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## Punk rock poet Jim Carroll dies at 60

By CBC Arts  
CBC Arts

*Punk rocker and poet Jim Carroll, author of the autobiographical *The Basketball Diaries*, has died. He was 60.*

Punk rocker and poet Jim Carroll, author of the autobiographical *The Basketball Diaries*, has died. He was 60.

He died Friday while working at his desk in his Manhattan home, according to his website. The cause of death is believed to be a heart attack.

His Jim Carroll Band combined his poetic sensibility with rock 'n' roll and was influential in the burgeoning punk rock scene in 1970s New York.

Carroll made a big impact with his album *Catholic Boy* and the single *People Who Died*, which was heavily played in response to ex-Beatle John Lennon's death in 1980.

He rubbed shoulders with artists such as the Velvet Underground, Patti Smith, Larry Rivers and Robert Mapplethorpe in New York.

"There ain't much time left, you're born out of this insane abyss and you're going to fall back into it, so while you're alive, you might as well show your bare ass," Carroll told *Rolling Stone* at the time.

Known for his deeply personal lyrics, Carroll recorded the albums *Pools of Mercury*, *I Write Your Name* and *A World Without Gravity*.

He was an influence on a later generation of artists, both musicians and writers, and worked with Pearl Jam, Rancid, Lou Reed, Danny Barnes and John Cale.

Mentioned in Warhol films

Carroll was a poet before he became a rock musician, publishing his first collection *Organic Trains* at age 16.

Carroll was mentored by poet Ted Berrigan, and moved in circles that included William Burroughs, Beat writer Allen Ginsberg and artist Andy Warhol. He appeared in two of Warhol's films.

From age 12, he kept a journal, chronicling his Catholic childhood as the son of an Irish bartender and the impact of his

basketball scholarship.

Throughout his teens, he lived a double life, hooked on heroin but a basketball player and excellent student.

That story would become *The Basketball Diaries*, published in 1978 and made into a 1995 movie of the same name.

Other collections include:

- *4 Ups and 1 Down* (1970).
- *The Book of Nods* (1986).
- *Fear of Dreaming* (1993).
- *Void of course: Poems 1994-1997* (1998).

Carroll left New York in 1973 and moved to California where he vowed to kick his heroin addiction.

He spent several years enjoying solitude, writing poetry, and met his future wife, Rosemary Klemfuss, there. They later divorced.

In 1978, Patti Smith came to California on tour with her band, encouraged Jim to form a band, which led to the creation of the Jim Carroll Band.

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