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[Jim Carroll Watches The Earth Recede](#)

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(Below, via his home in Athens, GA, Daniel Hutchens shares his thoughts on the life and work of Jim Carroll...)

A while back I wrote a *Diversions* feature for Aquarium Drunkard about my [“ten most influential albums.”](#) I found out ten wasn’t nearly enough. I had to leave off so many albums essential to my musical education, one of which was Jim Carroll’s [Catholic Boy](#).

Upon hearing of [Carroll’s](#) death, I’ve found myself compelled to revisit his work, and to write down some of my feelings about it. In my personal life, another member of my extended “family” passed away recently,

and I think writing this article provided a kind of therapy...it's always good to keep busy. And in the process of digging through old notebooks, memories, etc., I've discovered Carroll's writing had even a heavier impact on my own life and work than I'd consciously realized.

I started out writing this piece for publication in Athens, Georgia's [Flagpole Magazine](#), but they wanted something brief, no more than 850 words. This piece quickly outgrew that format, so I brought it back to Aquarium Drunkard.

Jim Carroll, a truly great poet, punk rock singer, philosopher, artistic heir to outlaw creative types such as Rimbaud and the Beat Generation, and all-around NYC icon for our times, passed away September 11 at his home in Manhattan. The cause was likely a heart attack, according to his former wife, Rosemary Carroll. He was found fallen across his desk, where he had been writing.

Carroll was born August 1, 1949, in New York City, and spent his childhood on the Lower East Side, where he attended Catholic schools. At age 12 he began keeping a series of journals that would eventually become the famed [Basketball Diaries](#), which in 1995 became a mainstream Hollywood movie starring Leonardo DiCaprio. Carroll had mixed feelings about the movie at the time, saying that, "The actors all did great jobs, they're excellent. It's just that the movie doesn't have very much to do with my book."

The book itself recounts Carroll's youth, ages 12-15, when he was a star basketball player in school, and an excellent student. He won a scholarship to Trinity, an elite private Manhattan high school. He led his basketball team, the Trinity Tigers, to serious respectability and many triumphs on the court; he was named "All Ivy Player" for his accomplishments.

I came across a videotaped 1991 interview with Carroll, looks like it was done backstage somewhere, in Cleveland, Ohio, in which Carroll recalls detailed enthusiasms of his basketball career that bring to mind some of Jack Kerouac's descriptions of high school football triumphs, and bedroom made-up sports games—loving, artistic sketches of youthful athletic feats:

"When I came in as a freshman, I scored 47 points in my first game...I could dunk a basketball backwards...When I was a freshman, Calvin Hill, who went on to be the running back for the Dallas Cowboys...was playing for Riverdale...and, um, he played basketball, of course, he was 6' 4", he was built like Jim Brown when he was a senior in high school...he was a pretty good basketball player, I remember on a fast break I pinned his shot...pinning is a big woof in New York, on the playgrounds, if you pin a guy...what you're s'posed to do, y know he takes a layup on a fast break and you pin it to the backboard, y know when you block it, doesn't matter if you get called for goaltending or not, you got him, y know?"

But *The Basketball Diaries* also reveal Carroll's other life: by age 13 he had started dabbling in heroin, just once in a while at first, but as his teenage years progressed he found himself a full-blown junkie, hustling on the streets for money to get his next fix, letting sleazy businessmen blow him in filthy subway station mens' rooms for cash, rolling drunks for their wallets, snatching purses, whatever.

After Carroll's sophomore year in high school, the interest in basketball waned, and even the new fixation on drugs couldn't approach the ever-expanding buzz of what would become a life's work: poetry. Carroll said in the aforementioned 1991 interview that, "See, then, people thought it was drugs that ruined me [for basketball, after his sophomore year], but it wasn't. It was poetry, I got interested in poetry. The jock trip was runnin' thin."

While writing this article, I contacted Cassie Carter, who is Carroll's longtime friend and maintainer of his website, [CatholicBoy.com](#). She pointed out the poetry angle of the Diaries to me: "There's basketball,

drugs/hustling, and POETRY. Everyone misses that because it's the lens they're looking through, although there are plenty of entries in BD that discuss it directly. Poetry, poetry, poetry. That is the main story of the damn book."

