

A Celebration of Life



Tommy Scott Young

December 13, 1943 – May 15, 2023

Sunday, May 21, 2023, 2:00 p.m.

Gethsemane Baptist Church | 443 99 Rd, Blair, SC 29015

Rev. Julian Thompson, Pastor

Bishop Redfern, II, Eulogist

Rev. Ryan E. McConnell, Officiant

Life Reflections of Tommy Scott Young

Storyteller, poet, playwright, author, producer, teacher, scholar, and sculptor are a few of the descriptions of Tommy Scott Young. The Blair, South Carolina native, son of Nancy Lee Thompson Young and John Robert (Rice) Young, was born on December 13, 1943. He passed from labor to reward, on Monday, May 15, 2023.

Tommy Scott gave his life to Christ and joined the Gethsemane Baptist Church at an early age. While living in Los Angeles, CA, he attended the Holman Methodist Church, where he sang in the choir. After returning to South Carolina, he was instrumental in establishing the Christ Unity Church of Columbia.

Tommy Scott attended Gethsemane Elementary School and McCrorey-Liston High School, in Blair, SC, and St. Emma Military Academy in Virginia, after which he served in the United States Air Force. He attended Benedict College for two years, then transferred to California State University at Los Angeles where he received his Bachelor of Arts Degree in Fine Arts and Theatre. He went on to pursue graduate work in sculpting.

While in Los Angeles, he studied with many actors, including Kathleen Freeman and Yaphet Koto. He also worked with the Watts Writers Workshop, where he trained Roger Mosely. He wrote and produced a play entitled *Angela* about the life of Angela Davis. He collaborated with Angela Davis herself, Jane Fonda, and Quincy Jones on this project. He worked with Jester Hairston, one of the stars of the television show *Amen*, to hone his piano skills. He utilized his skill as a performer of classical, traditional, and modern storytelling throughout the nation, including being an artist-in-residence, for the arts councils and commissions in North Carolina, Georgia, and South Carolina. He taught at the University of Southern California, UCLA, and Benedict College. Tommy Scott was a guest of Her Majesty's Eastern Arts Council in 1988, during which time he completed a tour of England, performing in many hamlets, towns, and cities throughout the United Kingdom.

Tommy Scott resided in New York City for several years, where he studied at The New School's College for Performing Arts. While in New York, he became a storyteller-in-residence at the Lincoln Center Institute, where his performances and teachings reached hundreds of individuals.

He was most known in South Carolina as the founder and director of the Kitani Foundation, which from 1977-1983, was a pioneer in bringing nationally acclaimed performing artists to South Carolina. The Kitani Foundation's purpose was to "enable school children in

South Carolina to see nationally known artists and to promote outstanding performing artists in the state.” As a result, Tommy Scott brought more than twenty-five national performing artists and groups to South Carolina including Ella Fitzgerald, Dizzy Gillespie, The Feld Ballet, A Chorus Line, The Jung Su Song and Dance Troupe of China, The Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater and The Dance Theatre of Harlem. The performances reached tens of thousands of students and the public as well. Kitani’s annual children’s poster and calendar contests encouraged drawing and poetry by our young people.

The Kitani Foundation founded Mayfest, in Columbia and the Artists-in-Schools Program for Richland County School District I. Before the Koger Center for the Arts was established, The Kitani Foundation was already instrumental in bringing national performing artists to the state. In 1979, the Kitani Foundation received the South Carolina Arts Commission’s prestigious Elizabeth O’Neil Verner Award for “outstanding contributions to the arts in South Carolina.”

A gifted writer, Tommy Scott authored several books including *Tommy Scott Young Spins Magical Tales*, *Crazy Wolf Sings a Crazy Wolf Song*, and *Black Blues and Shiny Songs* (poetry).

Tommy Scott was extremely proud of his son, Lee Thompson Young, who also combined the dual profession of storytelling and theater. Lee had a starring role as Jett Jackson on the Disney Channel’s show, *The Famous Jett Jackson*. He also had starring roles in *Friday Night Lights*, *Akeelah and the Bee*, and *Rizzoli and Isles*.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Nancy Lee Thompson Young, his father, John Robert (Rice) Young, and his son, Lee Thompson Young.

