

Tribe of Heart, Ltd. - Media Giraffe Profile

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Stein / James LaVeck Jenny - Director / Producer

"When Jenny and I first started to work together almost ten years ago, we had a vision of using the power of the arts to address some of the most serious problems in society in a way that helped individuals and also created community [m]uch of the violence in our society grows out of an underlying sense of meaninglessness. When groups of people commit themselves to protecting the vulnerable, restoring the earth, and creating a just society, a special kind of community comes into existence. The name of our organization reflects our goal of supporting this form of community which seeks to exclude no one and offer benefit to all." *James LaVeck & Jenny Stein, in an 2000 web interview and on the Tribe of Heart website*"

Address: P.O. Box 149

Location: Ithaca, NY, 14851

Email: james@tribeofheart.org

Website: <http://www.tribeofheart.org/>

Work: 607-275-0806

Fax: 607-275-0702

About

Tribe of Heart is a 501c(3) charitable, non-profit organization that produces and distributes award-winning documentaries "about ordinary people making an extraordinary difference for others." To date, their first two completed films deal with human treatment of animals, a cause which the filmmaking team of Jenny Stein (director) and James LaVeck (produced) focused on in 1997.

Based near Ithaca, N.Y. , the team have completed two films, "The Witness" (2001) and "Peaceable Kingdom" (2004) -- about factory farming -- among four planned documentaries about people helping animals in unique and inspiring ways. for example, Peaceable Kingdom focuses on a "farm sanctuary" located in the scenic Finger Lakes region of upstate New York.

Their larger goal goes beyond helping animals, however, to reducing a sense of isolation and disempowerment. To support a network of people getting their films seen, Tribe of Heart provides step-by-step instructions, publicity resources, online community forums, teaching guides and personal advice. Their three-step approach:

Produce activist documentaries with the power to facilitate dramatic transformations in attitude and behavior amongst a broad cross-section of the general public.

Distribute these films as widely as possible by making them affordable and available to people all over the world.

Provide support services and outreach programs that enable any person who has been inspired by the message of our films to effectively reach out and share that message with many others.

BELOW FROM

<http://www.bronxstage.com/films/honor/kingdom.htm>

Jenny Stein is a graduate of UCLA's Independent Producers Program and of Cornell University. James LaVeck is a graduate of Cornell University and a published novelist. They began their collaboration in 1990 with a feature screenplay based on one of James's unpublished books. In 1997, they founded Tribe of Heart to respond to an unmet need for films that explore the human potential to respond to injustice with creativity and non-violence. In 2004, LaVeck and Stein were honored with a Distinguished Guardian Award from In Defense of America, which recognizes work contributing to the international effort to instill greater levels of respect, responsibility, and compassion toward animals.

LaVeck is also a painter.

BELOW FROM:

http://www.guardianawards.org/laveck_stein.html

James LaVeck and Jenny Stein are the co-founders of Tribe of Heart, a non-profit organization dedicated to producing and distributing films that empower people who wish to teach compassion in their communities. Integrating art, education, and a celebration of the human spirit, the films of Jenny and James tell the stories of ordinary people who have experienced a profound change of heart and have then gone on to work for peaceful change in society. Their current project, the four part Animal People documentary anthology, debuted in 2000 with *The Witness*, a favorite with both film festival audiences and animal advocates. This award-winning documentary tells the story of Eddie Lama's amazing change of consciousness as he brings the shocking realities of the meat and fur industries to the streets of New York. The second film of the anthology, *Peaceable Kingdom*, described by Dr. Jane Goodall as "a masterpiece," had premieres earlier this year in Manhattan, Los Angeles and San Francisco to sold out audiences and standing ovations. The film explores the subject of factory farming and offers a riveting portrait of human and animal lives caught up in an out-of-control industrial machine. Tribe of Heart films explore our wondrous human capacity to face challenging truths about the impact of our choices on the vulnerable of our society, and then respond with the power of compassion, creativity, and non-violence. Their intent is to help the general public understand that those working to protect animals are motivated by the same core values that have inspired the great social movements of history. Many viewers report that viewing a Tribe of Heart film changed the course of their lives. Over the past four years Jenny and James's work has inspired an extraordinary grassroots movement, with thousands of people from all walks of life acquiring copies of the films to share in their communities.

THEIR VISION (from the Tribe of Heart website)

- "Every now and then, a book or a movie comes along with the right idea at the right time, captivating the minds and hearts of millions of people and catalyzing a shift of perspective on a critical social issue. During the era of human slavery in America, for example, Harriet Beecher Stowe wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a book that helped people from all walks of life understand that human slavery was unjustified, immoral, and intolerable. A few decades later, supporters of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals funded the printing and distribution of two million copies of Anna Sewell's *Black Beauty*. Written from the point of view of a horse, this important novel opened the eyes of both children and adults to the plight of animals. The widespread distribution of *Black Beauty* propelled the US animal protection movement into the mainstream, inspiring its many readers to share the message of the book in their communities and to vigorously work for change. "These visionaries of the past proved that our society can be awakened and transformed through the gentle power of storytelling that the accounts of ordinary people struggling for justice and truth can reveal hidden suffering and cruelty in a way that most people can understand. Such stories call forth our shared values for kindness, integrity, and protecting the vulnerable. They motivate us to take a stand for what we think is right. "At Tribe of Heart, we are deeply inspired by people like

Harriet Beecher Stowe and George Angell. Their example gives us hope as we work to address the challenges of our own times."

OTHER LINKS:

In 2000, reviewer Howard Rosenberg of the Los Angeles Times, interviewed, Eddie Lama, the 44-year-old contractor-turned-animal-rights activist who is the central character in the documentary, "Witness."

Links

- [Read More](#)

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