It's true. The book gives an adult-dosage-account of a young artist's coming of age and gaining mastery over his medium, meanwhile wrestling his lusts, pains, confusions, weaknesses, addictions...but also his sudden rushes of joy and enlightenment, his great times "in the zone" on the basketball court, as well as in his notebook...it's a timeless document. His young life had certainly been a surreal battleground of heroin addiction, hustling for cash, eluding cops, etc. ...on those mythic streets of NYC, which his writings describe as a mix of the Wild West, and some sinister jungle, and a massive private club owned by the super-wealthy and the celebrities and the politicians...but he documented the whole staggering expanse, he dedicated himself to catching those poetic lines as they flew by, and he slapped 'em down in his notebooks, and he drew a faithful picture of his city in his life in his time.



His first book of poetry, [Organic Trains](#), was published when he was only 16. Meanwhile excerpts of *The Basketball Diaries* began to appear in [The Paris Review](#). The poet Ted Berrigan took Jim under his wing, and in fact took him to meet Jack Kerouac, one of Jim's bigtime heroes. Kerouac observed that, at 13, Jim Carroll was writing better prose than most contemporary "famous" novelists.

Another "Beat Generation" legend, [William Burroughs](#), called Carroll a "born writer." And another great poet/rocker in her own right, Patti Smith, told the New York Times the weekend of Carroll's passing that, "I met him in 1970, and already he was pretty much universally recognized as the best poet of his generation. The work was sophisticated and elegant. He had beauty."

+ CONTINUE READING BELOW AFTER THE JUMP.....

Indeed, during the 70's Carroll became a young, mysterious but magnetic "star" of sorts in the rarefied art/celebrity circles of New York City. He kept company with the likes of Andy Warhol, Patti Smith and Robert Mapplethorpe, Allen Ginsberg, Bob Dylan, members of the Velvet Underground, and many others. Rolling Stones guitarist Keith Richards helped Carroll score a three record deal with Atlantic, the first result of which would be *Catholic Boy*, which was released in 1980.

It's an earthshaking masterpiece of a rock n roll record, a buzzing hybrid of raw switchblade punk and Carroll's cutting-edge-poetic NYC street lingo, illuminated with real spiritual fervor, and desire and fear and junk hallucinations and lowdown sorrows and soaring orgasms, all of it, the whole insane world he observed all around him, glorious and unbearable all at the same time. The lyrics are rabid poetry unleashed, glistening with that diamondpure scalpel of Carroll's fierce intelligence. And he managed to sketch even what he couldn't see or taste or experience...in my view, he's one of the most "religious" writers I've ever come across...never in a preachy or mean-spirited kinda way, but his writing just stirs souls and makes his readers/listeners curious about the nature of God and life and death, and about the similarities between the rites of the Catholic church and the obsessive routines of a junkie shooting up: "I just love a ritual."

Carroll was blessed with great partners on the Catholic Boy project, too: the band was Brian Linsley and Terrell Winn on guitars, Steve Linsley on bass, and Wayne Woods on drums, plus a few guests, notably Stones mainstay Bobby Keys on sax. The band created a sound that can only be described as pure, sharp, and savage. Carroll's meticulous vocals snake atop the thunder with relaxed dead-on timing, first a complicated tongue-twister of a stanza that would intimidate most rock singers, then an unself-conscious growl or moan or just a perfectly-placed audible breath...hard to tell how many bands, singers, writers, and artists of every stripe have been profoundly schooled by this record. It was produced by Earl McGrath and Bob Clearmountain, and the classic cover photo is by Annie Liebovitz. This record don't mess around, to say the least. It's damn sure standing the test of time; it'll still hold your head underwater for a brutal baptizing while kicking you hard in the ass and swiping your wallet just for chuckles. It's a measuring stick for all rock n roll bands yet to come... "Yeah yeah, you can play blazing supersonic solos ad nauseam, but can you do this? Can you change people's lives?"

