark to Bright, 1 to 10 8

Air Flow/Resistance, High to Low 9

Workmanship 9

Ergonomics/Mouth Feel 6

Volume/Projection 9

Best Suited for What Type of Gig All types; very flexible piece

## Comments:

This piece has a removable baffle or spoiler that brightens the sound and increases volume and projection. It is flexible enough for most gig situations. The feel in the mouth is slightly bigger than average.

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# Mouthpiece Evaluation Sheet

Date 11/9/06

Mouthpiece Brand Jody Jazz Model ESP Tenor 8 without Spoiler 

Reed Used Vandoren Java 3

Ligature Rovner

Horn Selmer Mark VI

## Response/Articulation

Low Register 7

Middle Register 7

High Register 7

Altissimo 7

Dark to Bright, 1 to 10 6

Air Flow/Resistance, High to Low 7

Workmanship 9

Ergonomics/Mouth Feel 6

Volume/Projection 7

Best Suited for What Type of Gig Acoustic jazz, big band

## Comments:

Without the baffle this piece has a nice, dark sound that would be great for all except high volume situations. The mouth-feel is a little big. The slight increase in resistance gives the sound a little more solidity; the resistance feels just about right.

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# Mouthpiece Evaluation Sheet

Date 11/9/06

Mouthpiece Brand Jody Jazz Model HR\* 6M Alto 

Reed Used Vandoren Java 2.5

Ligature Rovner

Horn Selmer Mark VI

## Response/Articulation

Low Register 8

Middle Register 8

High Register 9

Altissimo 8

Dark to Bright, 1 to 10 7

Air Flow/Resistance, High to Low 6

Workmanship 9

Ergonomics/Mouth Feel 6

Volume/Projection 7

Best Suited for What Type of Gig Jazz, big band

## Comments:

This hard rubber piece, like the HR Tenor, does a lot of things right. The sound is warm with some projection; the resistance is just right; the response is very good; mouth-feel is good. The articulation is not as fast as some pieces but better for jazz.

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# Mouthpiece Evaluation Sheet

Date 11/9/06

Mouthpiece Brand Jody Jazz Model HR\* 6\* Soprano 

Reed Used Vandoren Java 2.5

Ligature Rovner

Horn Selmer Mark VI

## Response/Articulation

Low Register 8

Middle Register 8

High Register 8

Altissimo 6

Dark to Bright, 1 to 10 5

Air Flow/Resistance, High to Low 6

Workmanship 9

Ergonomics/Mouth Feel 9

Volume/Projection 7

Best Suited for What Type of Gig Jazz, big band section

## Comments:

This hard rubber piece, like it's alto and tenor counterparts, is an excellent piece. The quality of the rubber in all of these pieces is excellent. Mouth-feel is very good; intonation is excellent; response at all volume levels is very good.



# Mouthpiece Evaluation Sheet

Date 11/9/06

Mouthpiece Brand Jody Jazz Model HR\*8 Tenor 

Reed Used Vandoren Java 3

Ligature Rovner

Horn Selmer Mark VI

## Response/Articulation

Low Register 8

Middle Register 8

High Register 9

Altissimo 8

Dark to Bright, 1 to 10 7

Air Flow/Resistance, High to Low 7

Workmanship 9

Ergonomics/Mouth Feel 6

Volume/Projection 7

Best Suited for What Type of Gig Jazz, big band

## Comments:

This hard rubber piece does almost everything right. The sound is warm with some projection; the resistance is just right; the response is very good. It feels a little thin in the mouth.

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