

**Media Working Group**  
**P.O. Box 1807, Lexington, KY 40588-1807**  
www.mwg.org  
www.cratiswilliams.org

**For Immediate Release**

Media Working Group and director Fred Johnson are pleased to announce Kentucky Educational Television's special broadcast of "Cratis Williams: Living the Divided Life." Air times are:

(All times EST)

KET2 Wednesday, Dec 14 at 10:00 pm

KET1 Thursday, Dec 15 at 2:00 am

**Cratis Williams: Living the Divided Life**

Cratis Williams, often referred to as "the father of Appalachian literature", pioneered the field of Appalachian studies. His seminal 1962 PhD dissertation, "The Southern Mountaineer in Fact and Fiction," is regarded as the most influential critical work on the modern Appalachian experience in the region's literature. Dr. Williams' work was characterized by his interdisciplinary approach to understanding the cultural life and history of the southern Appalachian region, synthesizing the history, economics, literature, speech, music, religion, politics, philosophy, folk tales and folk art of those who identify themselves as Appalachians.

In this entertaining and poignant documentary Cratis Williams weaves his personal recollections, song, storytelling, in-depth scholarship and understanding of folk culture into a grand tale of the modern Appalachian experience. Balladeer, linguist, cultural activist, storyteller, Cratis Williams was beloved throughout Southern Appalachia as storyteller and cultural hero.

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Cratis was an eloquent defender of Appalachian Culture and one of the most important scholars of the post-war era. In this hour-long documentary, Cratis visits his ancestral homeland and family on Caines Creek in Eastern Kentucky's Big Sandy Valley. He reminisces about confronting the stereotypes of Appalachian Culture and personalities while growing up among descendants of "Kentucky Long Hunters, veterans of the American Revolution, Tories escaped to the backwoods, refugees from the Whisky Rebellion, and Kentucky Mountain feudists."

Also featured in the documentary are leading Appalachian writers and scholars Gurney Norman, Pat Beaver, Grace Edwards, Loyal Jones, Jim Wayne Miller, and David Williams, attesting to the historical importance of Dr. Cratis Williams' scholarship and work for a generation of artists, writers and scholars. The documentary is 58:30.

### **Fred Johnson: The Filmmaker**

Fred Johnson has been making documentary and video art since the mid-seventies. Much of his work has been focused on relationships of land, constructed space, and communications. His work is grounded in an abiding interest in consciousness and the human capacity for language, culture and change.

Johnson's documentaries have been broadcast on the Learning and Discovery Channels, WNET-NY, Kentucky Educational Television, BBC 2 and BBC's World Service. As a recipient of a Television Arts Fellowship from the Fulbright Commission he was sited at the BBC's Community Programme Unit in London. While there he produced *Future on the Line* and *Death on Delivery* and was subsequently commissioned to produce *Hybrid City*. *Coal Black Voices*, co-produced with Jean Donohue was broadcast on regional PBS in 2001.

This documentary received support from the Kentucky Arts Council, Ohio Arts Council, Kentucky Educational Television, The National Endowment for the Arts'

Southeast Media Fellowship Program, Kentucky Humanities Council and Berea College's Appalachian Center's Research Development Fellowship.

### **Media Working Group**

Founded in 1987, Media Working Group (MWG) is a non-profit media education, production, and development organization providing an organizational framework for artists and media educators to conduct diverse multi-disciplinary work in media culture. It is a hybrid of a media arts center, media institute, arts incubator, and artist network. The organization provides capacity for artists to carry-out their work on their own terms and furnishes a rich environment of mutual support and freedom of expression for their artistic labor. MWG is designed to stimulate and support the creation of video, film, web-based media, and photography. It is also an arts service organization that provides training and education with the intent to encourage critical understanding of the artistic, social and cultural impact of the media. MWG conducts five kinds of activities:

- Production of high quality independent media,
- Exhibition of film and video for education and building awareness of media culture;
- Education and Training,

For more information contact:

Fred Johnson Producer/director 617.282.5677

Jean Donohue Co-producer 859.581.0033

For High Resolution Archival Photos go to [www.cratiswilliams.org/press.html](http://www.cratiswilliams.org/press.html)

For a Preview of the Documentary [www.cratiswilliams.org/preview.html](http://www.cratiswilliams.org/preview.html)

See Kentucky Educational Television's Press Release

[http://www.wcvn.org/pressroom/2005/53/KCWIL\\_.html](http://www.wcvn.org/pressroom/2005/53/KCWIL_.html)

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December 8, 2005

