

Jane SpokenWord



I met Miguel Algarín at the Local 269 on E. Houston St. at a duo performance with Albey 'onBass' Balgochian. In the audience there was a man sitting at the bar who was obviously into the scene. His voice was distinct and perceptible from the back of the room as he passionately extolled the music and the spoken word. Nearing the end of our set I saw him making his way to the stage, he wanted to sit in with the bass player. Although I did not know who he was, I instinctively relinquished the mic to him. This is not something I would usually do, but there was something special about the spirit of this man. He immediately began to spit poetry in harmony with the bass, his voice was delicious and I devoured every word. I knew I wanted to speak to him when he was done, but he quickly and unceremoniously

left the club. I asked the bartender who he was, but he remained the unknown poet. Several weeks later we (Albey & I) were walking home and there in front of the Nuyorican Poets Cafe was the poet from the bar. To my complete astonishment it was El Maestro Miguel Algarín, I knew him well from his work but I had never met him. From that moment on, every time I saw him in the East Village we would talk about life and poetry... his poetic lesson was always "write what you know." When Miguel and Albey decided to record a cd together (Soul to Sol) they agreed it would be favorable to do so in a comfortable informal setting... our apartment. The times spent at my kitchen table were glorious, I kept the wine glasses full and the joints lit, and when I think of the captivating wizardry of his storytelling, I can still hear and feel his deep passionate voice in my head. My memories of Miguel and the Nuyorican Poets Cafe will always be treasured, at his birthday party we danced and he schooled me about the 'bomba,' at the cd release party of "Soul to Sol" I was euphoric when he called me onstage to accompany him on a piece. It was an honor to make my debut on the Nuyorican stage with its founding father. You are missed my friend, thank you for your generosity, the profound memories and the lessons, your spirit lives on in all who knew you and your work. "Write what you know."

A poet of the street **Jane SpokenWord's** performances represent the spoken word as it is meant to be experienced, raw, uncensored and thought provoking. Her collaborations include Nuyorican Poet Miguel Algarín, Beat Poet John Sinclair, HipHop musician/producer DJ Nastee, and a performance at The Whitney Museum with the Maestro Cecil Taylor (All About Jazz Best of 2016.) She has authored two books of poetry with art and music by co-author Albey onBass: 'Word Against the Machine' and 'Tragically Hip' and her work has been published in the National Beat Poetry Foundation Anthologies, The Underground Poets & Artists Anthology, 3 Nuyorican Poets Cafe Alternative New Year's Day Spoken Word Extravaganza's, The Bezzine 100 Thousand Poets for Change, Word City Monthly, and Time of the Poet Republic. Her poetry and videos of past works as well as current projects are available on her website: <https://janespokenword.com/>