

Distinguished Achievement Citation

James D. Henke

Class of 1976

With pride, we present Ohio Wesleyan's Distinguished Achievement Citation to Jim Henke in recognition of his exceptional career as a nationally award-winning music writer and historian and for his involvement as a champion of human rights.

After graduating from Ohio Wesleyan in 1976 with a major in journalism, Jim began his career as a copy editor for the Cleveland Plain Dealer. After a year, he left this post to become copy editor for Rolling Stone magazine. Within five years, he was promoted to music editor, where he spent ten years overseeing the magazine's music coverage. He also wrote cover stories on many of the top artists in rock and roll including Bruce Springsteen, Eric Clapton and Paul McCartney.

In 1994, after an 18-year career as a music writer, Jim brought his extraordinary knowledge of rock history and his experience working directly with artist and music industry professionals to his new position as Vice President of exhibitions and Curatorial Affairs at the newly created Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and museum in Cleveland. He was responsible for putting together and heading the team that created all of the museum's original exhibits for the grand opening in September, 1995.

He continues to be instrumental in determining all museum exhibitions and acquiring artifacts for those exhibits and for public programs for the museum that explore rock's impact on global culture. His special projects have included exhibits on the Psychedelic Era, Elvis Presley, Hip Hop and Rock style. Most recently, Jim worked with Yoko Ono to put together the first major US exhibit on the life and career of John Lennon. This exhibit, titled "Lennon: His Life and Work," will be at the museum through the end of the year.

Jim has edited books such as I Want to Take you Higher: The Psychedelic Era, a book that accompanied the museum's well-received exhibit of the same name, The Rolling Stone Illustrated History of Rock and Roll, The Rolling Stone Album Guide and Rock Style.

In keeping with his commitment to the support of human rights, Jim wrote Human Rights Now, which was published in 1988. This book, written as a benefit project for Amnesty International, to whom all profits from sales went, is a travelogue of the Human rights Now international tour, which featured Bruce Springsteen, Peter Gabriel, Sting and others. Jim took a six-week leave of absence from Rolling Stone to go along on the concert tour, which promoted the 40th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

While at Ohio Wesleyan, Jim was editor of the Transcript, the independent student newspaper and a member of Chi Phi. He also served as a student member on both the Teaching and Learning and Academic Policy faculty committees. Jim is a member of Leadership Cleveland, a selective program that helps to develop and enhance community leadership. In 1992, he received the ASCAP-Deems Taylor Award for excellence in music writing. Jim lives with his two sons in Cleveland Heights, Ohio.

We join his reunioning classmates in saluting Jim Henke and recognizing his outstanding accomplishments through the presentation of this Distinguished Achievement Award.

