

**Oral Memoirs  
of  
Caroline James and Hugh James**

An Interview Produced by

Joe Gennaro

Timothy G. Brown

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Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra

*Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra*

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## **Interview Histories**

Interviewee: Caroline James and Hugh James

Transcriber: Genesis Rawls

The recordings and transcripts of the interview were processed in the offices of the RICHES of Central Florida Department, University of Central Florida, Orlando, Florida.

## **Project Detail**

In celebration of the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra's 20th Anniversary season, this video series chronicles the orchestra's two decades of history in Central Florida. This video was produced by Joe Gennaro, Timothy G. Brown and Lisa Mills with the guidance of Stella Sung and Emily Lindahl.

The Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra, located at 812 East Rollins Street Suite 300 in Orlando, was inspired by the closing of the Florida Symphony in 1993. The orchestra performs in more than 125 concerts each season. In June of 2013, the Philharmonic made plans to purchase the Plaza Live, located at 425 North Bumby Avenue in downtown Orlando, for office space, a rehearsal hall, a music library, and a music hall.

## **Legal Status**

Scholarly use of the recording and transcript of the interview with Caroline James and Hugh James is unrestricted. The interview agreement was signed in 2012.

## **Abstract**

Episode in the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra's 20th Anniversary video series, chronicling the orchestra's history in Central Florida. This episode features an interview with Hugh James and Caroline James, patrons of the orchestra. Topics in the video include how the James got involved with the orchestra, working with the people and musicians of the OPO, the Philharmonic's relationship with patrons, the orchestra's role in the community, and ticket sales and subscribers.

Hugh and Caroline are members of the Friends of the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra, an organization dedicated to supporting the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra. The Orlando Philharmonic Guild first met in February of 1996 and changed its name to the Friends of the Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra in July of that same year. They held their first invitational fundraiser, "The Holiday Pops Dinner Gala", at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in December of 1996. The Friends celebrated its 15th anniversary in October of 2011 and continues to host fundraising events focused on garnering financial and community support of the OPO.

# Caroline James and Hugh James

Oral History Memoir

0:00:00

## Introduction

0:00:13

## How the James got involved with the orchestra

**Caroline**

I was retired. He was still working. Uh, so I dragged him in slowly but surely it's well.

0:00:21

## Working with the people and musicians of the OPO

**Hugh**

If you sort of had to ask, "What is the nicest thing about working with the OPO [Orlando Philharmonic Orchestra]?" It's the people. it's the people. Um, especially, in some ways, the musicians. They're not people in fancy suits across there on the stage. They're regular folks and they are just nice people. They're all such nice people.

0:00:44

## The Philharmonic's relationship with patrons

**Caroline**

The Philharmonic really reaches out to its patrons and wants every patron to know they are the most important person in that auditorium. And we, um – we have post-concert receptions, where you get to meet the musicians, the staff, guest artists, fellow patrons. And there's a real mixing and mingling and you feel like you're part of a big family.

0:01:06

## The orchestra's role in the community

**Hugh**

The Philharmonic has become an integral part of the community. Um, both with its concerts, with its presentations, with its opera, and with all the things that it's doing for young people. So, um, I think the recognition in the community is far, far higher than it was 10 years ago. With each concert, we have less general seating tickets to sell. That's the bad news [*laughs*]. The good news is that's because they are full of subscribers.

0:01:45

## Closing credits

*End of Interview*