CIA Commencement Speakers
Last updated May 2016

This list was compiled from the Archives of the Cleveland Institute of Art’s collection of commencement programs, which is not a complete set. Additionally, documentation was provided by articles in the Cleveland Plain Dealer; this information is noted in brackets. In the early years, commencement information was incorporated into documents entitled “Closing Exercises” and not issued as a separate publication. If the location of the ceremony was printed on the document, it is listed below. In this context, the Cleveland School of Art is designed as CSA, the Cleveland Institute of Art as CIA, and the Cleveland Museum of Art as CMA. For the most part, especially for early programs, speaker descriptions were taken directly from the commencement programs. Where address titles were included in the program, they are listed after the speaker’s name and identifying description. Some speeches in the late 20th century were recorded; please see the archives sound recording index for that information.

1886  two addresses: Gen’L M.D. Leggett, Rev W.V. W. Davis; held at Willson Avenue [PD article June 29, 1886]

1887  [Rev. Dr. Cyrus Bates (of St. Paul’s) and Dr. S. P. Sprecher (of the Euclid avenue Presbyterian Church) PD article, July 1, 1887]

1888  [Rev. Dr. Ladd and Rev. Y. P. Morgan PD article June 16, 1888]

1889  [Rev. H. C. Haydn (of Western Reserve University), Principal N. A. Wells, and Miss Luella Varney PD article June 5, 1889]

1891  [President Charles F. Thwing (of Western Reserve University), Prof. W. I. Thomas (of Oberlin College), and Dr. F. L. Hosmer (of Unity church) PD article June 2, 1891]

1892  Mr. George H. Bartlett (Principal of the Massachusetts Normal Art School, Boston)

1893  [Prof. Henry T. Bailey (of the Massachusetts state board of education) PD article June 15, 1893; quotes much of the address]

1894  [Judge Stevenson Burke and Miss Georgia Norton, PD article June 13, 1894]

1895  Rev. Marion Murdock (Unity Church); held at Epworth Memorial Church; [PD article June 10, 1895]
1896  Rev. Henry M. Ladd (Euclid Avenue Congregational church); held at Epworth Memorial Church;  [PD article June 19, 1896]

1897  Rabbi Moses J. Gries; held at Epworth Memorial Church; [PD article June 17, 1897; some remarks quoted]

1898  Mr. L. H. Jones (Superintendent of Cleveland Public Schools); “Art and the Art of Living”; held at Epworth Memorial Church; [PD article June 16, 1898]

1899  [Prof. H. W. Hulbert PD article June 15, 1899]

1900  Mr. George Hartnell Bartlett (Principal of the Massachusetts Normal Art School, Boston); held at Epworth Memorial Church; [PD article June 14, 1900]

1901  Mr. Charles De Kay (Director, National Arts Club, New York City); held at Epworth Memorial Church; [PD article June 13, 1901; quotes some of the address]

1902  Mr. A. H. Griffith (Director, Detroit Museum of Art); “Art Galleries and Museums: their Value to the People”; held at Epworth Memorial Church;  [PD article June 12, 1902]

1903  Rev. Minot Osgood Simons (Unity Church); “Loyalty to Art Development”; held at Epworth Memorial Church; [PD article June 4, 1903]

1904  Mrs. A. A. F. Johnston (Professor of Medieval History, Oberlin College); “History in Architecture”; held at Epworth Memorial Church; [PD article June 12, 1904]

1906  George W. Stevens (Director of Toledo Museum of Art); [PD article June 12, 1906]

1907  Prof. Henry Turner Bailey (of Boston)  [PD article June 11, 1907; quotes at length from the address]

1908  Rev. Ward Beecher Pickard (former pastor of Epworth Memorial church)  [PD article June 9, 1908; quotes at length from the address]

1909  Mr. Halsey C. Ives (Director, Saint Louis Museum of Fine Arts); “Art a Factor in the Material Development of a People”  [PD article June 4, 1909; quotes at length from the address]
1911  [“… dispensing with the usual commencement day addresses … Miss Georgia Leighton Norton, principal of the school, gave a brief address …” PD article June 11, 1911]

