

Distinguished Achievement Citation

Robert E. Lee

Class of 1939

With this posthumous presentation of Ohio Wesleyan University's Distinguished Achievement Citation, the Ohio Wesleyan Alumni Association Board of Directors is honored to recognize **Robert E. Lee** for his extensive and prizewinning authorship in the world of theatre.

Lee graduated from Ohio Wesleyan in 1939 and served in the United States Army in the early 1940s. Along with Jerome Lawrence, he co-founded the Armed Forces Radio Service.

From here, Lawrence and Lee formed a lifelong partnership writing plays, musicals, screenplays, radio plays, scripts for radio and television programs, as well as stories and articles for various publications, biographies and textbooks. The men believed, "Theatre is the universal means of expression. It embraces all of the arts through which human minds seek to reach one another."

Their most famous works include *Inherit the Wind* (winner of a Donaldson Award for best new play in 1955), *First Monday in October*, *The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail*, *Auntie Mame* and a musical adaptation titled *Mame* (nominated for a 1966 Tony Award). *Auntie Mame* opened on Broadway in 1966 and ran for more than 1,500 performances. In 2010, OWU's own Department of Theatre and Dance performed it at the Chappellear Drama Center.

Between the two, Lawrence and Lee won two lifetime achievement awards, two Peabody Awards, two Tonys, and one Emmy nomination. They also won the 1984 Writers Guild of America Valentine Davies Award for contributions to the entertainment industry that brought honor and dignity to all writers. Their critically acclaimed plays have been performed in over 30 languages, and in 1990, the men were named members of both the Theater Hall of Fame and Fellows of the American Theatre at the Kennedy Center.

It is with great appreciation and admiration that we award Robert E. Lee the Distinguished Achievement Citation for his many significant contributions to the dramatic arts.

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