

Mark Tipton  
*jazz trumpet*

Recital in partial fulfillment of the  
Doctor of Musical Arts, 2024  
Student of Billy Hart and Joe Morris

with

Gabriel Nieves, tenor saxophone

Joey Dies, trombone

George Maclaurin, piano

Kai Lance, guitar

Daniel Mayer, bass

Carlo Kind, drums

Aviana Gedler and Pitiki Aliakai, voice

Saturday, April 13, 2024

8:00 p.m.

Pierce Hall

PROGRAM

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**Woody Shaw**  
(1944–1989)  
arr. Mark Tipton

*Tomorrow's Destiny*

**Mark Tipton**

*Paradoxical Dreams*

**Woody Shaw**  
arr. Mark Tipton

*Ginseng People*

**Victor Lewis**  
(b. 1950)  
arr. Lewis

*Seventh Avenue*

**Henry Mancini**  
(1924–1994)  
arr. Mark Tipton

*Moment to Moment*

*Intermission*

**Woody Shaw**  
arr. Mark Tipton

*Beyond All Limits*

**Mark Tipton**

*Vernacular Stretch (Reboot)*

**Woody Shaw**  
arr. Mark Tipton

*OPEC / Dies Irae version*

**Mark Tipton**

*Peace Invocation*

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

Gabriel Nieves, tenor saxophone  
Joey Dies, trombone  
George Maclaurin, piano  
Kai Lance, guitar  
Daniel Mayer, bass  
Carlo Kind, drums  
Aviana Gedler, voice  
Pitiki Aliakai, voice

*First of all, I wish to thank my wife Heather  
for her unwavering support throughout my DMA studies – I literally couldn't have done it  
without you! Gratitude goes out to my parents, grandparents, and my extended family  
and friends, who have believed in me over the long haul.*

*I would like to dedicate this concert to the memory of my late friend Aymeric Dupré la Tour,  
who passed away unexpectedly in June 2022. He was a brilliant pianist, organist,  
and harpsichordist from Lyon, France with whom I spent years at Oberlin,  
and later in Manhattan, when he was at Juilliard and I was at Mannes.  
He inspired and encouraged me to pursue my doctorate,  
and improvising with him was rather like playing with J.S. Bach, Jean-Philippe Rameau,  
Olivier Messiaen, Igor Stravinsky, and Cecil Taylor all rolled into one!  
Without hubris, I believe that he would have been proud of me today.  
I miss you dearly, my old friend!*

*I wish to thank my private teachers at NEC over the past three years:  
Jason Palmer, John McNeil, Jerry Bergonzi, Ken Schaphorst, Billy Hart, and Joe Morris -  
thank you for all you've given me! I would also like to express my gratitude  
to my DMA Thesis Advisor, Mehmet Sanlikol,  
for his unwavering support and sage guidance.*

*Thank you to the incredible musicians whom I am honored to work with tonight!  
They all put in a tremendous amount of work,  
and I am deeply grateful to them for bringing my vision to life.*

*Last, but by no means least, I want to thank all of you, the audience,  
for showing up and supporting me and my colleagues tonight!*

**Personal note:**

This recital is bittersweet for me for two reasons. First of all, it is my third and final DMA recital at NEC. Secondly, as many of you know, my long-standing plan to write my DMA Thesis on the legendary jazz trumpeter/composer Woody Shaw had to be abandoned due to reasons beyond my control. Each of my recitals thus far at NEC have featured between three and six of his compositions, and tonight you will hear four more of them. Throughout the past three years I have had the opportunity to learn Woody's tunes, obsessively study his improvisational and expressive style, and speak with more than a dozen musicians who worked with Woody Shaw, as well as trumpeters who were profoundly influenced by his playing and concepts. The priceless stories each of these individuals told me helped me to understand other facets of Woody's brilliant career, his personal strengths and challenges, and his unique personality. Through this process I have grown as a musician, interviewer, and researcher, and (perhaps ironically) I have also gained the confidence and tools with which to further develop my own style. Onwards and upwards!