Of course over the years Jim caught a lot of shit about all the technically detailed descriptions of drugs in his writing—scenes about buying drugs and injecting them and the hard ecstatic initial rush of getting high and the inevitable hellish comedowns—the whole episodes always drawn to the finest detail with a steady, honest hand. But he never romanticized the drug culture; he just told the truth. The fun, wild, creative side of drugs—which of course is why people do drugs in the first place, and have for centuries—but also the nightmarish consequences, the hangovers, the jail sentences, the diseases and deaths.

In a 1997 interview, Carroll said, "I've met kids getting over drug problems who think of [*The Basketball Diaries*] as a real anti-drug book. It's just where you are in your life and what you want to romanticize."

And here's Carroll in an interview discussing Kurt Cobain's suicide: "I just thought back to when I was doing drugs and I could never think of killing myself, because writing was too important to me. I always thought that my best work was yet to come, so that was what always kept me going."

So I find it hard to understand those who have criticized Carroll over the years for his "glamorization" of drugs, suicide, death. (First of all, as George Carlin said: "Have you ever noticed how many dumbass motherfuckers there are in this country?") But really, you just have to actually listen to the words. Carroll's most famous song is "*People Who Died*", and the lyrics get right down to business:

Teddy sniffing glue, he was 12 years old
Fell from the roof on East Two-Nine
Cathy was 11 when she pulled the plug
On 26 reds and a bottle of wine
Bobby got leukemia, 14 years old
He looked like 65 when he died
He was a friend of mine...

G-berg and Georgie let their gimmicks go rotten
They died of hepatitis in upper Manhattan
Sly in Vietnam took a bullet in the head
Bobby OD'd on Drano on the night that he was wed
They were two more friends of mine
I miss 'em, they died

Those ain't exactly romantic, rose-colored-glasses sentiments about death. They're just pieces of accurate reporting, like Hemingway's dispatches from the wars. Brutal but also can become uplifting to the listener, who suddenly feels a kinship with another human being, someone who has suffered a similar agony or horror...and to hear that song blasting full-on earsplitting volume from a great speaker system, or to hear a great rock band cover that song ([which, by the way, Drive-By Truckers do regularly](#))—well, to me, it actually feels healing, empowering, like a prayer plugged into about 10,000 watts of righteous power.

Truckers' frontman Patterson Hood had this to say about Carroll: "I was first turned on to Jim Carroll's 1st album (*Catholic Boy*) by my older cousin back in 1980 when I was 16 years old. I totally fell in love with 'People Who Died' and worked it up as a cover in my High School band (I think we were called Apollo). I have since covered it in every band I have ever played in including Adam's House Cat and Drive-By Truckers. DBT has probably played it close to 1000 times, including a recording on our live album (Alabama Ass Whuppin'). Also, in High School, I read Jim's book '*The Basketball Diaries*' which I probably read 4-5 times over the years. It probably kept me from ever trying heroin back in my wilder days, for which I'm forever grateful. I never got to meet him, although we had a mutual friend in NYC who says he played him our version of '*People Who Died*'. I was told he liked our version. I really hate to hear of his passing."

Producer David Barbe formed the seminal Athens, GA punk band Mercyland back around the time he was discovering Carroll's work: "I first became familiar with Jim Carroll when I moved into the UGA dorms in '81 and Joel Suttles had a copy of '*Catholic Boy*.' Right off the bat, '*People Who Died*' was pretty undeniable to us and fit in with our steady diet (at the time) of The Clash, The Jam, Elvis C, etc. That record led me to read '*The Basketball Diaries*,' the work with which I most associate him. Its depiction of disillusionment and boredom belies the time in which it took place. It is a story that is out of time, a harbinger of things 10 years away. It is engrossing, sad, moving, funny...He was an odd figure, in a way. Punk rocker, poet, hustler, junkie, basketball star. Famous for a series of disconnected images that strangely add up and depict the whole man. I'll miss him."

As I mentioned earlier, Carroll's friend Cassie Carter was kind enough to grant me an interview during the writing of this article. She shared lots of stories and insights, but the happiest news she reported was that Carroll's long-awaited novel, tentatively titled *The Petting Zoo*, had finally been completed just before his death:

"It'll need some final editing...but the actual writing is done. I'm positive it will be [published]. And I can tell you that everybody's going to be delighted. It's wonderful."

