

# Tom King

1964 - 2003

Inducted into the *Hall of Fame* in 1999

Tom King graduated from WHS in 1982, where he was active in music and drama, serving as Thespian president his senior year. Tom's indelible legacy in the entertainment industry is a testament to his enduring passion and contagious enthusiasm for the performing arts.

Tom received a B.S. from the University of Iowa School of Journalism in 1986. That year he began his journalism career with The Wall Street Journal and soon was promoted to advertising columnist. In 1993 he moved to Los Angeles to cover the entertainment industry. His work was widely acclaimed and, in 1997, he received a book contract for a biography of media mogul David Geffen. That book, *The Operator: David Geffen Builds, Buys, and Sells the New Hollywood*, made both the New York Times and Los Angeles Times bestseller lists. Following publication of the book, Tom made frequent visits to college campuses, including the University of Iowa, where he participated in symposiums on journalism. In 1999, he rejoined The Wall Street Journal as a senior special writer and created the "Hollywood Journal" column that appeared each Friday. He also had a regular slot on CNBC.

*He had an attractive, self-effacing style that made him an effective interviewer. He had an ability to lure people into conversations, probably saying more than they thought they were saying.* A. Scott Berg, Pulitzer Prize-winning biographer

Although Tom enjoyed performing on the stage as a child and in his high school and college years, his passionate interest in and support of gifted performers of all types became his trademark. He was the first to applaud, the first to laugh, the first to shed a tear, and the first to stand and cheer in any audience.

*Dear Mr. and Mrs. King,*

*John Barret just told me about Tom, and I was so saddened and shocked to hear of your loss. I have to tell you I met him only once, in preparation for the release of "The Hours." He did an interview with me, one of hundreds I did for the film, but it was without question the most interesting and stimulating discussion of the whole press junket. He was so charming and bright, thoughtful and compassionate, that I said to him, "You can't normally do this for a living - you're too interested in the conversation!" (Most of the journalists can barely conceal their, a.) boredom or b.) ignorance of the artistic process involved in making a film.) He laughed and admitted as much: That he didn't normally write celeb/movie stuff, but that the ambition and subject matter of this film moved and engaged him enough to want to write about it. Anyway, I was charmed completely, and just wanted you to know how unusual a journalist he was.*

*With sympathy,  
Meryl Streep*

Tom's parents, Don and June King, and his partner, Ken Miller, have chosen to honor Tom and the other inductees to the WHS Performing Arts Hall of Fame by designating memorial contributions for this special exhibit.



*Who infused his work and  
our lives with intelligence,  
passion and wit.*

Columbia Pictures  
DreamWorks SKG  
Miramax Films  
New Line Cinema  
Paramount Pictures  
Screen Gems  
Twentieth Century Fox  
Universal Pictures

The Walt Disney Studios  
Focus Features  
MGM  
Paramount Classics  
Paramount Studios  
Sony Pictures Classics  
United Artists  
Warner Bros. Studios