1912  (no commencement address listed in the program)

1913  (no commencement address listed in the program) [Rev. Dr. Paul F. Stephen PD article June 1, 1913]

1914  [Mrs. Stevenson Burke PD article June 14, 1914; quotes from the address]

1915  (no commencement address listed in the program)

1916  Frederic Allen Whiting (Director, Cleveland Museum of Art) [PD article May 28, 1916]

1917  Dr. Henry Turner Bailey (Editor of the School Arts Magazine, Boston, Massachusetts); “Mission of Art School Graduates”

1918  Dr. Henry Turner Bailey (Dean of The Cleveland School of Art and Advisor in Educational Work, The Cleveland Museum of Art)

1919  James Frederick Hopkins (Director of Art Education for Massachusetts, The Massachusetts Normal Art School, Boston)

1920  Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver (The Temple, Cleveland); “Making the Good Beautiful”; held at CSA

1921  (no commencement address listed in the program; Pageant: “Our Heritage of Beauty; The Gifts of the Past to the Art Student of the Present. A Dramatic Review by the Interpreter. Text by Henry Turner Bailey”); held at CSA; [A pageant “to be presented … as a variation from the time honored commencement program of receiving diplomas and listening to addresses” PD article May 29, 1921]

1922  (no commencement address listed in the program; there was a “tableaux” and “mural” decoration entitled “The Gifts of the Art School to the Community: A Modern interpretation of ancient song of crafts in the books called Ecclesiasticus by Henry Turner Bailey”); held at CMA

1923  (no commencement address listed in the program; there was a “tableaux” or pageant, with text by Henry Turner Bailey); held at CMA
1924 (no commencement address listed in the program; separate document indicates that there was a reading of William Price’s allegory “the Artsman” by Mr. Frank Stephens of Arden Delaware); held at CMA

1925 Professor Walter Sargent (University of Chicago); “The Mission of the Artist in the Twentieth Century”; held at CMA [PD article, June 5, 1925]

1926 William McAndrew (Superintendent of Schools, Chicago); “Life, Liberty, Happiness and Art”: held at CMA

1927 Dr. Henry Turner Bailey; held at CSA

1928 Dr. Henry Turner Bailey; held at CMA

1929 Royal B. Farnum; held at CSA

1930 Rev. Dilworth Lupton; “Zest for Living, a Key to Success”; held at CSA

1931 Dr. William Elgin Wickenden (President, Case School of Applied Science); held at Severance Hall

1932 Mr. William Mathewson Milliken (Director, Cleveland Museum of Art); held at CMA

1933 Instead of a commencement address or message to the graduates, there was: “A Retrospective of the School’s First Fifty Years” by Mrs. Martha Tibbals Weaver & Mr. Henry George Keller; held at CMA

