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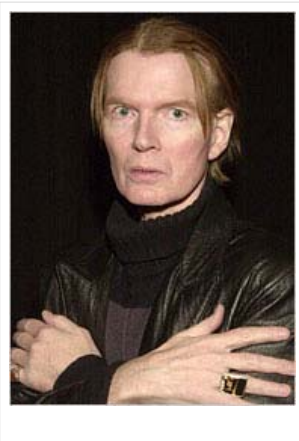
# Poet rocker Jim Carroll dead at age 60

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September 14, 12:02 PM The Doors Examiner Jim Cherry

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He was a poet who put together a rock band. He was a poet who was noticed at a young age, a fan of Rimbaud and compared with him, and known for his addictions. No, it's not Jim Morrison, though he did work with Ray Manzarek and Robby Krieger, but another poetic Jim. Jim Carroll died of a heart attack on Friday September 11, 2009, he was 60 years old.

I first heard of Jim Carroll in the early 80's when his album Catholic Boy came out. I listened to it's driving beats and sparse but poetic lyrics again and again. His story could have been mine, a boy who was an altar boy with poetic ambitions who wanted to be a rock star. His story could have been that of many. His poems made naturally great songs. The music didn't over power the lyrics but enhanced them and punched them home with a punk force behind them.

I read The Basketball Diaries, his self-published memoir which is still an amazingly sensitive portrait that swings wildly between the innocence of youth, and the decadent world of drug addiction. Mr. Carroll paid for his addictions not only with his soul, but his body, at first a beautiful young boy, but the hard life of addiction and the streets made his face a masque of what it once was, nearly unrecognizable by the time Hollywood made a movie of The Basketball Diaries. Dorian Gray without the luxury of a picture.

His book of poems, Living At The Movies, I read and reread looking for inspiration of my nascent poetic dreams. Still sitting on my shelves is a vinyl record album Catholic Boy and what has to be a first edition of Living At The Movies.

Later in his career Mr. Carroll worked with Ray Manzarek and Robby Krieger of The Doors, who were looking to recapture the poet in the rock star magic they had experienced with Jim Morrison. Together they worked up a few songs most notably Cops Talk, which was a typical Jim Carroll slice of NYC life, it wasn't very Doorsian. Mr. Carroll also appeared with Manzarek at poetry readings.

At the end of The Basketball Diaries Mr. Carroll wrote of wanting to be pure again. He's gone through the cleansing solvent of life and is once again, pure.



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