



// Instrument News & Reviews

David Gallant checks out the latest musical instrument and technology launches

Jody Jazz Super Jet Sax Mouthpiece

The new Super Jet alto from Jody Jazz brings an altogether new dimension to their range of high quality mouthpieces. Small-chambered, its unique inner shape with a small step baffle allows the player to be able to punch out enough power to cut through an electric band, while at the same time having the control to be able to deliver soft and sweet melody lines.

Made from silver-plated virgin bell brass, the Super Jet, like all Jody Jazz mouthpieces, is hand-finished with smooth clean lines and in many ways looks more like a piece of highly-prized jewellery than a saxophone mouthpiece!

Shipped with a standard Rico 'H' ligature, Jody Jazz's distinctive cap and a Deluxe mouthpiece pouch, we fitted our sample stacked with a Vandoren 3 reed to the house Selmer and immediately noticed how open and free blowing the Super Jet is. That said, it does need a lot of air support. With its shorter facing curve, the altissimo is easily accessible, bright and powerful. And being as free blowing as it is, the Super Jet allows the player to dig deep into the lower register with complete confidence. Needless to say, the intonation is spot on and tonally there's plenty of colour. But what stands out with the Super Jet, is that you can use it to either drive your sound or alternatively bring it to a whisper. We tested the mouthpiece with three different ligatures and found that it delivered a very different response with each of the three.



A Ring ligature suggested soul/funk, while a standard 'H' seemed the perfect match for a big band, with a leather ligature definitely leaning towards jazz lounge. Could the Super Jet be the ultimate 'all rounder'?

www.jodyjazz.com

The Loar LH204 Brownstone Guitar

'Got blues if you want it', could be the calling card for this little beauty that's a dead ringer for those small-bodied flat-top instruments that came out of the early 1900s. Designed in America and manufactured in China, the Brownstone incorporates many of the design features that gave those early instruments such a distinctive tone and timbre.

With a mahogany body (we think it might be sapele) and a stained solid sitka spruce top, the Brownstone has a full and bulbous LO

shape 14.75" rear bout. The rims are a standard 4.25" and are framed by a heavy cream binding that is also repeated around the soundhole – a favoured design feature for many of the mass produced steel-strung guitars of the early 20th century. The same cream binding encases the padauk fretboard, which carries 19 medium frets (14 to the body) and is supported by a shallow 'C' mahogany neck that is scarf jointed

into the headstock just beyond the 43mm bone nut. The black composite front plate of the headstock carries 'The Loar' script, a respectful nod in the direction of Gibson who carried 'The Gibson' in much the same form on some of their early instruments. Three-in-one Tonepro tuners have for some reason come with 'Kluson Deluxe' stamped on the casings. Whatever the origin, we personally would have preferred to see 'open backs' to keep in line with the traditional cream buttons. At the bottom end, the bridge is a straight padauk with an angled bone saddle and black plastic pins.

Laced with a set of D'Addario phosphor bronze, the Brownstone is an easy player with its not so traditional shallow 'C' neck. Well balanced across the full range, there's plenty of sustain, particularly in the treble where it delivers a bright, slightly raspy response. The middle is meaty and there is life in the bass, but to our ears the lower range sounds somewhat compressed and a tad boxy.

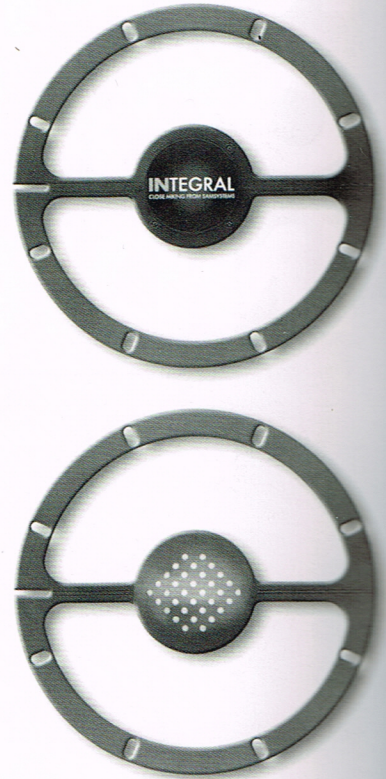
We have no doubt that the blues dudes will love the vibe of the Brownstone. But at just a whisker under £400, uncased, the competition out there is hot.

www.recording-king.co.uk

SamSystems Integral

Miking up amplifiers on stage to go through the mixing desk to the Public Address system has always been a major

logistical exercise, with switchovers and different bands requiring different setups. Then there's the space effect – stands and boom arms appearing from every conceivable corner, not to mention the need for an army of stage crew. And that's all before you find the 'sweet spot' with each individual amp face!



Now all that tiresome and frustrating procedure could be a thing of the past, as a couple of clever engineers at SamSystems have come up with an ingenious – if not simple – answer to losing all that stage furniture. The Integral is a baffled, guitar specific mic encased and suspended within a composite hoop between the grill and speaker cone of an amplifier. Its angle and position have been carefully selected by way of various tests with different makes of speaker to pick up on the optimum overall 'sweet spot'. With a maximum depth of 11/4" and an XLR connection, it's simple to install and should fit easily behind the grill of most guitar combos and cabs.

The mic has been calibrated to be quite bright in the mids and high mids when the mixing desk is set flat. A useful setting, as this allows the treble to be rolled off to taste. And of course there is still the option of mixing the Integral with an outside mic for extra colour if required.

At the time of going to press, the Integral is only available for 10" and 12" speakers. We're left thinking... how come nobody has ever thought of this before!

www.samsystems-uk.com

