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Raúl E Curto* (rcurto@math.uiowa.edu), Department of Mathematics, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242. *Spectral pictures of 2-variable weighted shifts.*

In joint work with Jasang Yoon, we study the spectral pictures of (jointly) hyponormal 2-variable weighted shifts with commuting subnormal components. By contrast with all known results in the theory of subnormal (single and 2-variable) weighted shifts, we show that the Taylor essential spectrum can be disconnected. We do this by obtaining a simple sufficient condition that guarantees disconnectedness, based on the norms of the horizontal slices of the shift. We also show that for every $k \geq 1$ there exists a k -hyponormal 2-variable weighted shift whose horizontal and vertical slices have 1- or 2-atomic Berger measures, and whose Taylor essential spectrum is disconnected.

We use tools and techniques from multivariable operator theory, from our previous work on the Lifting Problem for Commuting Subnormals, and from the groupoid machinery developed by the author and P. Muhly to analyze the structure of C^* -algebras generated by multiplication operators on Reinhardt domains. As a by-product, we show that the Taylor essential spectrum is not necessarily the boundary of the Taylor spectrum. (Received August 04, 2006)