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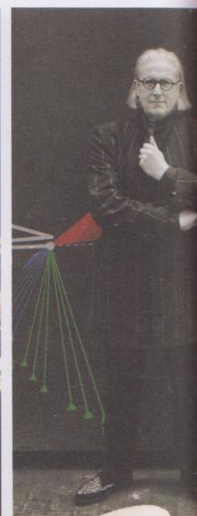
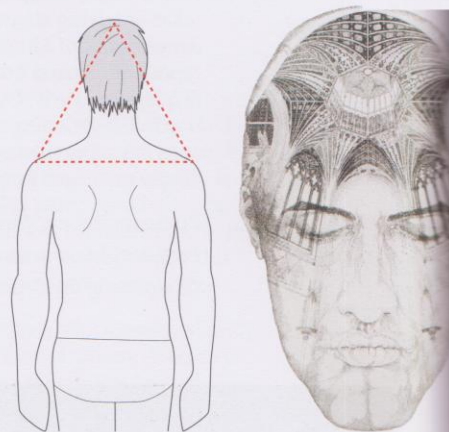
The saxophone and you – new ideas and understanding

- The three elements of saxophone playing
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- The mirror patterns of the saxophone, the reed and your body
- Mirror mechanics
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- Playing the Reed Fan in register 1
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INTRODUCTION

This book reflects the teaching concepts that I have developed over many years of thought, revision and testing with students and professionals. The approach is universal and is for jazz, classical, rock and pop players. It is primarily for soprano and alto saxophones, but the basic principles underpinning the method apply to all saxophones.

Careful study of this book will help you to achieve:

- a relaxed approach
- easy and immediate response over all registers
- correct intonation over all registers
- an even and resonant sound with a variety of tone-colours
- clear and even articulation, from slow to extremely high speeds
- increased stamina

The ethos

'Don't play the saxophone – let it play you.' Charlie Parker

'Let the saxophone teach you how to play itself' has been the guiding principle of my teaching for many years, so this book uses the natural forces of the saxophone as a basis for you to get the most playing power from the least effort. This is the same idea that professional golfers use to develop their swing so it moves the ball further, faster and more accurately than any amateur's effort, no matter how much muscle is applied.

- You will become more efficient.
- You will play the instrument – you won't 'fight' it.
- You will understand the saxophone and eliminate guesswork in playing.
- The saxophone will respond to you and you will be able to realise your performance potential.

The saxophone teaches you by giving clear, quality feedback through the learning process:

- The saxophone's acoustic structure is such that notes will behave in a consistent way every time.
- The saxophone's intonation is perfect.
- The efficient use of your breath.
- Your relaxation level directly affects your playing.

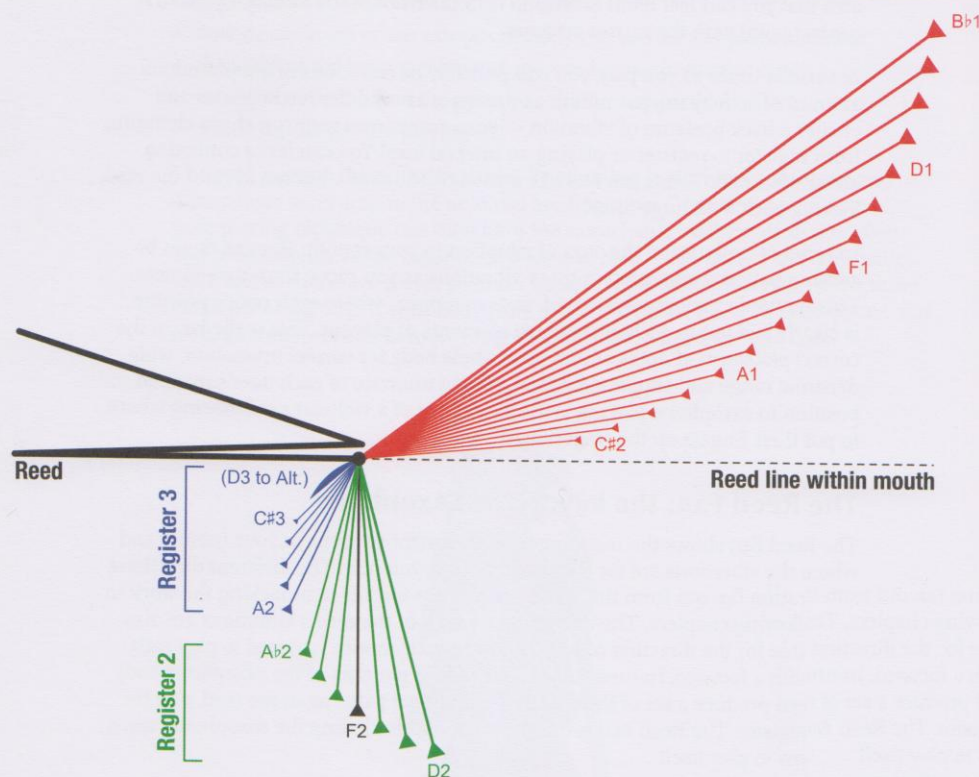
By studying this method, you will learn the saxophone and its techniques. On a technical level, you will learn where the sound comes from. When the sound is not there, you will know the way to fix it. The way to clear your mind.



