ABSTRACT

James Clifton Williams (1923-1976) was a true product of the American schools band movement. He was one of the most prolific composers of serious contemporary music for the wind band. His first two band compositions won the prestigious American Bandmasters Association’s Ostwald Award for original band literature in 1956 and 1957. His music has become a significant part of the standard repertoire for wind band literature. Williams composed over 50 works for band; 30 of which have been published. Despite the frequency with which they are performed, very few have been recorded. The purpose of the project was to thoroughly study and record to compact disc selected published and unpublished wind band works of this important American composer. The recording ensemble was a wind band consisting of UW-Platteville faculty, selected students and alumni, and area musicians with an affiliation to UW-Platteville or the Tri-State Area.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this project was to record to compact disc selected published and unpublished wind band compositions of James Clifton Williams. The criterion for selecting the published compositions was based on the significance of the work and deficiency of available recordings. The unpublished music was obtained from Michelle
Williams Hanzlik, daughter of the composer. She possesses her father’s entire original musical manuscripts and shared them with me for my initial research. Compositions were selected from these manuscripts for recording.

During my visit to the home of Ms. Hanzlik, she made available to me her father’s unpublished transcriptions of *Symphonic Dances 1, 4 and 5*. These 3 movements are part of five *Symphonic Dances* included in the recording. Another unpublished work, *Pandèan Fable*, for solo bass flute and wind band, was also selected by me for inclusion. It is hoped these newly discovered works, some laying dormant for over 40 years, will become a prominent part of the wind band repertoire.

The following Clifton Williams compositions are included on the recording. As noted earlier, the unpublished works and those in their newly recorded formats received their world premieres.

- **Symphonic Dances Nos. 1-5** (world premiere recording for wind band)
- **Dramatic Essay** for solo trumpet and band
- **Pandèan Fable** for solo bass flute and band (unpublished world premiere recording)
- **The Strategic Air Command** with mail chorus (world premiere recording in this version with chorus)
- **The Sinfonians** with male chorus (world premiere recording in this version with chorus)

Mark Custom Recording Services, Inc., from Clarence, New York, recorded on site in the UWP Brodbeck Concert Hall for 3 days; six hours each day. Mark Morrette, owner of Mark Custom, served as recording engineer. Mark Custom Recording was selected for this project based on their impressive accomplishments (60 *Grammy* Entry List appearances and 2 *Grammy* nominations), superior quality, attention to detail, and enthusiasm for this venture.
PROJECT BENEFITS

Reference recordings of the works of James Clifton Williams are needed so that young directors will program his music on their concerts and share his music with their students. This recording will serve as a reference and teaching tool for music students and band conductors in instrumental music education. This project provides additional recognition for Williams’s published and unpublished compositions. In addition it is hoped these newly discovered works become a prominent part of the wind band repertoire.

Academically, these recordings will be an excellent addition to the repertoire used in conducting, wind literature, and instrumental methods classes at UWP as well as other college and university instrumental music classes throughout the United States and abroad. This recording project will be a showcase for the university, an exemplary public relations model, and a means for student recruitment at UWP. As part of their marketing agreement, Mark Custom will list the CD in their CD catalog and website which is distributed and marketed throughout the world. They will distribute the disc throughout North America through Amazon.com, Walking Frog Records, Tailgate Records, Shattinger Music Co. of St. Louis, eBay, many internet suppliers, their independent network of stores as well as the over 35 state and industry conventions that they and their vendors attend.

SHARING INFORMATION

The recording project is currently in the post-production process beginning with the editing of the session takes into a coherent whole. The final procedures, mastering
and adding the CD booklet will complete the finished disc. Once the disc is completed, it will be commercially available through Mark Records. With the advent of this recording, and the assistance of Williams’s daughter, Ms. Hanzlik, these newly discovered works will be published. Additionally, performances of seven of the nine recorded compositions were performed live on campus by the UW-Platteville Symphonic Wind Ensemble during the 2008-2009 academic year.