

Penny Arcade



Miguel Algarín was a mystery. He was a renegade visionary who elevated a despised street patois to poetry yet someone who was employed for decades by one of the East Coast's stuffiest colleges, Rutgers; an expert in Shakespeare. Miguel Algarín was self-contained. He grew in power from working-class roots that refused to be intellectually limited, courtesy of his parents and once in the educational freedom that characterized America's 1950's he hit the ground running and married his love of both low brow and highbrow, of the street and the ivory tower.

A son of Loisaida, he never lost or left his love of NYC's Lower East Side. He was a citizen of it's streets, known and loved and sometimes feared. Buoyant, electric, uninhibited, affectionate,

sociable, demonstrative and approachable many were none the less intimidated by him

Miguel Algarín had the aloneness of the long distance runner as the world around him and the Nuyorican Poets Cafe he co-founded gentrified, and the people closest to him who could fully understand him, died young.

Miguel Algarín brought a street theatricality and Puerto Rican macho swagger to his poetry that enveloped his shifting sexual persona and the dynamic presentation of his performance.

A poet with nine lives, Miguel Algarín rose up again and again, surprising everyone who knew him.

Self-indulgent and sometimes belligerent as he battled diabetes, alcoholism and poor romantic choices, the brilliant hard wiring of his mind made it difficult for anyone to caution him or help him beyond the custodial care he would accept when necessary.

He calmly accepted the cards fate dealt him even when he was placed on the back shelf, as is often done to innovators by those that follow. Yet Miguel never abdicated his Throne. I wish he was here now.

Penny Arcade
Lower East Side

Penny Arcade Aka Susana Ventura is an internationally respected performance artist, writer, poet and experimental theatre maker known for her magnetic stage presence, her take no prisoners wit and her content rich plays and one liners. She is the author of ten scripted

performance plays and hundreds of performance art pieces. Her work has always focused on the other and the outsider, giving voice to those marginalized by society. Her willingness to speak truth to power at the expense of career concerns has made her an international icon of artistic resistance. Her decades long focus on the creation of community and inclusion as the goals of performance and her efforts to use performance as a transformative act mark her as a true original in American theatre and performance. <https://pennyarcade.tv>