Tommy Scott is survived by his sister, Felicia Yvonne Young Trower; his niece, Timia Kitani Trower; his grandnephew, Shelton Gabriel Whittaker, his grandniece, Rachael Gabrielle Whittaker, and his special “twin cousin” Margie Thompson Caldwell. Many cousins and friends will also miss him dearly.

Tommy Scott believed that by sharing his talents, he enriched the lives of others.

May your journey to the spirit world be a good one.

Love,

Felicia Yvonne, Timia Kitani, Shelton Gabriel, and Rachael Gabrielle

Order of Service

Pastor Ryan E. McConnell, Officiant
Parker Baptist Church, Camden, SC

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|---------------------------------|--|---|
| The Prelude | "Really Gonna Miss You" | <i>Smokey Robinson (Artist)</i> |
| The Processional | | Clergy and Family |
| The Prayer | | Rev. Ryan McConnell, Cousin |
| The Scriptures | Old Testament, Psalm 23 New Testament, 2 Timothy 4:7-8 | Elder Jennifer Jenkins, Friend Elder Edward Jenkins, Friend |
| The Song of Comfort | "Precious Lord" | Delois Wise Terry R. Scott Franklin Graham |
| Tommy's Life Story | | Janet Kim Thompson, Cousin |
| The Inspirational Tribute | "Goodness of God" | <i>CeCe Winans (Artist)</i> |
| The Presentation of Resolutions | The City of Columbia The SC Senate The SC House of Representatives | Teresa B. L. Wilson, Cousin Columbia City Manager Rep. Annie E. McDaniel District 41 |
| The Reflections | | Keisher Glymph, Cousin Darryl Douglas, Cousin Reginald Wilkins, Friend Paulette Cunningham, Friend |
| The Sermonic Selection | "May the Works I've Done Speak for Me" | Recardo Holmes & the Heavenly Heirs with Julius Moore |
| The Words of Comfort | | The Right Reverend Redfern II, Friend Presiding Bishop & General Overseer, Ecumenical Church and University |
| The Closing Solo | "Walk Around Heaven" | Johnnie McDuffie, Friend |
| The Benediction | | Pastor Ryan E. McConnell |
| The Recessional | "Amen" | Terry R. Scott |

 Committal in The Thompson Cemetery, Gethsemane Baptist Church 

The Repast will be held at 3151 State Hwy 215 N., Blair, SC 29015

"I wanna be lak a eagle" and "Judged by Angels" are two poems Tommy Scott wrote during his struggle with Alzheimer's disease. He continued to create until the last stages of the illness, painting and skillfully playing the piano even after he lost his ability to speak.

I wanna be lak a eagle

I don wanna be
Lak you wan me to be
I wanna be lak a eagle
Born to fly high & free

I don wanna have to listen
To the world's radio
I wanna hear angels sing
Yeah, I wanna hear em sing
So soft

and sweet

and low

I don wanna be
Lak you wan me to be
I wanna be lak a eagle
Born to fly high & free

© Tommy Scott Young January 12, 2015

Judged by Angels

in this life
we are on trial
moment by moment
we are tested

for our love
OR
for our hatred

for our generosity
OR
for our greed

for our empathy
OR
for our disdain

for our hope
OR
for our deep despair

for our love of war
OR
for our love of peace

for our dignity
OR
for our lowliness

for our growth
OR
for our ruin

yes, daily
each precious second
that our inner clock ticks
we are tested
for the strength of our faith
as we are judged by
angels

© Tommy Scott Young February 15, 2014

The Family of Tommy Scott Young

Great-Grandparents



Bun Thompson and Nancy Sims Thompson
(not pictured)



Anthony (Tony) Shelton and Ida Hopkins
Shelton



Henry Young (not pictured) and Caroline
Coleman Young

Ilisa and Heck Toliver
(Not pictured)

