



## Overview

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Jason Stoneking is a poet, essayist and screenwriter who has been performing his work live for more than 20 years. He is the author of two collections of poetry and two collections of essays, and the co-writer of a feature-length screenplay recently optioned for development by Paramount Pictures. He has also written and directed two short films and released a punk rock album. He moonlights as a tournament commentator for chess.com.

## Influences

Lenny Bruce, Hunter S. Thompson, Dorothy Parker, Charles Bukowski, Woody Allen, Wislawa Szymborska, Spalding Gray, Michel de Montaigne

## Contact

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## Bio

Jason Stoneking was born in 1974 and raised in New Hampshire and Pennsylvania before quitting high school and leaving home in 1989 to follow in the footsteps of his vagabond literary heroes. He spent his teen years thumbing around the United States, going to Grateful Dead shows and Rainbow Gatherings, sleeping on beaches and in parks, playing guitar on the street, using and selling LSD until he wound up doing a few months' time in Santa Clara County for supplying an undercover cop when he was 17. When he got out, his path led him to Boulder, Colorado, where he cut his teeth as a stage poet in the So You're a Poet reading series. There, he had the opportunity to perform at readings featuring influences like Allen Ginsberg and Anne Waldman, among others. Soon, he became a mainstay on the local poetry slam circuit, competing in events throughout the American southwest. In 1994, he won the Denver Regional Poetry Slam and was invited to perform on the main stage at that year's Lollapalooza festival. He also represented Colorado in the National Poetry Slam in Asheville, North Carolina that same year. While in Boulder, Jason met singer/songwriter Tori Amos and hitchhiked across the country to attend a series of her concerts. Amos took Stoneking under her wing and wrote the foreword to a collection of his poems, *Double Edged Pen*, independently published in 1996.



Throughout the 90s, Jason's poetry appeared in a variety of lit journals, magazines and newspapers, including Big City Lit, The Factory, Feng Shui, and the Boulder Daily Camera. In 1996, Jason moved to Paris, where he continued to perform live, and French translations of his poetry and short fiction appeared in two issues of the Parisian literary review Les Episodes. In 2000, his second collection of poems, *no demon no god*, was published by Onestar Press in Paris. In 2001, Jason signed a recording deal with Robinson Studios and went to Sweden to make an album as the frontman of the eponymous garage-punk band Stoneking. Through the early 2000s, he traveled extensively through Europe and America, performing his music in bars and clubs. In 2004, Jason returned to Paris where he was named the runner-up in that year's Brentano's Paris Poet Laureate competition. In 2006, Jason tried his hand at directing one of his scripts and his first short film, *Larry's Big Break*, was officially selected for that year's Santa Fe Film Festival. In 2009, he wrote and directed his second short, *Knock Knock*, which was accepted for screening in the Short Film Corner at Cannes. The following year, *The Stoneking Project*, a documentary by Richard Dailey about Jason's band, was officially selected for both the Cannes Independent Film Festival and the London Independent Film Festival.

Also in the 2000s, Jason began assisting his friend, artist Markus Hansen, on installation projects around Europe. In 2010, this collaboration resulted in a book. Hansen provided Stoneking with a series of 25 titles, and Jason wrote an essay in response to each one. They collected the results of this exercise under the title *Audience of One*. Hansen published the collection, and Jason began performing the essays publicly in support of the book. In 2011, Jason invited a dozen of his favorite people to submit titles to him for an expanded version of the project. He accepted five titles from each contributor. The resulting book, *Audience of Twelve*, contains 60 essays and was published by Happy House Books in 2012. During the same year, Jason co-wrote a feature-length screenplay with Sylvain Despretz that was optioned for development by Paramount Pictures. In the summer, Stoneking toured the United States reading from *Audience of Twelve*. In venues from indie bookstores to bars to art galleries, Jason performed in more than a dozen cities over three weeks. In the fall, he returned to Paris to film a live performance video featuring several of the pieces from the book, directed by French documentary filmmaker Guillaume Diamant-Berger.



## Current

For the last three years, Jason has worked regularly as a live broadcast commentator, covering chess tournaments for chess.com/tv. He is also a long-distance runner who recently completed his first marathon in Athens, Greece, and his second in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. In the coming year, Jason plans to begin releasing his essay performances in audio and video formats. He is also busy writing the forthcoming collection *Audience of None*, for which he has returned to choosing his own titles.

