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by

Joel Ferst

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**A Literature Review of Prominent Saxophone Altissimo Pedagogy  
Publications**

**APPROVED BY  
SUPERVISING COMMITTEE:**

Stephen Page, Supervisor

Jonathan Gunn

Andrew Parker

**A Literature Review of Prominent Saxophone Altissimo Pedagogy**

**Publications**

**by**

**Joel Ferst**

**Report**

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## **Abstract**

### **A Literature Review of Prominent Saxophone Altissimo Pedagogy**

#### **Publications**

Joel Ferst, M.Music  
The University of Texas at Austin, 2023

Supervisor: Stephen Page

Since its invention in the 1840s by Belgian instrument maker Adolphe Sax, the saxophone has grown rapidly in both repertoire and pedagogy. Sax applied for, and received, a 15-year patent for the instrument on June 28, 1846, which covered 14 different versions of the original design ranging from soprano to contrabass. The instruments were split into two series: a group pitched in F and C, speculated to be for orchestral use, and a group pitched in Bb and Eb, speculated for use in French military bands, which became the standard version. The original, non-transposed keyed range of the saxophone was in treble clef and went from B below the staff to the first Eb above the staff. The non-transposed keyed range of the modern saxophone spans two and a half octaves, from low Bb below the staff in treble clef to high F# above the staff in treble clef. It is clear from writings and accounts by Hector Berlioz, a close personal friend of Adolphe Sax, that a four-octave range was always envisioned.<sup>1</sup> Through the manipulation of the oral cavity, which in America is most commonly referred to as voicing, saxophonists can isolate

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<sup>1</sup> Hemke, Frederick L. *The Early History of the Saxophone*. DMA Diss., University of Wisconsin, Original publication date: 1975. Photocopy publication date: 1986 "Vita."

the harmonics in the natural overtone series to extend past the keyed range to achieve a range of up to four octaves.

This document will serve as a literature review of prominent pedagogical literature about the extended range of the saxophone, as well as include sections discussing the process behind producing the extended range above the keyed range of the saxophone. This document will also address different methodologies and approaches.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

The saxophone was invented in the 1840s and patented in 1846 by Belgium instrument maker Adolphe Sax. The saxophone is a single-reed instrument and a member of the woodwind family. Sax studied both flute and clarinet at the Brussels Conservatory and was the son of a musical instrument maker Charles-Joseph Sax. While at the conservatory, Adolphe Sax felt there was a missing instrumental range, which would serve as a bridge between the wind and brass families, to which we can see Adolphe Sax start to think about how to achieve this through his work with perfecting other woodwind instruments.

Sax experimented with the bass clarinet, taking its 1838 bassoon-like appearance, and making it straight, as well as changing where the tone-holes were placed, and creating a second register hole, which are all changes found today on the modern bass clarinet.

Sax also experimented with the ophicleide, which are a family of conical-bore keyed brass instruments that were invented in France. Sax built a soprano ophicleide and there are claims that the instrument is the direct ancestor of the saxophone, with Sax having been rumored to put a woodwind mouthpiece on the ophicleide. Superficially, the instruments are similar to each other due to their wide bore and large tone-holes.

The first designs for the saxophone were presented in the 1840s, with Sax moving to Paris in 1842. Through his experimentation with the bass clarinet and ophicleide, Adolphe Sax was able to develop the skills and technology to develop the saxophone. Adolphe Sax set out to create an instrument with the projection of a brass instrument, but the agility of a woodwind. Unlike the clarinet, he wanted an instrument that would overblow a twelfth at the octave, and use the same fingerings for both octaves. The original key-work for the instrument is based on the left hand using the Triebert System 3 oboe and the right hand using the Boehm clarinet. On June

28, 1846, Sax applied for, and received, a 15-year patent for the instrument which covered 14 different versions of the original design ranging from soprano to contrabass. The original, non-transposed keyed range of the saxophone was in treble clef and went from B below the staff to the first Eb above the staff. The non-transposed keyed range of the modern saxophone spans two and a half octaves, from low Bb below the staff in treble clef to high F# above the staff in treble clef. It is clear from writings and accounts by Hector Berlioz, a close personal friend of Adolphe Sax, that a four-octave range was always envisioned. <sup>2</sup>

The saxophone is a conical instrument, which means its most narrow point is at the mouthpiece and it has an even expanding taper to its largest point at the bell. The modern saxophone has twenty to twenty-three keys and around twenty-five tone-hole openings, with the variations accounting for the low-A mechanism commonly found on baritone saxophones, and the high F# and high G keys found on other voices.