Jim Carroll was a genuine artist, and a one-in-a-million character, possessing the kind of utter cool that only results from some deepdown, slowburn wisdom...I remember seeing one of his poetry readings at the old Uptown Lounge in Athens, back in the late 80's...(in fact, a little detour here, my band [Bloodkin](#) opened for Jim Carroll that night...and he hadn't showed by maybe 9 PM, so the owner of the venue told us to go ahead and start playing, even though there wasn't yet a soul in the place...but we did as we were told, played to a pretty much empty room, and I was kinda pissed...then when Jim finally showed up, I talked to him for a while back in the office...told him the story about our band having to play early... "That's such typical shit, man," he said, in his laid-back-more-than-thou ex-junkie drawl. "Why should I have gotten here early? What do I gotta do, tune my poetry books for soundcheck? And why does that mean you guys should play earlier? I only read about an hour, man, there was no rush. That's why I hate the music business, it's truly the most corrupt business on the planet. Sorry, man. Didn't mean to step on your gig." And that's how he came across, polite, down-to-earth and conversational. We got on the topic of New York City hustlers and con artists—I'd been there the week before, and told him about seeing guys who would jump on trains as they pulled into the station, and hurry up and down the cars, begging money on the premise of "my wife and I have to buy tickets to Philly" or whatever...and then I'd see the same guy a few days later, spewing the same dialogue.

"Oh yeah man," Jim said, "those guys got it down to an artform. They're real shrewd, and I have a certain amount of respect for 'em." Then he told me a story about the "umbrella guys" in New York, who keep a bundle of umbrellas stashed someplace, then whenever it rains they break out the umbrellas and sell them at exorbitant prices to hapless tourists...)

Okay, detour over. I remember watching him read his poetry that night at the Uptown, and there was this big drunk guy right down front who kept heckling, making smartass comments, desperate for attention...and

finally Jim looked right at the guy and said, “Look, chump, I don’t rattle. So you might as well knock it off.” It’s hard to explain, he just spoke a few words, no threats or anything, but his voice and demeanor were so rock-solid confident that the guy immediately shut up, didn’t make a peep the rest of the night. I’ve always remembered that moment, and Jim Carroll as one of the cooler customers I’ve ever witnessed working a performance. He just claimed his stage. And most definitely, across all the years of his books, records, and live performances, he didn’t rattle.

Following is the complete transcription of a telephone interview between Daniel Hutchens and Cassie Carter, Jim Carroll’s longtime friend and maintainer of his website, CatholicBoy.com.

The interview was conducted September 14, 2009.

DH: Once again, thank you so much for responding to me

CC: Sure, sure.

DH: in the middle of all this. And just, to let you know, um, I’m not a professional journalist or anything. I’m a musician. And I’ve lived and worked here in Athens, Georgia for the last 23 years. But I do occasionally write a magazine article, you know, freelance.

CC: Right.

DH: But when I heard the news, I called Flagpole Magazine, which is kind of the arts and music publication in Athens. And it’s actually pretty cool. [Not quite so cool on this occasion, as things turned out. I originally approached Flagpole about publishing this piece, but they didn’t seem overly interested; they wanted me to cut the text down to 850 words, and during phone conversations with a few editors it dawned on me they didn’t seem to know who Jim Carroll was. So I came back to Aquarium Drunkard.]

CC: Yeah it is, I think I mentioned in my email to you, my second email, they did a really nice two article series [about Carroll], it was around ’96 or something, I really liked it, but I think it got lost, back in those days I was linking straight to them, and then they just vaporized.

DH: Yeah, that’s the thing, especially stuff that’s older, I can’t find it in their archives online. But if I go down there and talk to somebody...

CC: Yeah, because you’re working with them, maybe you could ask them about it because I’d really like to have it...anyway, that’s not why you called.

DH: But I will definitely do that and see if I can find them...Now, obviously I don’t know you personally, but if I understand correctly, you knew Jim Carroll quite a long time.

