

Jaan Uhelszki



Jaan Uhelszki rose through the ranks at CREEM Magazine from the subscription desk to noted critic and editor for the magazine. Working concessions in the Grande Ballroom as a teen in Detroit introduced her to music from the likes of *Jimi Hendrix*, *The Stooges*, *Janis Joplin*, *The MC5* and others. Dave Marsh assigned



Jaan (center) in makeup to perform with KISS

her first story, covering Smokey Robinson's retirement press conference.

As a woman in the industry, she had to go further and work harder than her male counterparts. Jaan turned that into a strength though. "A man couldn't have done that story. He wouldn't have got the access. Being an underestimated under-gender I got away with things my male counterparts couldn't," she wrote of performing onstage in full make-up with the band *KISS*, an experience she documented in her feature article



"I Dreamed I Was Onstage with KISS in My Maidenform Bra." She would say later that that experience helped her writing, because she understood the thrill of performing in front of thousands of screaming fans better than other critics and music journalists.

Other notable interviews were with Jimmy Page of *Led Zeppelin* - after following the band on tour for a week with Page's publicist serving as an "interpreter" - and *Lynryd Skynryd* - where Ronnie Van Zandt told her that he didn't see himself living to 30 (he died a year later) and that he "only drank while working".

In 1976, Jaan left CREEM to work for other publications and continues to work in the music industry to this day.

Why I was inspired: Jaan was a pioneer who didn't let anything hold her back from getting an exceptional story.

--Submitted by Caitlin Donnelly