**Shaw, arr. Tipton** *Tomorrow's Destiny*

Woody Shaw first recorded this composition on his 1976 album, *Little Red's Fantasy*. "Little Red" was his nickname for his wife at the time, Maxine. *Tomorrow's Destiny* alternates between fast latin and uptempo swing feels, and features a long form of 72 measures per chorus. Woody also recorded this tune with Freddie Hubbard on their 1987 album, *The Eternal Triangle*. Its highly intervallic melody and its non-functional (or "functional-adjacent") harmonies prove a worthy challenge to improvising musicians. My arrangement honors Woody's original version, while adding my own compositional touches.

**Tipton** *Paradoxical Dreams*

As the title alludes to, there is indeed a paradox embedded into the fabric of this composition: the juxtaposition of stylistically-distant materials, including highly-orchestrated sections, aleatoric units, driving hard bop passages, quasi-classical interludes, and an effusive and evocative ending that hints at Mingus. There is also a motive that is borrowed from the tune just heard on this recital, Woody Shaw's *Tomorrow's Destiny*, recontextualized in a contemporary setting in 10/8 time.

**Shaw, arr. Tipton** *Ginseng People*

This is a high-energy "groove" tune that is seldom performed. It appeared on Woody Shaw's 1981 Columbia album, *For Sure!*, featuring Woody with his right-hand man, trombonist Steve Turre. I transcribed and arranged this tune myself, since no score could be located. Woody had performed *Ginseng People* earlier at the Keystone Korner in San Francisco in 1977 (also with Turre), and a recording of this performance was released in 2005. There is also an impressive live recording of *Ginseng People* with Woody and pianist Geri Allen, recorded in 1986 at Baker's Keyboard Lounge in Detroit. Similar to Victor Lewis's *Seventh Avenue*, much of the

harmony in this tune is comprised of sus4 chords (i.e. dominant 7th chords with a suspended 4th).

**Lewis**, arr. Lewis    *Seventh Avenue*

I had the great honor of speaking with drummer/composer Victor Lewis earlier this year about his work with Woody Shaw, and one topic of our discussion was *Seventh Avenue*, which he composed. Although Lewis had recorded *Seventh Avenue* with David Sanborn in 1976, it wasn't very well-known until 1978 when Woody recorded it for his album *Stepping Stones: Live at the Village Vanguard*, with Lewis on drums. Victor Lewis related the following story to me from the late 1970s:

“Woody came to me one day and said, ‘Hey man, I hear you compose,’ and I said, ‘Yeah,’ and he demanded me to bring something in. He told me the story why. He said when he was playing with Horace Silver...[who] only played his own tunes... Woody kept asking Horace if they could play one of his tunes. I guess he wore Horace down, so as a favor, Horace rehearsed [Woody's] tune at the sound-check of some gig, and they played it on the gig, and it got a standing ovation! Needless to say, Horace never played the tune again! Woody vowed if he ever had his own band he wouldn't just play only his own [tunes]. Woody and I heard dissonances and stresses similarly, like the sus4 chords [in *Seventh Avenue*], and he helped me validate myself as a composer.”

Lewis and Shaw both enjoyed compositions by Eastern European composers such as Bartók and Kodály, and Lewis had studied classical piano and cello during his youth in Omaha, NE, (his mother Camille and his father Richard were both classically-trained musicians). *Seventh Avenue* is primarily in 7/4 time (a musical pun on the title, which of course refers to 7th Avenue in NYC). The harmony consists of dominant 9th chords with a suspended 4th that shift primarily by the interval of a whole-step between five different roots. Another version of this tune can be heard on a recently-released live recording, *Woody Shaw Quintet: Basel 1980*, recorded in January 1980 in Basel, Switzerland, with Lewis on drums, (released in 2019). Trumpeter Ingrid Jensen also recorded *Seventh Avenue* with Victor Lewis on drums for her 1999 album *Higher Grounds*.