Within the parameters of this paper there will be a discussion on the technique of voicing, which refers to the shaping of the air column within the oral cavity and how that affects the airstream and sound generation.

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<sup>2</sup> Hemke, Frederick L. *The Early History of the Saxophone*. DMA Diss., University of Wisconsin, Original publication date: 1975. Photocopy publication date: 1986 "Vita."



## Chapter 2: Definition of Key and Technical Terms

The technique of voicing can be introduced to a saxophonist who has some experience already, perhaps six to twelve months of study.

When first learning about voicing, the saxophonist needs to view the process of creating sound as beginning with the lungs pushing the air out, then traveling through the oral cavity, which then vibrates the reed and travels through the saxophone. While the conical taper of the saxophone itself is even, the applied fingering mechanism is imperfect, resulting in a compromise between acoustical placement and size of the tone holes, and their resulting pitches and intonation, along with resonance. To counteract these imperfect placements, the player typically uses voicing to adjust, shaping the air column ahead of the mouthpiece to counteract the natural acoustic tendencies of the instrument itself.

Voicing occurs within the oral cavity and generally refers to the raising and lowering of the tongue, and in particular, the median lingual sulcus (middle) of the tongue, which allows for the manipulation of tone and intonation, which helps achieve homogeneity across the range of the instrument, counteracting the imperfect tone-hole placement. A good analogy to voicing is thinking of it like rolling a thumb over a garden hose. The thumb manipulates the water pressure in the same way the tongue manipulates the airstream in the oral cavity. To set up a good oral cavity, the saxophonist should raise the tongue to where the filiform (side of the tongue) is lightly touching the inside of the first molar behind the canine, allowing for the mentioned median lingual sulcus to move freely. A good syllable for having a student set up the oral cavity is “Ni.” One can think of voicing on an X and Y plane, in which the Y plane is the raising and lowering of the tongue and the X plane is the tongue touching the molars. A good exercise to

practice the manipulation of the air is to have the student hiss, and then have the student raise and lower the pitch of the hiss, which is congruent to the fundamental movement for voicing.

After the student has shown the ability to manipulate the aforementioned hiss, it can be transferred to playing on the mouthpiece alone. Students should work to create the fundamental pitch on their mouthpiece alone, matching with either a tuner or piano. The fundamental pitches for each of the four primary saxophones are listed below:

Soprano - concert C

Alto - concert A

Tenor - concert G

Baritone -concert D

Once a student feels comfortable sustaining the fundamental pitch, they can be introduced to an exercise called “mouthpiece pitch bends.” The exercise involves bending the fundamental mouthpiece pitch up and down by voicing, always working to return to the fundamental pitch after. The process is similar to when they were producing the hiss, raising and lowering the median lingual sulcus on the Y (vertical) plane. The ideal range a saxophonist wants to achieve on the mouthpiece alone is dependent on the person's physical limitation, however a minor third above the fundamental pitch and a perfect fifth below is considered standard. There are outliers who want to achieve a full octave, which is very doable, but not necessary. Once comfortable, students can also play familiar tunes on the mouthpiece, such as “Happy Birthday” or “Mary Had a Little Lamb,” to achieve fluidity.

Once a student has demonstrated some success with mouthpiece pitch bends, they can then add the neck to the mouthpiece. The next exercise will be referred to as neck overtones, which will have the student play the fundamental note on the neck, and by utilizing voicing, they

will isolate harmonics that exist within the fundamental pitch. These excises are the most useful on alto and tenor saxophone, but can be performed on all saxophones. The fundamental and neck overtone series are listed below.