CC: I started out, I was a scholar, I published a bibliography about him in 1990, and wrote my master’s thesis about him, and I built the website obviously, and published a couple of other articles. But, you know, in the past ten years, we’ve gotten to know each other and became friends. And really especially we were working pretty closely this summer, helping him get his stuff organized. So I was talking to him at least every week, and seeing him every other week at least.

DH: When you say helping him get his stuff organized...

CC: He had just moved, and, you know, there was just a bunch of stuff. He was trying to finish his book, and edit a big mess of notes and that sort of thing, so I was just helping him with that stuff.

DH: Cool. That's actually one big question that I have for you, and obviously if there's anything that you feel uncomfortable talking about, then I assume you won't (laughs). But I'm just really curious about that book. [Carroll had been working on a novel, tentatively titled *The Petting Zoo*, for many years, and rumors of its publication swirled through the press occasionally.] I've just heard so many stories for years.

CC: The book that has been looming for twenty years you mean? (laughs)

DH: Yes!

CC: Yeah, that's what he was working on.

DH: How far along is that book, do you know?

CC: Well, basically, it's funny, because basically the whole thing is written. And he's been working on line edits. And that was, he had all these notes from, just like line edits from the publisher at Penguin, and going through and making sure those were all done, and then he'd done some other stuff that had to be removed or consolidated, that's what he was working on.

DH: Just editing type stuff.

CC: Yeah, I mean it's all written but, really it was just line editing and shuffling some pieces around, and he had pulled a bunch of things out that were gonna go back in, last week that was what he was working on, the pieces that had been pulled out, he was putting back in. And um, but, you know, from what I've seen I believe the thing can be published. It'll need some final editing just to make sure everything is all together, but the actual writing is done.

DH: Do you think that it will be published?

CC: Yes, I'm positive it will be.

DH: That's great. And you are involved in that process?

CC: I hope so, yeah.

DH: Yeah. That's really great.

CC: Yeah, um, I spoke to Rosemary [Carroll's former wife] about that, and I should be but, we're gonna have to, obviously we'll have to talk to the publisher and see exactly how that's gonna work.

DH: Sure.

CC: Yeah, I don't want to step on anybody's toes.

DH: It's kind of a tender situation I guess.

CC: Yeah.

DH: But, man, I know I would love to see it, and so would so many people, I'm sure.

CC: Yeah, oh yes, and I can tell you that everybody's going to be delighted. It's wonderful.

DH: Well, that doesn't surprise me.

CC: Yeah. And, you know, he's talked a lot about this book, so people that have been following him will

already have a pretty good idea what it's about, but you know, it's in the details. That's always it with Jim. *The Basketball Diaries* is not a great book because of the story, it's a great book because of the writing, and the way that it's written.

DH: And, that surely is a great book though. In its own crazy way.

CC: Yes. (laughs)

DH: He affected so many people's lives. It's kind of amazing.

CC: It really is. I mean, just the emails I've been getting the past couple of days, and you know, people just talk about how he influenced them and affected them, people saying, you know, "I was in high school and playing around with drugs, and then I read *The Basketball Diaries* and that was it"...or...(laughs)...people that were already screwed up, and that book helped them turn their lives around. You know, people that have become artists, poets, or musicians, whatever, people who have followed that dream of being an artist because of that inspiration...for me, that's the most wonderful thing at a sad time, is to read these positive stories, you know.

DH: Yeah, absolutely. And there are people out there with criticisms of his work, that it was promoting drug abuse, which is craziness...

CC: Well, I would like to see them actually point to where it says that (laughs)...because it doesn't.

DH: Exactly. I was talking earlier today with a friend of mine, Patterson Hood, who's in the band Drive-By Truckers.

CC: Oh yeah, they cover "*People Who Died*"!

DH: They do it a lot. And he told me that, when he was young, he read *The Basketball Diaries* and he said that was probably the only reason he didn't start doing heroin at a wild time in his life.

CC: That's great.

