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's legendary King Records in a cutting-edge way: Through two-way videoconferencing with the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum in
Cleveland
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The class, which will take place Friday afternoon at CET studios, is the fulfillment of a promise made by Rock Hall President Terry Stewart during the 65th anniversary celebration of King Records in 2008. That's when the hall installed a city of Cincinnati-funded historic marker at the King Records site at 1540 Brewster Ave. in Evanston, after the efforts of the nonprofit Cincinnati USA Music Heritage Foundation and former Cincinnati Councilman John Cranley.

King Records was to Cincinnati as Motown was to Detroit or Sun and Stax records were to Me mphis
. From 1943-1971, the influential independent record label was home to a musically and racially diverse roster of bluegrass, R&B, rock, doo-wop, country, soul and funk artists, most famously James Brown.

The hour-long King class will be taught by Rock Hall director of education Jason Hanley through the museum's award-winning distance learning program, On The Road, and will be available to other schools around the country after Friday, Hanley said. It features interviews that the Rock Hall conducted with funk bassist and Rock and Roll Hall of Famer Bootsy Collins and bluegrass legend Ralph Stanley, both King alums.

"What I love about it is that we've put it together in such a way that it both acknowledges what happened at King Records, but it also puts it into the broader history (of popular music)," Hanley said.

The class, which will be led here by Cincinnati State Technical and Community College emeritus humanities professor and current adjunct professor Michael H. Jones, is invitation-only. But local music fans have a chance to win a seat by buying a VIP ticket to Sunday night's Cincinnati Entertainment Awards, hosted by CityBeat.

The VIP package also includes the opportunity to become one of the first members of the Music Heritage Foundation, The Funky Drummer Society, named after the oft-sampled James Brown tune that was recorded in Cincinnati in 1969 and released by King Records in 1970.

The one-year membership also includes more than a dozen other perks, including a Funky Drummer Society membership card autographed by Bootsy Collins (a Music Heritage Foundation co-founder) and an advance copy of "Hank to Thank" by the Dallas Moore Band featuring Willie Nelson guitarist Jody Payne. The live album was recorded in August 2010 at the former E.T. Herzog Recording Co. space at 811 Race St., where Hank Williams recorded eight classic songs.

"The Music Heritage Foundation is thrilled to help facilitate momentous efforts with partners like the Rock Hall and CEAs to preserve and celebrate our historic and ongoing musical culture," said Music Heritage Foundation co-founder Elliott Ruther. "With membership available, we hope to facilitate diverse grass-roots opportunities for our local music and Cincinnati community to own and deepen the realization of this mission."

Today is the deadline to buy the $50 VIP package to the Cincinnati Entertainment Awards (7 p.m. Sunday, Madison Theater, 730 Madison Ave., Covington) and the chance to win a spot in Friday's King Records class. Regular tickets are $17 in advance and $20 at the door. To buy, visit www.citybeat.com .