#### Alto

- Ab: The fundamental/first partial.
- Bb: 1st harmonic/2nd partial, voicing similar to altissimo G.
- Gb/G: 3rd partial, which relates to the upper/extreme altissimo.

#### Tenor

- E: The fundamental/first partial.
- F#: 1st harmonic/2nd partial, voicing similar to altissimo G.
- D: 3rd partial, which relates to the upper/extreme altissimo.

To facilitate switching between partials, students should start with an air articulation, using a syllable such as “ha,” with a long-term goal of being able to slur between them. The mechanism for achieving the partials is the same as when you bend the pitch up in the mouthpiece exercises. When doing the exercise on alto, the neck fundamental matches with the A on the mouthpiece, the second partial matches with B on the mouthpiece, and the third partial matches with mouthpiece pitch C.

After demonstrating some success with producing neck overtones, the student should assemble the full saxophone, at which point we can incorporate an additional exercise called the “Front F Trick.”<sup>3</sup> This exercise utilizes the same type of voicing flexibility found within the

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<sup>3</sup> Sinta, Donald, and Denise C. Dabney. *Voicing: An Approach to the Saxophone's Third Register*. Sintafest Music, 1992.

mouthpiece pitch bend exercises, described earlier. Have the student start on front high F and go down chromatically playing the note a half-step below, front high E. Next, the student should go back to front F, and while maintaining the fingering for that note, bend down to the high E using only the same mechanism from when they were doing mouthpiece bends. During this exercise, the student should focus on having the bend be slow and smooth, using their air to support the sound through the entirety of the bend. Have them repeat this process, using the front high F as the fundamental you return to. Have the student move chromatically down the saxophone until they reach a point where they cannot bend down anymore, resulting in a low grunting sound. Daily incorporation of this exercise will allow the student to bend lower from F and will increase flexibility in the upper register, allowing for better tone and intonation.

After showing success in performing the F trick, students should work on the overtone series on the lower range of the saxophone. Students should start on the low Bb fingering and in the same process used in the upward pitch bends in mouthpiece exercise and in neck overtones shift that note to the next fundamental. The overtone exercises are best practiced on low Bb, B, C, and Db. Overtones are extremely important in giving a young saxophonist a strong foundation. They help a student achieve a full and warm sound very early on, and help them become more aware of what is happening in their oral cavity when they play.

## Chapter 3: Literature Review

### *Beginning Studies in the Altissimo Register for Saxophone*

Rosemary Lang

Rosemary Lang's *Beginning Studies in the Altissimo Register for Saxophone* is a great pedagogical resource for saxophonists looking to discover and polish their altissimo. Rosemary Lang was born in Indianapolis, Indiana, and is known for her pedagogical books on both clarinet and saxophone playing. Lang holds both a bachelor's and master's degree in clarinet from the Jordan Conservatory of Music at Butler University, where she was later appointed the professor of clarinet, saxophone, and woodwind ensembles. This book is edited and revised by Dr. Gail Levinsky, Professor of Saxophone at Susquehanna University, who studied with Lang at Butler University.

Lang's book opens with a foreword defining what the altissimo range is, talking about the possible frustrations and the need to go slowly to avoid the false-positives of biting and other negative issues with learning altissimo without strong fundamentals. Lang's next section establishes that not all altissimo fingerings are standard due to there being many different models of the saxophone. The book next gives a list of overtones starting from low Bb to C, after which Lang describes voicing as "adjusting the position and arch of the tongue and the subtle control of the direction of the air column,"<sup>4</sup> and reiterates it will take a lot of experimentation to produce the overtones. The preliminary studies of the book focus on taking the saxophonist through the overtone series, working on the movement and shifting of voicing that is necessary to play altissimo.

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<sup>4</sup> Lang, Rosemary. *Beginning Studies in the Altissimo Register for Saxophone*. Ensemble Publications, 1971.