Grandparents



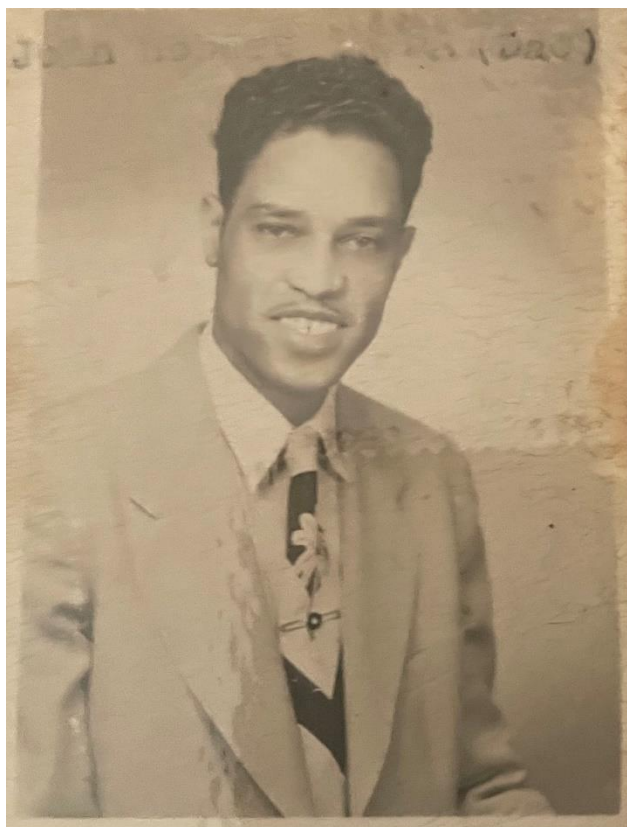
Tommy Lee Thompson, Sr., and Eunice
Shelton Thompson



Scott Young and Ida Toliver Young

Parents

John Robert (Rice) Young and Nancy Lee Thompson Young



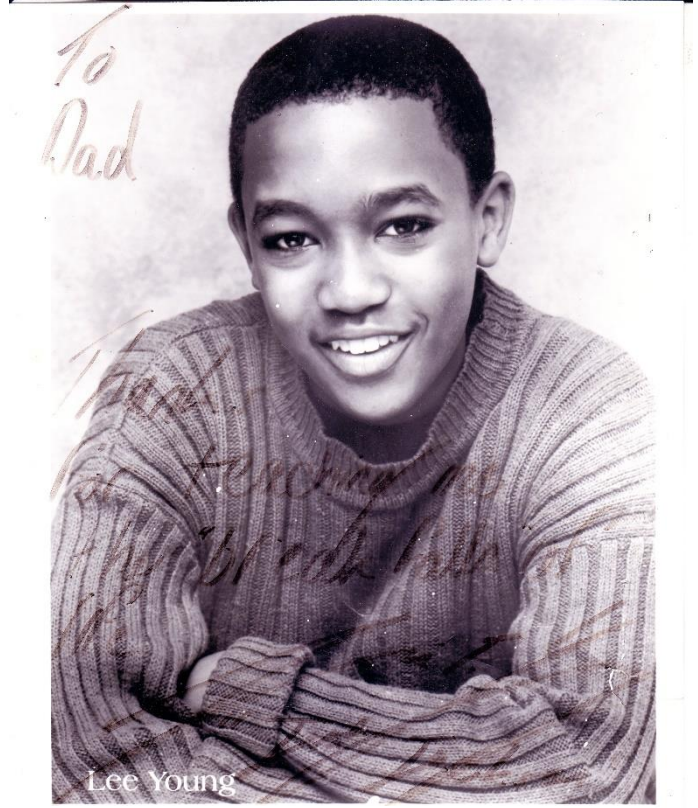
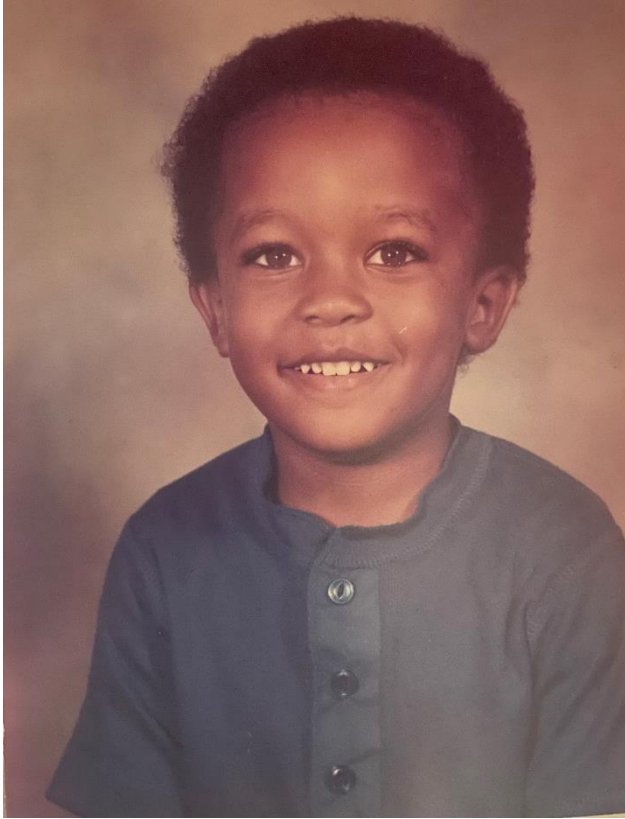
Sister