DH: I did personally mess around with drugs at a certain time in my life, but that was my own problem, and nobody could have stopped me from doing it. And it was always refreshing to run across somebody like Jim Carroll, who would talk about the drug experience, and just simply tell the truth. His writing was not glamorizing drugs at all...I mean, the first couple times you do something, it is fun, it does feel good, that's why people do it. And when people lie about that, you know, it destroys trust, kids don't believe anything else you have to say about it.

CC: Yeah, that was one thing that Jim always said, as far as the "Just Say No" campaigns, that was the problem, it comes off as lying because you don't say that.

DH: Yeah. So anyway...Jim Carroll's writing was always more of a positive force to me, uplifting. When did you first actually meet him?

CC: Um, I think it was about '89 or something the first time...it was funny 'cause I was working on the bibliography, and, I was in San Diego at the time, and I had contacted Rosemary, Jim's ex-wife and now lawyer—poor Rosemary, she's just a wreck right now, you can imagine, she's handling all this stuff, and I feel so sorry for her—but anyway, back then, she just arranged for me to talk with Jim. And I showed up there, I just wanted to ask some questions for the bibliography and everything. He was reading at the Spirit Club in San Diego, and I kind of waited in line while he was talking to people and signing things for people. And I go back there, and one of the questions I had for him was about *Organic Trains*—his first book. And he whipped out a copy and he handed it to me. "Here, this is for you." That says a lot about him.

DH: That's pretty cool.

CC: Yeah. We talked for awhile, and I ended up giving him a ride back to his motel, and we sat in the car and talked for about an hour...and it was the first time I met him, and it was really delightful. I pretty much stayed in touch with him after that. In '96 I singlehandedly organized this massive reading—I was in Bowling Green, working on my Ph.D. at the time—and I organized a reading with Jim there, and God, it was the biggest turnout of any event ever at Bowling Green—and I spent two days with him then. Then later I moved to New York, and eventually started the website. And he'd give me stuff to put on there, you know, I'd take pictures of his t shirts, he had a collection of his old band t shirts that were like yellow with age (laughs)...and I laid 'em out on the floor of the apartment and took pictures of them. And he'd give me copies of the translations, stuff like that.

DH: Was he a computer guy himself?

CC: Yeah, he had a Mac laptop.

DH: Is that what he wrote on?

CC: Yeah.

DH: What was his health like the last couple years of his life?

CC: Honestly, he hadn't been feeling well at all.

DH: That's kind of what I had gathered.

CC: Yeah, he'd been going to the doctor and trying to find out what was wrong, and the usual...I don't know what the state of our health care in this country is...

DH: Not great.

CC: Yeah, you know, he went to the doctors and they'd just go, "You're fine. It's all those drugs you did in the past, it's catching up with you." But you know...at least run a damn test! But I have no idea, we don't know exactly what happened, because the autopsy results aren't back. Pretty sure it was a heart attack.

DH: How were his spirits or state of mind toward the end?

CC: He seemed to be pretty up. (laughs) He was pretty freaked out about getting the novel done, but I mean...

DH: He was trying not to finish it!

CC: Yeah, well, he was really trying to finish it but it was, you know it was quite a thing, he worked on the thing for 20 years, and it was like, "Get it out of here," but at the same time, "No!" (laughs)

DH: Honestly, coming to the end of a big project like that could be pretty intimidating.

CC: Yeah, it is. It is. Yeah, he was pretty up, I mean, I don't know, he just really always had such a great sense of humor. He didn't seem to be down at all.

DH: Did he still write other things toward the end? Poetry or anything?

CC: I think so, I'm pretty sure that there are some other things, like he started a while back a bunch of monologues...he did these great monologues, and he was starting to transcribe those.

DH: These were, like he would get up onstage and do a monologue?

CC: Yeah.

DH: Did he still follow basketball?

CC: I think the only thing he followed was college basketball. He wasn't interested in pro at all.

DH: Yep. Gotcha. Cool. Once again...thanks for doing this, you've given me a generous supply of information.

CC: Send me a copy, I wanna see it!

DH: I definitely will. And, you know, take care of yourself.

CC: Well, you too, and good luck with that article.