**Mancini**, arr. Tipton    *Moment to Moment*

Critics and producers don't always get it right, and I had to chuckle when I read Michael Cuscana's liner notes for the 2018 release, *Woody Shaw: Tokyo 1981*, in which he credited Shaw as the song's composer, and stated the following, “Woody's yearning, reflective *From Moment to Moment* was a recent composition that first appeared on this quintet's final album, *Time Is Right*, on Red Records, recorded on January 1, 1983.” First of all, if it was recorded in Tokyo in 1981, then Cuscana's timeline is off, and – much more importantly – *Moment to Moment* was written by Henry Mancini for the eponymous 1966 neo-noir film, starring Jean Seberg, Honor Blackman, and Sean Garrison. The moral of the story of course is: don't believe

everything that you read! That aside, it is a poignant melody, which I chose to arrange for horn soli (as a kind of “lament on the death of Woody Shaw”), followed by voice and full ensemble, retaining vestiges of Woody’s version, (you’ll hear this most clearly at the end of the final ‘A’ section during solos). Incidentally, Freddie Hubbard had recorded this tune on his CTI album, *First Light*, recorded in 1971. Perhaps this is what inspired Woody to adopt the tune into his own repertoire?

### **Shaw, arr. Tipton** *Beyond All Limits*

*Beyond All Limits* and two other Woody Shaw compositions were recorded in 1965 by Woody with organist/pianist Larry Young, tenor saxophonist Joe Henderson, and drummer Elvin Jones for the now legendary Blue Note album, *Unity*. What isn’t as widely known is that Woody recorded an earlier version of *Beyond All Limits* with Larry Young, Nathan Davis, and Billy Brooks for Office de Radiodiffusion Télévision Française (ORTF) on January 22, 1965, (re-released in 2016). At this time, Woody had recently turned 20, and intimations of his highly individualistic approach to harmonic language and motivic development can be heard on this recording. Additionally, Shaw told Nat Hentoff that he wrote this tune when he was merely 18 years old (!). In Woody’s words, “By the title [of *Beyond All Limits*], I meant that once the inherent difficulties of the tune are solved, there are no limits as to where you can go with it.” My arrangement retains the spirit of Woody’s versions, while offering a deconstructivist ending.

### **Tipton** *Vernacular Stretch (Reboot)*

*Vernacular Stretch* is an original composition of mine that had its first incarnation as a fairly simple “lead-sheet tune,” (i.e. not orchestrated), which I played on tour in Summer 2023 between North Carolina and Maine. This new – and, in my biased opinion, improved – version (or “Reboot”) features a solo trumpet opening followed by an orchestrated ensemble introduction before the angular melody of the first theme is heard. Jazz fans with a sense of humor will notice several tongue-in-cheek elements in the first theme, while hip-hop fans may well enjoy the second theme. The neologism “vernacular stretch” applies to the composition’s various musical language types, as well as the piece’s stylistic content and the various contexts of its content, revealing a decidedly metamodernist approach to musical expression.

### **Shaw, arr. Tipton** *OPEC / Dies Irae version*

Fossil fuels were apparently on Woody Shaw’s mind when he penned this insistently driving quasi-freebop tune. OPEC, in traditional parlance, stands for “Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries,” which exists to further the economic interests of oil-producing nations. The title of this tune is still relevant in today’s age, when there is a global shift away from fossil fuels and towards alternative energy sources. Woody recorded this tune at least three times: 1) on his 1980 album, *For Sure!*, 2) live in NYC in 1981, and 3) Live at the Keystone Korner in San Francisco in Fall 1981 with Steve Turre, Larry Willis, Stafford James, and Victor Lewis. In the first part of my arrangement I added a musical quotation of the ancient Latin sequence (chant), “Dies

Irae," ("day of wrath, that day will dissolve the world in ashes..."), as a nod to ecocide, and – less politically – because the introduction played by the ensemble just mentioned closely resembles the theme of *Dies Irae*. Was this merely a coincidence...?

**Tipton** *Peace Invocation*

There are several straightforward messages in the lyrics of this song, which will be sung by vocalists Aviana Gedler and Pitiki Aliakai. I believe that sometimes urgency demands us to be direct rather than to be merely clever, therefore the meaning of the lyrics to this song should not seem elusive to the listener. Over the course of my life I have been greatly influenced by the mindful and powerful songs of Nina Simone, Marvin Gaye, Donny Hathaway, Bob Dylan, and Richie Havens. This is written in the spirit of their songs.

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