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**Praise for the Audience Essays:**

*“Jason Stoneking has perfected that particularly European art of the feuilleton essay, and when I read his work, I’m torn three ways: between wanting to keep on reading for sheer pleasure; uncapping the pen and writing my own damned stuff; or running out my front door and living life to the fullest. Jason’s work nags and tugs at the reader in a million profound ways, and I’m likely to miss friends, family, and my own past while reading his essays. Though I have never met Jason in the flesh, his spirit and soul are right there on the page, for any reader open and willing to make the connection. Only the most honest of writers can invite such an instant, visceral bond. His work reminds me of what’s important and what isn’t, and always makes me want to reconnect with long-lost friends, by talking the night away over a bottle (or three) of wine.”*

– **Pete Hausler**, Editor, Post Road magazine

**Review from the reading tour:**

*“Jason Stoneking’s mesmerizing, hilarious, and painfully honest works are an absolute delight. His stories made me laugh, they brought tears to my eyes, and I damn near pissed my pants a few times...”*

*“Stoneking is the smartest, quickest, funniest, and most memorable author I have ever had the privilege of meeting.”*

– **Katherine Sweetman**, Reviewer Magazine

**Praise for Audience of One:**

*“How to describe something so original? David Sedaris for the Kerouac crowd? Bukowski meets Socrates in a Paris bar? Whatever the case, the intellectual horsepower here is awesome, the humor laugh-out-loud funny, the writing limpid as virgin spring water, the honesty sometimes devastating. And how often is it that a collection of essays reads like great fiction? I’ll bet you anything you can’t read just one. Delicious.”*

– **Richard Dailey**, Afterart News

**From the Foreword to Double-Edged Pen:**

*“[Jason is]... a true adventurer, a manboy, a vowel ... smoking on a vortex, and catching words and reeling them in from the other side.”*

– **Tori Amos**

*“Jason Stoneking is a happening disguised as a book event. He marries an infectious energy with the smarts of a hip intellectual and the joy of a curious kid. An event with Jason Stoneking is all about the interactive exchange between the writer, the reader, the audience and the prompts that generate his delicious, bold, humorous essays. He finds the sweet spot between concept, intellect, drama and fun. Engaging and provocative, “Audience of Twelve” is a collection that will stretch and delight you. Along with “Audience of One,” it’s the perfect companion to a snifter of Armagnac--best shared with friends over the course of a long night’s discussion.”*

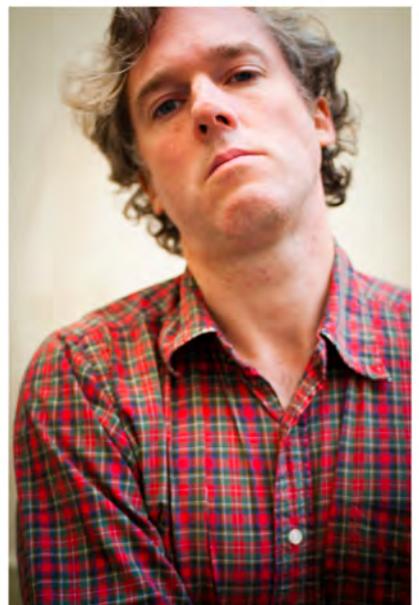
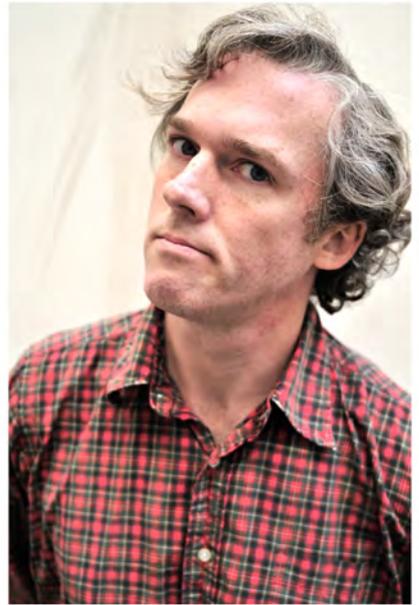
– **Terry Nebeker**, One More Page Books

*“Jason Stoneking’s readings have been amongst the most successful we have organized at the Poetry Club. He is a terrific writer, and his way of reading his work brings it to life in a really dynamic way. His voice is raw and engaging, captivating the audience.”*

– **Nini Ayach**, co-founder of The Poetry Club Art Space in Brooklyn

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**“I’ve Got the World  
on a *shoe* String”**

**Jason Stoneking**  
North American Tour  
July, 2012

[www.jasonstoneking.com](http://www.jasonstoneking.com)



Nov. 20th 18:30

Markus Hansen and  
Happy House Books  
invite you to

An evening with

**Jason Stoneking**

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