

THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF MUSIC

THE LIFE AND TEACHING  
OF FLUTIST ALBERT TIPTON:  
1917-1997

BY

HEATHER A. SMALL

A Treatise submitted to the  
College of Music  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Music

Degree Awarded:  
Summer Semester, 2006

The members of the Committee approve the Treatise of Heather A. Small defended on April 21, 2006.

---

Frank Kowalsky  
Professor Directing Treatise

---

Seth Beckman  
Outside Committee Member

---

Eva Amsler  
Committee Member

---

Jeff Keesecker  
Committee Member

The Office of Graduate Studies has verified and approved the above named committee members.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As I prepared this treatise I was fortunate to receive advice and assistance from several individuals and institutions. I am grateful to them all:

To Dick and Judy Tipton for the materials they provided from the family archive.

To Florida State University and my supervisory committee: Frank Kowalsky, Seth Beckman, Eva Amsler, and Jeff Keesecker for advice and direction throughout my degree. Thanks especially to Frank for his editorial comments.

To Nancy Fowler for her personal remembrances of Albert and her tremendous help behind the scenes. You are my honorary committee member.

Thanks to those that assisted in the research stage: Helen Buzyna and the Florida State University Publicity Office, Kim Shively, Jennifer Overton and the Shepherd School of Music, Melinda Schweig, and Erica Maresh.

To Sheryl Cohen and Frances Lapp Averitt and all of the former Tipton students who responded to my questionnaire.

Finally, this project would not have been possible without the love and support of friends and family.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures.....	v
List of Audio Examples.....	vi
Abstract.....	vii
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. BIOGRAPHY .....	3
3. MUSICAL TOPICS .....	18
Acoustics.....	18
Alternate Fingerings .....	20
Articulation .....	22
Beginner Method.....	24
Breathing.....	26
Conductors and Conducting.....	28
Contests.....	30
Group Lessons.....	32
Instruments and Instrument Maintenance.....	33
Intonation .....	35
Performance Anxiety.....	41
Practicing .....	42
Style.....	43
Whistle Tones.....	44
4. SUMMARY OF RESPONSES.....	46
Tipton's Teaching.....	46
Anecdotes.....	55
Tipton's Influences .....	60
APPENDICES .....	65
A. Discography of Performances by Albert Tipton.....	65
B. Copy of Questionnaire for Former Students of Albert Tipton.....	66
C. Lifetime Achievement Letters.....	68
D. Tipton Letter and Advertisement.....	71
E. Tipton Interview Conducted by Melinda Schweig on 3 October 1993.....	73
F. Tipton Interview Conducted by Melinda Schweig on 11 December 1993.....	86
G. Tipton Interview Conducted by Melinda Schweig on 17 December 1993....	96
REFERENCES.....	113
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.....	116

## LIST OF AUDIO EXAMPLES

- Example 1: Sergei Prokofiev: *Peter and the Wolf*.....10  
Basil Rathbone, narrator  
All American Youth Orchestra; Leopold Stokowski, conductor  
Recorded: Los Angeles, CA – 1941
- Example 2: Benjamin Godard: *Allegretto* from *Suite, Op. 116*.....13  
Tipton Chamber Orchestra; Albert Tipton, soloist and conductor  
Recorded: live on tour ca. early 1960s
- Example 3: Heitor Villa-Lobos: *Jet Whistle* (last movement).....14  
Mario DiFiore, cello  
Recorded: live on tour of Tipton Trio ca. early 1960s
- Example 4: Sergei Prokofiev: *Sonata in D Major, Op. 94*.....44  
Mary Norris, piano  
Enhanced whistle tones
- Example 5: Sergei Prokofiev: *Sonata in D Major, Op. 94*.....45  
Mary Norris, piano  
Recorded: March 1969 – *The Platinum Flute*

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Albert Tipton publicity photo for Florida State.....	viii
Figure 2: Albert Tipton ca. 1929.....	04
Figure 3: Tipton Chamber Orchestra ca. 1957 .....	12
Figure 4: Tipton Trio publicity photo from <i>The Baroque Sonata</i> LP.....	15
Figure 5: Thumb B-flat fingerings.....	21
Figure 6: Additional alternate fingerings .....	21
Figure 7: Example for scaling length of articulation .....	23
Figure 8: Tipton tuning exercise.....	36
Figure 9: Averitt illustration of difference tones .....	38
Figure 10: Tuning exercise without rhythmic synchronization.....	39

## ABSTRACT

This treatise examines the life and teaching of the eminent American flutist Albert Tipton. He studied with William Kincaid at the Curtis Institute in Philadelphia, was solo flutist with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra and the St. Louis Symphony, and was also a founding member of the Aspen Music Festival where he performed and taught for forty years. Tipton traveled throughout North and South America under the auspices of Columbia Artist Management with his wife, pianist Mary Norris, in duos, trios, and a chamber orchestra. In addition he was an accomplished conductor and composer, writing two pieces for string ensemble and one for flute and string orchestra. He later joined the faculties of the Florida State University in 1968 and the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University in Houston, Texas in 1975.

For a number of years Tipton wrote and edited a column in *The School Musician Director and Teacher*; these writings among others are reviewed in Chapter 3. There he discussed topics such as difference tones, articulation, group lessons, and musical style, to name a few. The subsequent chapter presents quotations from questionnaires that were mailed to former Tipton students. Three aspects of their experience with him were addressed in the survey: Tipton's teaching philosophy, his influence on their lives, and memorable anecdotes. The result is a synopsis of information for generations of flutists to study the life and accomplishments of this most influential performer and teacher.



Figure 1. Albert Tipton publicity photo from Florida State University