

J. Kimo Williams Biography

On June 1, 1969, J. Kimo Williams was captivated as he witnessed Jimi Hendrix's spellbinding performance of "Spanish Castle Magic" at a Waikiki Shell concert in Hawaii. This transformative experience solidified his unwavering commitment to a life devoted to music. Subsequently, on July 4, 1969, he enlisted in the Army and was deployed to Vietnam. His service in Vietnam and departure from Sunset Beach, Hawaii, led J. Kimo to embark on a journey that saw him pursuing his musical aspirations at Berklee College of Music in Boston.

J. Kimo began crafting compositions for jazz big bands, infusing them with elements from his days playing Jimi Hendrix songs in Vietnam, the Jazz fusion music of Weather Report, and the classical realm, including application using strings, French horn, tuba, and double-reeds. He established his own ensemble to perform his compositions. The ensemble, was known as "The Paumalu Symphony,".

In 1980, J. Kimo moved to Chicago with his musician and artistic collaborator, Carol Williams. They co-founded a recording label and studio, "Little Beck Music". He rebranded his music ensemble as "Kimotion," enlisting talented Chicago musicians as instrumentalists.

His debut CD, "War Stories," in 1991, garnered praise from critics, receiving 4.5 stars from Downbeat Magazine. This album was a therapeutic outlet that drew from his experiences during the Vietnam War.

As a Vietnam Veteran dealing with PTSD and disabilities, his compositions often drew inspiration from his military background, including his classical symphony "Symphony For The Sons of Nam."

In 2001, his second album, "Tracking," was recorded and featured high-profile jazz-fusion musicians such as Victor Bailey, Vinnie Colaiuta, Michael Brecker, and even actor-musician Gary Sinise. Collaborating with Sinise led to J. Kimo's formation of the Lt Dan Band, previously known as the G&K (Gary and Kimo) Classic Rock Band.

From 2012 onward, J. Kimo retired from the performing aspect of his musical expression and engaged in extensive recording projects across Chicago, New York, Los Angeles, and his Shepherdstown, WV Garage studio.

He views his music as a conduit for meaningful emotional connection and communication between himself and his audience.