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The Reed Fan: side view – the length and angle of the reed's vibrations



This diagram is an impression of a side-on view of the length and angles of the reed's vibrations as they appear in your mouth as you play. The patterns of the reed's vibrations are a mirror of the patterns of the saxophone's body. The length of the body of the instrument used to play any note is mirrored in the length of the reed's vibration. The different angles of the vibrations mirrors the gradual changes in the slant of the conical bore of the saxophone. The use of the octave keys changes the

direction of the air inside the reed mirrors this by different vibrations angles appearing each register. Register 1 vibrates the reed tip, while registers 2 and 3 are vibrations from the reed base. Registers 2 and 3 are smaller vibrations than register 1, narrowing the size of the vibrations for higher frequencies.

QUICK INSIGHT

The bore of the saxophone is a technical pattern that mirrors the saxophone itself. The use of art and science



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5 TILT

Register-changing on the saxophone – a clear and effective technique



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THE ENGINE ROOM

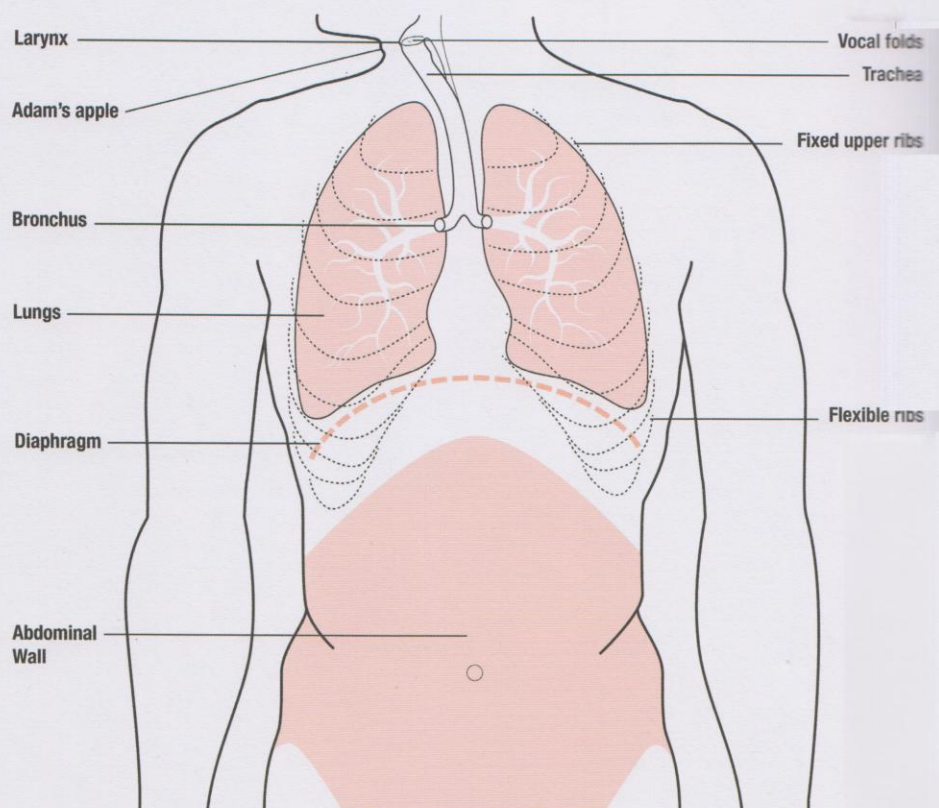
Breath support and powerful sounds – the anatomy of whole-body playing

This chapter is about breath support and how the abdominal wall of muscle moves to support all three registers. The connections between the abdominal wall, the Reed Fan and the Cathedral of Resonance are brought together in an introduction to the over-arching concept of the Power Lines – the prime tool for bringing all aspects of playing together in performance.

This chapter covers:

- The anatomy of the Engine Room
- How the abdominal wall supports breath-flow and sound over the three registers
- The abdominal pressure-points
- The Engine Room in the context of the Power Lines

The anatomy of the Engine Room



As introduced in Chapter 2, page 39, the Engine Room is the source of breath energy for your playing, and includes areas of your whole torso. From the top down, it consists of the larynx (where your vocal folds sit), the trachea (windpipe), the lungs, diaphragm, and the abdominal wall of muscle.