DH: Okay, so long.

CC: Alright. Alright, take care. Bye Bye.

Daniel Hutchens has lived in Athens, GA, and played in the band Bloodkin for the past twenty-three years.

This article is dedicated to the memories of Jim Carroll and Forrest Vereen.

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9 Responses to “Jim Carroll Watches The Earth Recede”

1. I was at that reading/show at the Uptown Lounge, and recall his dressing down of the asshat. Around the same time, Henry Rollins did a spoken-word show in Athens on UGA campus. I remember being struck with how much more powerful, subtle, and convincing JC's presentation was compared to HR's. One was sizzle, one was steak.

[1](#) / [Jon Parris](#) September 27th, 2009 at 7:55 pm

2. I'm sorry for his dead. I very repect him. If even I was introduced after watchin' film of his book “The Basketball Diares”. But then I've looked for informations about him through net-work and had many informed. I got good conclusions from his words and conclusions ofcourse. This was good idea from you. Excellent! Thank you!

[2](#) / [Maksud](#) September 28th, 2009 at 6:22 am

3. Thank you for a great tribute. I read the Basketball Diaries when I was 17 and the story has stayed with me my entire adult life. I feel lucky that I was able to see Jim Carroll perform both as a musician and a

poet, and I look forward to reading *The Petting Zoo*. The world lost someone incredibly talented and special on 9/11/09.

[3](#) / *elorac* September 28th, 2009 at 6:28 am

4. That was an excellent article and interview. I appreciate reading that as I am still trying to come to terms with the loss.

[4](#) / *RubyAlison* September 28th, 2009 at 7:27 am

5. Unrelated, but what are your thoughts on Judee Sill. My brother just introduced me to her today, and since you love the california scene I thought it would be cool to hear your thoughts.

[5](#) / *Ryan* September 28th, 2009 at 8:05 am

6. I liked the BD's cos I grew up in NYC and got all the in-jokes and observations on teenage NYC life. In the '90's I wrote a very brief humor memoir column "The Bocceball Diaries" for my friend Robert Martin's 'zine "Pagan Place". Apparently it was shown to Jim via a mutual friend and he found it funny. Glad I put a smile on his face. Just had to share a very small example of things that were inspired by him. and here's a poem I sent to cassie's site: (thank you for letting me share)

ode to jim carroll

just sweet 60
and what a day to die
sept. 11th
2009

shootin hoops dope
hangin off a bus
now this life
transforms from us

i write your name
in the dirt of
inwood park
the day i heard
you went out of reach of us

another nyc streetkid
alot like me
sniffin carbona
on the staten island ferry

just sweet 60
and what a day to die
sept. 11th
2009

with love by seaman cummings

[6](#) / *seaman and cummings* September 28th, 2009 at 10:31 am

7. great write-up. r.i.p.

[7](#) / *theMike* September 28th, 2009 at 12:31 pm

8. I'm only just dealing with such a huge loss...

I was just another nyc street kid, too.
 Strung out on heroin, Rock and Roll, the written word, and running.
 Always running
 Im standing still now, and traded addictions many times over.
 It will pass, my oh, so, well intentioned friends say.
 Unintentionally clueless and blindly cruel.
 "NO!" I try to say. NO NO NO!!!!
 It will never pass.
 That, my friends, is the point.
 Posterity, Legacy, no doubt.
 Dying, our grief for the one who is gone,
 its about fear.
 The fear that one day, we will be left,
 alone,
 with our memories.
 I don't worry much about that.
 No, not yet...

RIP JC.

I see you, y'know,
 And to paraphrase from the title song on a certain album,
 For one last time,
 I write your name
 Tonight.
 Tomorrow, who knows?

Jim Carroll 1949-2009
 I love you, Jim.
 Doe

[8](#) / *Doe Cavallere* September 28th, 2009 at 12:35 pm

9. I can't offer anything nearly as poignant as what's already been said. I simply recognize Carroll as one of those people who's influence was far beyond his name recognition. Music Junkie @ [Fusion 45](#)

[9](#) / [Fusion 45](#) September 28th, 2009 at 3:47 pm

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