1934 Mr. Louis Rorimer; held at CMA

1935 Mrs. Malcolm L. McBride; held at CMA

1936 Mr. Alfred Howell; held at CMA

1937 Mr. Henry G. Keller; held at CMA

1938 Mr. William M. Milliken; held at CMA

1939 The Hon. Harold H. Burton; held at CMA

1940 Mr. Henry G. Keller; held at CMA

1941 Dr. Thomas Munro; held at CMA

1942 Dr. Charles H. Lake; held at CMA
1943  Professor Finley M. K. Foster, PhD; held at CSA
1944  The Honorable Frank J. Lausche; held at CSA
1945  Mr. Louis Seltzer; held at CSA
1946  Dr. Joseph Remenyi; held at CMA
1947  Dr. William Elgin Wickenden (President, Case School of Applied Science); held at CMA
1948  Dr. Gordon K. Chalmers (President Kenyon College); held at CMA
1949  Dr. Louis Warren (Director, Lincoln National Life Foundation); “Lincoln as an Inspiration in Art”; held at Severance Hall
1950  Dr. John S. Millis (President of Western Reserve University); “Art and Intellect”; held at Severance Hall
1951  Dr. Wolfgang Stechow (Oberlin College); “Contemporary Challenges and Opportunities”; held at CMA
1952  Nathaniel R. Howard (Editor, The Cleveland News); “The Artist in Today’s World”; held at CMA
1953  Professor Raymond T. English (Kenyon College); “Technique and Freedom”; held at CMA
1954  Rev. Laurence H Hall (Senior Canon, Trinity Cathedral, Cleveland); held at CMA
1955  Harold T. Clark (Trustee, Cleveland Institute of Art; President, Cleveland Museum on Art); held at CMA
1956  (no program); invitations states held at CMA
1957  George W. Walker (Vice President and Director of Styling Ford Motor Company); “Designing for Selling”; held at CIA
1958  Sherman E. Lee (Director, The Cleveland Museum of Art); “The Responsibility of the Artist as an Individual”; held at CIA
1959  Nathaniel R. Howard (Editor, The Cleveland News); “The Artist in the Atomic Age”; held at CIA
1960  G. Brooks Earnest (President, Fenn College); “Art and Innovation”; held at CIA

1961  Alfred B. Bonds, Jr. (President, Baldwin Wallace College); “Leprosy and Lollipops”; held at CIA

1962  Frank H. Hurley (Dean, Faculty of Arts And Sciences, Western Reserve University); “The Ordinary and the Extraordinary”

1963  Alfred B. Bonds, Jr. (President Baldwin Wallace College); “Art and The Crisis and Ethics”; held at CIA

1964  Ralph M. Besse (President, The Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company); “A Balanced Culture”; held at CIA

1965  Rowland P. McKinley, Jr. (Headmaster, University School); ‘Some Thoughts For The Creative – By One Who Is Not”; held at CIA

1966  George H. Baird (Executive Director and President, Education Research Council of Greater Cleveland); “Pioneers of Art and Beauty”; held at CIA

1967  Norman L. Rice (Dean, College of Fine Arts, Carnegie Institute of Technology); “First Person, Singular”; held at CIA

1968  Dr. Paul W. Briggs (Superintendent, Cleveland Public Schools); “Creativity”; held at CIA

1969  Dr. Robert Bertolli (President, Massachusetts College of Art and State Director of Art Education); “This Is Our Day”; held at CIA

1970  Hale Chatfield (Assistant Professor of English, Hiram College – Poet and Author); “Art as a Way of Life”; held at CIA

1971  Dr. Sherman Lee (Director, Cleveland Museum of Art); “Eye Object”; held at CIA

1972  Professor Paul B. Arnold (Chairman, Department of Art, Oberlin College); “Where do we come from? What are we? Where are we going?”; held at CIA

1973  Dr. Roman Vishniac (Photo-Micrographer); “The final goal of our efforts should be the harmonious society and the creative individuum – or else”; held at CIA
1974  Joseph Blotner (Professor of English, University of Michigan); “You are welcome to it”; held at CIA
1975  Walter Darby Bannard (Painter, Art Critic); held at CIA
1976  Gene Baro (Critic, Writer, Corcoran Gallery of Art Director); “Artists in their Times”; held at CIA
1977  Andrew Forge (Dean, School of Art, Yale University); “Out on the Street”; held at CIA
1978  James King (Chief Executive Kilkenny Design Workshops Limited); “Design and Enterprise”; held at CIA
1979  Gideon Chagy (Vice President The Business Committee for the Arts, New York); “The Artist and the World of Business”; held at CIA
1980  Arnold Herstand (Director, U.S. Office Galerie Maeght Paris, Zurich, Barcelona); “The Acceptance of the Artist: A Mixed Blessing”; held at CIA
1981  Winfred Lutz (Institute Class of 1965, Gund Traveling Scholar, Director of Studies in Sculpture, Yale School of Art); “To Smile at the Cow or Be Eaten by the Horse”; held at CIA
1982  William Collins (1982 Visiting Artist); “On Becoming an Artist”; held at CIA
1983  Benny Andrews (Director, Visual Arts Program National Endowment for the Arts, Washington D.C.); “The Individual Artist, the Ultimate Individual”; held at CIA
1984  George V. Baylis (Dean of the School of Art University of Michigan-Ann Arbor, President of the National Association of Schools of Art and Design); “Ad Astra Per Aspera”; held at CIA
1985  Robert A Mayer (Director International Museum of Photography at George Eastman House, Rochester, New York); “Personal Integrity in the Quest for Excellence”; held at CIA
1986  Patterson Sims (Associate Curator, Permanent Collection, Whitney Museum of American Art); “A Calling, Not a Career”; held at CIA
1987  Dr. Theodore E. Klitzke (Dean Emeritus, The Maryland Institute College of Art); “Turn a Fresh Eye Upon the World”; held at CIA
1988  Grace Hartigan (Distinguished Painter, Director, Hoffberger Graduate School of Painting, The Maryland Institute College of Art); “What’s New”; held at CIA

