

# CLYDE TIPTON

Born Aug. 17, 1934, Clyde died on Dec. 15, 2022, surrounded by loved ones at his home in Maine, following a serious illness. He was 88 years old. An accomplished composer, conductor, singer and trumpet player, Clyde was a member of the music faculty at Georgia College & State University (GCSU) from 1974 through 2000. He also served as choir director at First Presbyterian Church Milledgeville during this time.

Originally from Richmond, Va., Clyde followed in his father's musical footsteps, playing soprano saxophone in a local May Day celebration at age 7 and singing the male lead in the operetta "Hansel and Gretel" when he was 11 years old. He attended Richmond public schools and played trumpet in the Thomas Jefferson High School orchestra and marching band. He also sang in church and school choirs. Clyde earned undergraduate and graduate degrees from Westminster Choir College in Princeton, New Jersey, in vocal performance and choral conducting, respectively. A highlight of his college career was a six-month tour with Westminster Choir throughout Asia, during which Clyde wrote a saxophone piece played by the King of Thailand. Clyde began his career as a church musician in 1956 at The Presbyterian Church of Toms River in New Jersey and later directed the choirs at Ginter Park Baptist Church in Richmond, Va. He began his teaching career at The Lawrenceville School in Lawrenceville, New Jersey, and subsequently joined the faculty of Rider University, where his opera, *The Forced Marriage* (text by Molière) was premiered. While teaching in New Jersey, he sang lead roles with the Princeton Opera, the Mobile (Alabama) Opera and the Aspen (CO) Opera Company.

During Clyde's time in Milledgeville, his "Memorial Mass" honoring Flannery O'Connor was premiered with college and community singers in 1994 on the occasion of the 30th

anniversary of O'Connor's death. His setting of a Native American text, "Pushing Up the Sky," was premiered in Carnegie Hall by the Princeton-based American Boy Choir. In his book "History of Georgia College & State University: 125 Years of a Liberal Arts College," Dr. Bob Wilson, professor emeritus of history and Clyde's dear friend and colleague wrote, "The music department continued to sustain and support the work of its gifted professor of music theory, a thoughtful, white-bearded man with a beautiful bass voice and a Zen-like quality, who composed sacred music, the hallmark of which was simplicity and grace. His more secular works reflected a deeply quiet, transcendental quality." After retiring from GCSU, Clyde and his family moved to Nairobi, Kenya. There, Clyde taught at Kenyatta University where he was composer-in-residence from 2000-2008. He also directed the Nairobi Music Society Choir. Clyde's compositions have been performed at new music festivals throughout the U.S. and abroad.

Clyde is remembered for his kindness, his great love of nature, especially wildflowers, his gentle spirit, and his open-hearted embrace of all people. A person of faith with a deep concern for social justice, he was an avid reader, especially of poetry, philosophy, and theology. In a recent journal entry, he wrote, "Always seek solitude with nature. Always seek the vastness of the stars. Always love life, whether living or dying. Always love stillness more than talking. Always welcome wherever you happen to be more than where you intended to go." During his last summer, Clyde enjoyed daily swims in the cold Atlantic Ocean.

Clyde was preceded in death by his parents, Helen and Clyde Tipton, and by his sister, Sue Tipton Moon. He is survived by his wife of 46 years, Jane Tipton, of New Harbor, Maine; by his daughter, Pamela Rivera of Morrisville, PA; by his sons, David Tipton (Shiela), Craig Tipton of Lawrenceville, NJ, and Nelson Tipton of New Harbor, ME; by his daughter Susan Tipton (David Blackwell) of Mountain Center, CA; by his son, Bryan

Tipton (Raina Ward) of Vista, CA; by his grandchildren, Adam Rivera of Morrisville, PA. and Samantha Zimmermann (Michael) of Rockledge, PA.; and great grandchildren, Aubrey and Asher Zimmermann. He is also survived by his brother-in-law, Peter Moon of Richmond, VA, and by nephews, Michael Moon (Yuhul) of Yorktown, VA., and Jeffrey Moon (Anna) of Oakton, VA.

Memorial gifts may be made to The Open Door Community, P.O. Box 10980, Baltimore, MD 21234 or to the Choral Programs Fund: GCSU Foundation/Choral Programs, Office of University Advancement, Campus Box 96, Milledgeville, GA 31061.