The following portion of the preliminary studies in Lang's book incorporates the front E and F fingerings into scalar passages, next adding in front F#/Gb once the first two notes are comfortable. Lang provides multiple different fingerings for each altissimo note as well as some tenor fingerings. Lang's primary way of teaching is by incorporating altissimo into common folk tunes that the student would most likely already know, which is helpful due to students already being familiar with the intervals. Lang uses these folk tunes all the way from front F# to altissimo F. The final portion of the book goes through major, minor, and chromatic scales.

*Saxophone Altissimo: High Note Development for the Contemporary Player*

Dr. Robert Luckey

Dr. Robert A. Luckey's *Saxophone Altissimo: High Note Development for the Contemporary Player* is a phenomenal resource for saxophonists that Luckey himself calls "a comprehensive approach for classical and jazz saxophonists for soprano, alto, tenor, and baritone saxophone."<sup>5</sup> The book features over 300 fingerings, excerpts from selected standard repertoire, overtone exercises, and jazz etudes with altissimo.

Dr. Robert A. Luckey is a saxophonist from Dunbar, Pennsylvania, who started learning saxophone from his father, who played with dance bands. He completed his bachelor's degree at the Indiana University of Pennsylvania, a master's degree at Duquesne University, and a PhD in ethnomusicology with an emphasis in Afro-American music and Jazz Studies from the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Luckey is a versatile artist, who has performed as both a classical

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<sup>5</sup> Luckey, Robert A. *Saxophone Altissimo: High Note Development for the Contemporary Player*. Olympia Music, 1998.

and jazz saxophonist. He has taught in numerous places, but most notably at the University of Southwestern Louisiana, where he was the Professor of Saxophone and Director of Jazz Studies.

The book opens with a preface that discusses Luckey's experience with his study of Sigurd Rascher's *Top-Tones* and Steve Nash's *Studies in High Harmonics*. Luckey discusses that his altissimo fingering suggestions are most applicable to modern saxophones, as compared to the vintage fingerings associated with Rascher's book. Robert Luckey also includes a list of additional recommended resources.

The "Background" section contains the history of altissimo, detailing Sigurd Rascher and Ted Nash's work towards standardizing it in repertoire and pedagogy, as well as what mechanisms are involved in producing and practicing altissimo. Luckey then continues, detailing the saxophone embouchure and how it is distinguished from the clarinet. This is an especially important notion for those individuals who may play both instruments, as producing this register on saxophone differs from that of the clarinet, due to their opposing acoustical nature, the clarinet being cylindrical, while the saxophone is conical. Within the other physical factors related to the production of the saxophone altissimo, Luckey discusses the overtones series, describing it in a way students of any age could understand. Luckey follows that by describing the process of how to create overtones in one's playing, while also presenting effective problem-solving methods for students to negate possible false-positives in their practice, such as biting. He provides additional examples and exercises, which are sequenced so that they will build the specific skills needed for success. Luckey conveys the importance to practice overblowing the palm keys, the same way you would play overtones on low Bb, explaining that the overblown palm keys are indeed altissimo notes, sounding a Major 6th above the fundamental, serving as an excellent gateway to the register.

Luckey's extensive list of altissimo fingerings is what makes this a great resource for saxophonists. Luckey gives the reader multiple fingerings for altissimo notes for the four primary saxophone voices. Luckey starts with soprano E above the staff and goes through all four saxophones to altissimo F. Luckey introduces "Extended Range Exercises," which help students connect the altissimo register to the standard keyed range of the instrument and writes these exercises using pictures with the fingerings rather than in standard written western notation. Luckey recommends having the student begin with a forte dynamic, with articulation, and eventually shift to piano and slurred. Luckey subsequently focuses on scales and arpeggios to assist in achieving fluidity in addition to the exercises. An additional resource in the book is the inclusion of American Folk Songs to be performed in the altissimo register, serving to strengthen the connection between the ear and the fingers within this new range of the instrument.

Luckey takes excerpts from selected classical alto saxophone solos and gives multiple examples of sequential altissimo fingerings to help the reader achieve fluidity and success in these passages. Luckey expertly explains why he chooses certain fingering groups for each passage, which can help a student make their own choice when they encounter altissimo in repertoire not in this book. He creates equivalent exercises for jazz musicians, by taking eight different jazz etudes, all that have backing tracks in the Abersold book. Each etude is composed as a jazz solo that incorporates altissimo into it in a way that sounds musically coherent.