1989  Moe Brooker (International Artist and Educator); “The Quality of Quality”; held at CIA

1990  Susan Wyatt (Executive Director Artists Space, New York); held at CIA

1991  Dennis E. Moore (Producer-Director, Dennis Earl Moore Productions Inc., Distinguished Alumnus, Class of 1966); held at CIA

1992  Gerald P. Hirshberg (Vice President Nissan Design International, Inc., Distinguished Alumnus); held at CIA

1993  Dr. Mary Schmidt Campbell (Dean Tish School of the Arts, New York University); held at CIA

1994  Willis H. (Bing) Davis (Chairman Art Department, Central State University, Wilberforce, Ohio); held at CIA

1995  Peter B. Lewis (Chairman, President, & CEO Progressive Corporation); held at CIA

1996  Phillip C. Johnson (Noted Architect); held at CIA

1997  Elizabeth Murray (Painter); held at CIA

1998  Dennis Barrie (President, Barrie Consulting); held at CIA

1999  Garner Tullis (Artist and Collaborator); held at CIA

2000  Marc Brown (Class of 1969); held at CIA

2001  John Marshall (Diploma 1964, BFA 1965); held at CIA

2002  Dave Hickey (Professor of Art and Theory, University of Nevada, Las Vegas); held at CIA

2003  Anne Wilkes Tucker (Gus and Lyndall Wortham, Curator of Photography, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston); held at CIA

2004  Gerald P Hirshberg (Class of 1963, 1971, Distinguished Alumnus); held at CIA
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Speaker/Role</th>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>David A. Ross (President Artists' Pension Trust, New York; Principal 5ive [sic]; Curator); held at CIA</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>Tucker Viemeister (VP Creative, Studio Red at Rockwell); held at CIA</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>Timothy Rub (Director, Cleveland Museum of Art); held at CIA</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>John R. Nottingham, John W. Spirk (Class of 1972, Co-Presidents Nottingham-Spirk Design Associates, Inc); held at CIA</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>Bennett Peji (Principal, Bennett Peji Design and San Diego Commissioner of Arts and Culture); held at CIA</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>Catherine Gund (Documentary filmmaker and Founder Aubin Pictures); held at John Hay High School</td>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>Lowery Stokes Sims (Charles Bronfman International Curator at the Museum of Arts &amp; Design New York City); held at CIA</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>Toby Devan Lewis (Curator, Philanthropist, Art Collector, Author); held at CMA</td>
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<td>2013</td>
<td>David Lee Csicsko (Class of 1980, Artist +Designer); held at CMA</td>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>Fred Bidwell (Interim Director, Cleveland Museum of Art); held at CMA</td>
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<td>2015</td>
<td>Brian Michael Bendis (Comic Book and Television Writer/Producer), held at CMA</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>Willem Dafoe (Actor), held at CMA</td>
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