Felicia Yvonne Young Trower



Timia Kitani Trower, **Niece**
Shelton Gabriel Whittaker, **Grandnephew**
Rachael Gabrielle Whittaker, **Grandniece**

Son
Lee Thompson Young



*To Dad:
Thanks for teaching me the "break falls" of
life.*



Birthday Message to Tommy Scott from His Son, Lee

Dad,

It has truly been a blessing having you as my father. You have given me many gifts that I realize now are priceless. First of all, and perhaps most of all, you have given me love, continuously and unconditionally. You also gave me space when I needed to grow, which can be so hard to give to the ones we love dearly. In your patience and wisdom, however, you did, and for that I am so grateful.

And that's not all. You blessed me with charm, and wit and a twinkle in the eye. You gave me poetry and magic. A great inheritance for a son indeed. And you gave me one of the

most important things in my life, stories. In fact, in some ways you embody a story for me, a legend Tommy Scott, the poet and the storyteller. The artist and the sculptor. The Lover. The actor, playwright, and director. The Revolutionary. The Crazy Wolf. A great friend, a great mentor and a pre-eminent father. It is an honor to be your son.

Happy Birthday!
Love,
Lee

12/13/2005

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Happy Birthday!

Love,
Lee

12/13/2005

Floral Bearers
Cousins and Friends

Pallbearers
Reginald Cannon, Sr.
Reginald Cannon, Jr.
Hampton Grant
Jae Kevin Jackson
Tyron James
Dwayne Wilson

Honorary Pallbearers
Luther Battiste, Esq.
Weldon Hammond, Esq.
Clifton Hendrix
Freddie McConnell
Dr. Lonnie Randolph, Jr.
Larry Robinson
Willie Lee Robinson
Irvin Sims
Larry Thompson
Runeski Thompson

A Special Thank You to Kim Thompson and Giana Thompson

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The family of Tommy Scott wishes to express deep and sincere thanks to Dr. Zhang Zaixiao, Dr. Kim Davis, the nursing staff, the social workers, and the staff at the C.M. Tucker, Jr. Nursing Care Center, as well as Agape Hospice Care, for the superb care they rendered to Tommy Scott. They gave him tender loving care that went beyond the call of duty. A special thanks to our dear friend Sandra Ligon for being there with Tommy almost each and every day, reading him scriptures, prayers, and words of comfort during his prolonged illness. Our thanks also to I.S. Leevy Johnson and Leevy's Funeral Home for the care shown to our family. We are eternally grateful to them for their kindness during our time of bereavement. Tommy Scott's loss is felt by us all. We want to say thank you to the program participants as well as to all who sent a prayer, cards, food, flowers, or made a call. Your heartfelt words and endless empathy have meant so much to us.

Services Entrusted To:

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| Taylor Street Chapel 1831 Taylor Street Columbia, SC 29201 (803)771-7799 I. S. Leevy Johnson -Owner & Director- | Leevy's FUNERAL HOME Chris Leevy Johnson -President & Managing Director- | Lower Richland Chapel 9120 Garners Ferry Road Hopkins, SC 29061 (803) 776-6922 Leverette A. Williams, II -General Manager- |
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