## *Top-Tones for the Saxophone*

Sigurd Rascher

Sigurd Rascher's *Top-Tones for the Saxophone*, first published in 1941, is one of the most prominent and fundamental books in saxophone voicing and pedagogy. Rascher (1907-2001) was a German-born saxophonist who was essential in shaping the current landscape of classical saxophone. Rascher studied at the Stuttgart Musikhochschule until 1930, first as a clarinetist, but later changed to saxophone. He became the teacher of saxophone at the Royal Danish Conservatory in Copenhagen. In 1939 he made his way to the United States, where he later performed with the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the New York Philharmonic. Rascher has had over 208 works dedicated to him and is responsible for many of the most prominent works for saxophone. He was a founder of the Rascher Saxophone Quartet, one of the most notable Saxophone Quartets in history that is still performing today.

Throughout *Top Tones*, Rascher is thorough and precise with the inclusion, sequencing, and explanation of each exercise, both in its purpose and execution.

The initial exercise Rascher presents is long tones, emphasizing uniformity in sound, and has the student raise and lower notes of the performer's choice chromatically, asking each note to have the same timbre color as the last. The other exercises Rascher has the student perform are overtones exercises, and interval leaps of fourths, fifths, and octaves.

Throughout the publication Rascher uses the phrase "tone imagination," which refers to the process of hearing the sound you want to create before you play, and through the process of voicing, creating that sound on the saxophone. In relation to tone imagination Rascher states the importance to hear and sing intervals, while playing, relating the process of voicing to the process of shifting pitches while singing, even though the vocal cords are not used in voicing.

The ability to hear and sing the notes is advantageous in one's ability to shift their voicing to more easily facilitate altissimo, and match timbre between notes.

Throughout the book Rascher is very detailed on his expectations of the performer, asking for perfect intonation, balanced dynamics, smooth legato, uniform tone quality, and continuous vibrato. Rascher relates the unfamiliar topics to more common ones, relating overtones to brass lip slurs, as well as relating the embouchure and voicing to vocal cords.

### *Saxophone High Tones*

Dr. Eugene Rousseau

Dr. Eugene Rousseau's *Saxophone High Tones, A Systematic Approach to the Extension of the Range of All the Saxophones: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Baritone* has long been a staple in the pedagogical world of the saxophone. Dr. Rousseau is an American classical saxophonist from Blue Island, Illinois, who completed studies as a Fulbright scholar at the Paris Conservatory with Marcel Mule, along with completing a doctoral degree from the University of Iowa with Himie Voxman. He also helped found the World Saxophone Congress and is a consultant for the Yamaha Corporation. He taught at both Indiana University and the University of Minnesota producing many prominent students that are still carrying on his pedagogical philosophies and ideals.

In the opening of the book, Dr. Rousseau covers the fundamentals of saxophone playing, providing the reader with a fingering chart, explanation on how to form an embouchure, and mouthpiece pitch exercises. Dr. Rousseau explains the harmonic series, discussing how one bypasses the fundamental note through "changing the embouchure and the air pressure, one must

make the embouchure more firm than normal, with more reed in the mouth.”<sup>6</sup> He describes the process of taking more mouthpiece as moving the jaw forward, instead of changing the embouchure. He refers to the overtone exercise discussed earlier as “closed tube exercises.”

A unique section of this book involves Dr. Rousseau’s discussion on acoustics and venting. Dr. Rousseau explains how the air vibrates throughout the saxophone, using the term “antinode” to describe where the air vibrates the most, and as a result the tone holes are placed as close to this place as possible. Though, as previously mentioned, the tone-hole placement on the saxophone is imperfect due to the mechanism and fingering system. Dr. Rousseau presents the reader with an exercise called “overblowing 6ths,” which builds off of the previous overtone exercise. He follows that up with his “modes of overtones” exercise, which goes over many different fingerings for upper notes of all four voices of the saxophone which has the student bridge the registers, assisting in blending the normal range of the saxophone to the extended range. The exercise “Beyond the Sixths” allows the saxophonist to overblow an additional partial, a 10th above the fundamental note written, following the same procedure. There are additional exercises that focus on high tones, and a scale work section to help students achieve fluidity in the altissimo register. The book concludes with a “Fingering Chart for High Tones,” which includes altissimo fingerings for all four saxophones.

