

Mark Tipton
jazz trumpet

Recital in partial fulfillment of the
Doctor of Musical Arts degree, 2024
Student of Jason Palmer and Jerry Bergonzi

Friday, May 5, 2023
8:00 p.m.
Eben Jordan

PROGRAM

Woody Shaw
(1944–1989)
arr. Mark Tipton

Stepping Stone

Joshua C.

Moontrane

In a Capricornian Way

Teresa Shaw
arr. Mark Tipton

Just a Ballad for Woody

Woody Shaw
arr. Mark Tipton

Rosewood

Song of Songs

Ryan Devlin, tenor and soprano saxophone
Michael Gerace, trombone
George Maclaurin, piano
Leo Weisskoff, bass
Caleb Montague, drums

Mark Tipton is the recipient of the Max and Sophie Mydans Scholarship.

*My heart goes out to my wife Heather
for her indefatigable support, love, and solid presence,
without which my journey would be vastly incomplete.*

*Thanks also to my parents, grandparents, and extended family,
as well as my friends,
who have believed in me over the long haul.*

*I would like to dedicate this concert to the memory of Woody Shaw,
whose music it is my profound pleasure to study, perform, and share with others.
Deep gratitude, love, and respect.*

*Last, but by no means least, I wish to thank my current private teachers here at NEC
for their direction, inspiration, and generous spirits:
Jason Palmer and Jerry Bergonzi –
thank you both!*

Stepping Stone

As the title suggests, Woody Shaw intended for the melody of this tune to be a launching-pad for soloists to soar into freewheeling improvisation. In this sense, it serves as a fantastic opener, as can be heard on Shaw's 1979 Columbia album (recorded in 1978), *Stepping Stones: Live at the Village Vanguard*. The angular melody and bright tempo of *Stepping Stone* poses a significant challenge to trumpeters, yet Woody executed these lines with poise and grace.

Joshua C.

Seldom performed, *Joshua C.* is one of my favorite Woody Shaw tunes, capturing the major-versus-minor and bitonal harmonic mysteries that he loved to exploit. My friend Fitz Jenkins, a jazz bassist who jammed with Woody in NYC during the 1960s, introduced me to this tune, which we included in our quintet's tour of Maine a number of years ago. According to Shaw's son, Woody Louis Armstrong Shaw III, his father dedicated this song to his Tai Chi instructor and friend, Joshua C. Whiting. The song was originally titled, *Love: for the One You Can't Have*, and was written for his first wife Maxine during a time when they were separated. *Joshua C.* was included on Woody's second solo album, *Song of Songs*, (recorded in 1972 and released in 1973). My arrangement of this moody mid-tempo tune is based off of the version heard on Woody's 1980 album, *For Sure!* (recorded in 1979), where he was joined by alto saxophonist Gary Bartz and trombonist Curtis Fuller.

Moontrane

Easily Woody's most well-known and most-often performed tune, *Moontrane* sounds deceptively easy, but it requires some serious effort to improvise fluidly over. The reason for this is that the harmonic progression shifts in unique and unpredictable ways – plus, the tempo is usually on the fast side. John McNeil, one of my jazz trumpet teachers, has a fondness for this tune, and he shared his transcription with me a year or so ago. My arrangement is a composite of his transcription and my transcription from Shaw's 1975 album of the same name, (recorded in 1974). Shaw first recorded this tune with organist Larry Young on a 1966 album he shared with Joe Henderson and Elvin Jones called *Unity* (recorded in 1965).

In a Capricornian Way

Woody Herman Shaw II was born on December 24, 1944; therefore he was a Capricorn, as the title suggests. Capricorns are born between December 22nd and January 20th, and they are known as ambitious, focused, and committed to improving whatever they encounter. In Woody Shaw's case, he expanded the possibilities of technical execution and harmonic complexity in the realm of jazz trumpet. This relaxed, nuanced waltz showcases "textbook examples" of Shaw's harmonic vocabulary, (from a compositional standpoint), as well as his quintessentially intervallic approach to melodic development. Woody's first recording of *In A Capricornian Way* was made with tenor saxophonist Booker Ervin for Ervin's 1968 Blue Note album, *Tex Book Tenor*, which oddly wasn't released until

1976. The tune was later included on Woody's 1980 *Stepping Stones* album, which then became the best-known recorded version of this tune.

Just a Ballad for Woody

Despite its somewhat formulaic construct, and its relative obscurity in Shaw's *œuvre*, I chose to include this song on tonight's recital because it was literally the only original ballad ever written for Woody. Although his second wife Teresa is credited as the composer, it seems probable that Woody contributed something to the harmonic progression, without which this tune may seem merely pedestrian. Incidentally, Woody was not known as a "balladeer," preferring tempos ranging from medium through incredibly fast – or "burnin'," to use the jazz vernacular. One cannot easily miss the melodic reference to the opening of *Body and Soul*. This tune was included on Shaw's 1985 duo recording with Freddie Hubbard, *Double Take*, and an excellent 1987 live recording by Woody was captured in Zürich, where he was joined by pianist Fred Henke, bassist Neil Swainson, and drummer Alex Deutsch.

Rosewood

Certainly one of the most pop-flavored tunes ever composed by Woody Shaw, *Rosewood* was also the title of his most popular album, released in 1978 (recorded in 1977), which featured an all-star cast that included Joe Henderson, Steve Turre, Onaje Allan Gumbs, and Victor Lewis, amongst others. The title is a portmanteau of Shaw's parents' first names, "Rose" (Rosalie Shaw) and "Wood" (Woody Shaw, Sr.). Of particular interest is the expansive solo section form, which can be thought of as **a b c d a b c e**, and which runs for 69 measures per chorus. The first time Woody recorded this tune was with vibraphonist Bobby Hutcherson in 1974 for Bobby's *Cirrus* album.

Song of Songs

"Tell me a story from the heart of your soul and what your existence in this universe is all about." - Woody Shaw

Like *Joshua C.*, Woody's composition *Song of Songs* was first released on his second solo album, *Song of Songs*, (recorded 1972 / released 1973). In Shaw's own words, "I wanted *Song of Songs* to have a significant, not melody, but sound. I guess that's inherent in the five-tone scale. It has a major/minor sound at the same time...when I wrote it I was thinking about something I could dedicate to the suffering in Indochina, because I like to relate my music to the times or my environment. And we all have to admit that war has had some influence on us in some way or another, and that was my way of expressing to the people of Indochina my concern." Woody also recorded this expansive piece with Bobby Hutcherson live at the 1973 Montreux Jazz Festival and with Anthony Braxton in 1977 for the album *Iron Men* (released in 1980). Additionally, a remarkable live performance in Tokyo from 1981 has recently resurfaced, featuring Mulgrew Miller, Steve Turre, Stafford James, and Tony Reedus. John Coltrane's influence can be clearly heard in the musical meditation that begins the piece, and it bears mentioning that Woody was known to carry around an armful

of late Coltrane vinyl albums throughout his life, which he drew on for inspiration. (That is something we have in common.) The remainder of the piece maintains an uptempo 6/4 feel until the euphoric coda, which reintroduces the ethos of the opening meditation, albeit in a transformed state.

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