

# Cleveland Rocks Out

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By Kiley Kellermeier

If ever a place were to prompt you to "Imagine," urge you to "Don't Stop Believin'," or propel you to the "Dark Side of the Moon," it would surely be the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in Cleveland.

The museum packs over half a century of rockers into 150,000 square feet. Within the sculptured, concrete walls dwell the musical remains of legends and icons of the rock and roll industry. Nearly all of the major figures of rock 'n' roll, past and present, are represented in some way, and have been since the building's opening in 1995.

While a house for prehistoric artifacts and ancient paintings it ain't, the museum of all things rock 'n' roll is still a cultural experience.

"Through movies, exhibits and interactive kiosks, the Museum offers many different ways for visitors to not only enjoy music that they may already be familiar with, but also to learn about other artists and their impact on music and society as a whole," said Jenny Steadman, Communications Coordinator for the Museum.

Temporary feature exhibits tend to be among the most popular attractions, Steadman said. These have included such icons as John Lennon, U2, Bob Dylan and Elvis. Interest, however, is different for every visitor.

"It depends on who your favorite band is and what your preferences are," Steadman said. "Some people prefer to see things like Jim Morrison's Cub Scout uniform or Jimi Hendrix's childhood drawings, while others prefer Kurt Cobain's guitar and John Bonham's drum kit."

Several exhibits consume two or three floors of the building. Though John Lennon has long since passed, the legendary songwriter and former Beatle lives on in his own three- floor exhibit. A long-term loan from Yoko Ono of invaluable John Lennon items was one of the museum's first major acquisitions. Fans and tribute-payers can view such items as his report card and eyeglasses, among other things, at the museum.

Other exhibits contain some artifacts that are "off the beaten path," Steadman said.

The history of Rolling Stone magazine is one such exhibit, containing a letter from Charles Manson and the original manuscript of Hunter S. Thompson's Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas.

"We also have an exhibit on the San Francisco scene that contains two undipped acid blotter sheets belonging to Janis Joplin," Steadman said.

Patrons may be lucky enough to bump into a few living legends while browsing the musical scenery. When musicians are in town for a concert, they sometimes drop by for a visit.

"Members of Queen were here recently," Steadman said. "We've also had visitors from members of the Dave Matthews Band, Snoop Dogg...and Duran Duran."

Tom Hanks, Henry Winkler and Drew Carey have also popped in for a look at the museum, Steadman said.

Visitors to the museum are old and young from across the globe. Parents and children can use the experience to learn how their generations' music is linked to one another, a connection that is often much closer than they think.

Music fans and curious tourists alike have the chance to see musicians possessions up close and personal. Seeing the most personal of items, such as handwritten lyrics, youth art, and personal letters written to family and fans, brings celebrities to a human-level. Visitors can enter the museum hoping to learn about a legend and leave feeling connected to a musician that they have spent their whole life looking up to.

"Rock has touched our world in so many ways," Steadman said.

It is a force in our culture, Steadman said, a force that has given a voice, a microphone and a stage, to people who might not have been heard otherwise.

"Whether you like Buddy Holly or Led Zeppelin, we have them here and we tell the story—the whole story—of how music changed our world," Steadman said.

Rock 'n' Roll is a link between cultures and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum is a meeting place for the learned and learning alike.

"This place is a Mecca," Steadman said, "and people do make a pilgrimage here."

For more information, and to confirm times, dates or prices:  
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