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<sup>6</sup> Rousseau, Eugene. *Saxophone High Tones*. Etoile Music, 1978.

*Voicing - An Approach to the Saxophone's Third Register*

Donald Sinta

Donald Sinta's *Voicing - An Approach to the Saxophone's Third Register* is one of the most prominent books in saxophone pedagogy. Donald Sinta is widely recognized as one of his generation's most gifted soloists and pedagogues. He has premiered dozens of works for the saxophone, many of them becoming staples of the repertoire, such as William Albright's "Sonata," William Bolcom's "Concert Suite," and Karel Husa's "Concerto." He is professor emeritus of saxophone at the University of Michigan, as well as a former professor at the Hartt School of Music, and Ithaca College.

In the opening of this publication, Professor Sinta discusses altissimo, voicing, and overtones, explaining their importance in achieving mastery of the saxophone. Sinta includes a variety of charts and diagrams to give context for the exercises in subsequent chapters. In "Preliminary Exercises," the author covers how to shape the oral cavity and use the tongue as an "octave key." Professor Sinta precisely explains everything he wants the performer to do, approaching the ideas as though the performer were again a beginning saxophonist, thereby ensuring the ideas are clear and well received. Sinta uses octave G as an example for playing with a higher tongue, reminding the reader of how that note wants to either sound as the lower octave or produce both notes, and calls the tongue an octave key to finding stability on octave G. In the next exercise in the sequence of how to properly manipulate the tongue Sinta uses mouthpiece pitch bends. This is followed by work away from the saxophone, having the student speak different vowel sounds, whistle, and hum to further manipulate the oral cavity. Professor Sinta then introduces the "F Trick," which was addressed earlier, in the Definition of Key and

Technical Terms section. Sinta advises the student to be patient and use their newfound skills in oral cavity manipulation to achieve the exercise.

Building off of the previous exercises, Sinta introduces the reader to “The First Mode.” The introductory exercise has the performer play notes without the octave key and through the manipulation of the oral cavity trigger the upper octave (first mode) of that note, having the reader eventually play full chromatic and scalar patterns without the octave key. Professor Sinta then has the student match intonation and timbre of notes in the overtone series by having them play a middle Bb and then finger low Bb while keeping the same pitch as middle Bb. Sinta then adds in “The Second Mode,” which is centered around unlocking the second partial in the overtone series, using similar exercises. “The Next Step” focuses on experimenting and creating increased awareness of the player’s oral cavity, adding in the third and fourth mode, while reinforcing all of the previous skills and concepts.

As a means of addressing the topic from a new vantage point, Professor Sinta introduces “reverse” voicing, having the student sustain a low note, then add the octave key, and keep the low register note sounding, not letting it jump up the octave. Sinta describes this as “requiring exaggerated openness.”<sup>7</sup> Professor Sinta reinforces the possible frustrations of these ranges and that they will take time to master. There is then a review section which serves to reinforce all of the above skills.

“Fun with Voicing!” introduces the importance of singing before you play. Sinta states that “this is of the utmost importance in the study of voicing as a means to the altissimo register.

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<sup>7</sup> Sinta, Donald, and Denise C. Dabney. *Voicing: An Approach to the Saxophone's Third Register*. Sintafest Music, 1992.

One must attempt to aurally imagine each note in order to transmit the appropriate physiological message to the mind and vocal tract.”<sup>8</sup> Sinta incorporates familiar songs that can be played using the overtone series, along with voiced scales, playing the middle octave of a scale without the octave key.

