

Caroline Harvey

performance poet. educator. activist.

Caroline Harvey is an award winning performance poet, a writing professor at Berklee College of Music, and an internationally renowned lecturer and teacher. She believes in poetry and performance as a powerful path for overcoming adversity and affecting real social change.

Featured on Season 5 of
HBO's Russell Simmons
Presents Def Poetry

Director of the Poetry Slam
Program at Berklee
College of Music

Awarded the 2014
Steelgrass Residency for
Creative Writing

Featured Artist at the
IUCN World Parks
Congress, Sydney 2014

2012 Pushcart Prize
Nominee


US Embassy in Serbia 2011
Grant Award Winner

M.A. from UCLA Department
of World Arts & Cultures

Shared stages with Mary
Lambert, Alicia Keys,
Livingston Taylor, Melissa
Ferrick, Donna De Lory, and
Yasiin Bey (Mos Def)



photo: Melissa Mahoney



Caroline Harvey, often called a punk folk theater artist, shares stories of creative surviving, and her work inspires a message of healing, unity, and empowerment.

She draws as much from Shakespeare as she does from Henry Rollins; she is as identified with a history of rebellion and recovery as she is with Buddhism & contemporary neurobiology. She has over 20 years of training and experience as a professional writer, performer, teacher, and workshop leader.

Caroline's poetry speaks to:

- Surviving & Thriving Post-Trauma
- Sex, Sexual Identity & the Gender Spectrum
- Women, Power & Innovative Feminism
- Spirituality in the Modern World
- Addiction Recovery

Caroline creates courses and workshops in:

- Poetry, Songwriting & Musical Theater
- Stage Techniques, Vocal Performance & Public Speaking
- Wellness Practices for the Artist, Activist & Musician

Caroline has been widely featured on radio & TV, at famed musical venues, and in the slam poetry nerve centers. She is a regular contributor to healing arts destinations including The Esalen Institute and shares her work internationally at colleges & universities. Caroline is a two-time resident artist with The Girl Project; her writing is published in national and academic journals including Gertrude Press, Radius, The Legendary, and The Lowestoft Chronicle. At Berklee, Caroline teaches her original curricula and collaborates with hit songwriter & stage techniques expert Livingston Taylor, and with celebrated writing teacher & author Pat Pattison.

A Personal Note from Caroline:

My personal history brought me into adulthood feeling isolated, silenced, and disconnected. I, like so many others, was misdiagnosed, miscategorized, and made to feel flawed by a culture that values impossible ideals. I lived with suffering, deep sadness, dangerously restrictive eating patterns, long periods of isolation, suicide attempts & cutting, an inability to maintain healthy personal boundaries, and drug & alcohol abuse.

Healing happened for me through the dedicated search for help from Western medicine, the practices of yoga, in literature and visual art, in the teachings of Buddhism, naturopathy, and more. But Slam Poetry remains one of my most precious tools for survival and health, and I have been a slam team member and/or a coach every year since 2003. Spoken Word taught me that I have a unique biological make-up...and I can either let it overwhelm me, or I can learn to maneuver and master it. The practice, study, and community of Performance Poetry helped me transform my so-called disorders into assets now essential to my life as an artist and activist.

My life is now regularly joyous, fun, adventurous, and hopeful. But I will not ever forget what it felt like to be silenced and suffering. I am committed to creating safe and exciting spaces in which anyone - regardless of skill, experience, history, belief, or politic - can bask in the liberating and healing gifts of Spoken Word.



*"delightfully heartfelt...
a startling, honest
admission of vulnerability."
-Fiona Lockyer, thejustice.org*

What they're saying:

"Caroline Harvey's voice is as powerful as the wind. Her words have purpose. Her performances are mesmerizing because she doesn't lose herself; she barely holds on. Think Mary Oliver, Patti Smith & a Grateful Dead concert. Now hit blend and drink up." -Melissa Ferrick, 8 time Boston Music Award winner, International Acoustic Music Award winner

"Having Caroline as a coach has bettered me in my writing, my performance, and my ability to receive other people's stories and give as much support as I am getting. I am more confident, better at articulating myself, and am no longer afraid to ask the challenging questions." -Poet Ethan Smith, acclaimed author of "Letter to the Girl I Used to Be"

"Caroline is deliriously inspirational...her poems are remarkable cavalcades of images...she is a phenomenon."
-Poet Tom Daley, Faculty: Walnut Hill School for the Arts & Online School of Poetry

"Caroline is one of this world's truest blessings. Even one small encounter with her will elevate your spirit and your soul as a natural consequence. You can never be the same, nor do you want to be." -Workshop Participant, 2012

Praise for Adrenaline

Praise the torment that wrecking-balls your neck.
Praise the clench of pitbull jaw, how your mammal brain
knows only freeze, fight, run. Praise the run. Praise
the terror.

Praise the terror that holds you still as a blood clot.
Still as the tossed gun. Praise the gun of your heart, its
quickenings and blasting, spurring, spurring your left lung
into a turbine. Praise the moment

you recall your legs. Praise the legs that hightail it primal out of
your bed, the womb, rehab, hospitals, that bad marriage, the winter.
Praise the dropkick, the blow, the sprint that shoots you out
like a circus cannon tumbleweed,

all flame and dazzle in your grand, shimmering escape. Praise
the gut-sense to escape. Praise the involuntary deep breath.
Praise the cease of all bodily functions except those which are
absolutely necessary for survival.

Praise the oxygen increase, the pupils opening like
gold rush, like geyser. Praise the kidneys, those pedestals of
purple flesh cradling your precious glands. Praise the glands that know
the odorless smell of threat,

the tinge of invisible smoke, the flick of an eye that intends to
mug, rape, push. Praise the foolish mugger that thinks he can
win. Praise the attacker who has no idea what an
inextinguishable ocean of speed

you are. Praise the dura mater. Praise the thick balloon
of membrane sheltering so perfectly the hallelujah treasurechest
that commands your every yes and no. Praise the yes
and the no. Praise the silk space between them.

Praise the blood highways and the vibrating meridians and the
nerves and the ureters and the synapses and the arteries
and the pink, fluttering mysteries that play xylophone symphonies
in your confessionbox of a marrow.

Praise your birthright. Praise your birth.
Praise it again.
Praise your persistent, victorious instinct to live
and to live and to live
and to live.

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