

Steven Connell

Steven Connell is a playwright, actor, and poet. To go with his back-to-back Los Angeles Slam Championships (2002/2003) he won the 2003 National Poetry Slam Championship with his LA team. In addition to being a *two-time* HBO Def Poet, his work has been featured on ABC World News, Good Morning America, MSNBC's Hardball and others. Private highlights include performing at Oprah Winfrey's celebration of Maya Angelou, the Quincy Jones Lifetime Achievement Award, and the Marion Anderson Gala (honoring Maya Angelou/Norman Lear); as well as special events for Senator Hillary Clinton, (*special request: Quincy Jones*), and President Barack Obama, (*special request: Oprah Winfrey*).

His work as writer and creative director on Norman Lear's *Declare Yourself* brought focus to the political facet of his work. This resulted in partnerships with Rock the Vote, the ACLU, and the Pen Foundation, to name a few and led to his being published in the acclaimed anthology "Why Freedom Matters". In 2009 he was asked to DC to perform as part of the Inaugural Celebration as well as invited in June to an evening of poetry at the White House.

In addition to creating work for the ACLU, Global Green, the Pasadena Pops, and many others, he and partner, Sekou (tha misfit), performed their play *no easy choices* in the HBO U.S. Comedy Arts Festival. Their newest play *The Word Begins* premiered at the Signature Theater garnering 3 Helen Hayes Award nominations in addition to rave reviews. It has since gone on to delight audiences in festivals in LA, DC, San Francisco, and most recently a limited run at the renowned New York Public Theater.

His "riveting" performance in his smash one-man show *40 Days* earned him the Best Solo Performance of 2005 in Los Angeles and he has just completed the highly acclaimed LA run of a collection of his short plays entitled *Jumping the Median*, produced by Norman Lear. His newest play, **Danger of Being Known**, just completed a

series of public readings leading up to a World Premier production in 2011. His first book of poems *Better Bound*, quickly sold out its' first printing, while his highly regarded spoken word album, "Intimate Nature of Knife Fights", remains in high demand.

In March of 2010 he was in China to take part in the Bookworm International Literary Festival. Following that he World Premiered a series of original pieces written for the 1st Annual Amnesty International Human Rights Arts Festival and then debuted a new piece at the SF Aids Foundation banquet, an event he also hosted. He is currently working hard on his new show, "Against Oblivion", a series of new work set to music and preparing to present at the upcoming TEDMED conference.