“Altissimo Technique - Part 1” emphasizes bridging the normal keyed range of the saxophone to the altissimo range. Sinta emphasizes front F and E, as well as palm keys in general, as necessary in bridging the two ranges, giving the student scalar exercises as well as thirds, fourths, and arpeggios. “Altissimo Technique - Part 2” describes refining your altissimo specific fingerings. Sinta discusses the flexible nature of altissimo, mentioning that a multitude of different fingerings will work for altissimo notes. He states that it is important to search for fingerings that work to serve both the technique and the music. This chapter features many different fingerings starting at high F# up to altissimo F. The book ends with a technical studies section that works on building altissimo naturally into ones playing using many different scales and modes.

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<sup>8</sup> Sinta, Donald, and Denise C. Dabney. *Voicing: An Approach to the Saxophone's Third Register*. Sintafest Music, 1992.

## Chapter 4: Literature Analysis

After reviewing and analyzing each publication, it is clear that each one has its own attributes and uses for the student.

Starting with Rosemary Lang's *Beginning Studies in the Altissimo Register for Saxophone*, the opening pedagogical sections are informative and give students a strong foundation. In the realm of practical allocation for a student, the book jumps right into more advanced exercises, using the front fingerings and altissimo, before building a strong pedagogical foundation, which may cause students to become frustrated. However, the exercises involving simple songs make great supplemental exercises for students who already have knowledge of how voicing and altissimo works, and thus makes this book a great resource for a student who can already play some overtones and altissimo, but is struggling to blend the written range of the instrument to the altissimo range.

In his book, Robert Luckey has compiled one of the most complex and vast libraries of altissimo fingerings, which is extremely valuable to students, giving them a technical option for every musical situation. He provides extensive fingering charts for all four instrumental voices, an attribute unique to his publication, as most only give you fingerings for the alto saxophone. Luckey's background as a musicologist is very evident in his presentation of information and ideas. The later chapters in which Luckey discusses altissimo in repertoire are valuable to students when they need to make choices about altissimo fingerings in specific situations. Luckey's publication is the only one to include such examples from repertoire with applicable solutions. The section where Luckey incorporates jazz and altissimo is unique and is one of the only books that has adaptive altissimo jazz etudes. Overall, this book is a valuable resource to a

growing saxophonist who would have some pre-existing knowledge of altissimo and wanted to expand the fingerings they could use.

During his playing years, Rascher championed the altissimo register and that knowledge is extremely prevalent in his *Top-Tones for the Saxophone*. While it is evident to a person with advanced knowledge of the saxophone how Rascher wants someone to perform his exercises, it might be confusing to one without such knowledge. Rascher can be overly advanced in his wording, using terms such as “tone imagination” to convey what he wants from the reader, leading students to misunderstand his intentions with certain exercises. While the actual sequencing of the exercises support and assist the student in understanding voicing and altissimo, the actual explanation in the book makes it not an ideal fit for the beginning student. Moreover, the altissimo fingerings used are based off of the Buescher saxophones that Rascher played, and may not work for modern production instruments.

Donald Sinta’s *Voicing - An Approach to the Saxophone’s Third Register* is one of the most prominent books in saxophone pedagogy. Any student that can play the normal range of the saxophone should be able to take this book and successfully incorporate the ideas included within. Professor Sinta does an expert job of describing each exercise and explaining why the student should be performing it, and the benefits to be gained. However, the book has no diagrams or visuals, and all of the feedback comes from the aural skills of the performer, leading it to be more accessible to an advanced student.

Dr. Rousseau’s *Saxophone High Tones, A Systematic Approach to the Extension of the Range of All the Saxophones: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Baritone* could be considered the ideal book to give to a student who has no knowledge of altissimo and voicing. Dr. Rousseau takes the student through each exercise explaining them precisely, starting with the most fundamental



parts of saxophone playing. Dr. Rousseau supports the student, opening up with a visual of the fingering system for the saxophone. He then has a detailed analysis of how to form a correct embouchure and oral cavity. The rest of the book is then sequenced in a manner that each exercise builds upon the next, minimizing possible frustrations for the student and allowing for optimal growth.

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