

biography

Alix Olson is an internationally touring folk poet and progressive queer artist-activist. One part peace vigil, one part protest rally, and one part joyful raucous concert, Alix ignites audiences everywhere she performs. Olson's innumerable stage, broadcast, radio and print appearances include twice headlining HBO's "Def Poetry Jam" (Russell Simmons), and an inclusion in Utne Magazine's InRadio compilation. Utne's website calls Olson "...the spoken word diva everyone's talking about."

Since winning 1998's National Poetry Slam with her New York City team and 1999's OutWrite LGBT Slam, Alix has co-authored *Burning Down the House* (Soft Skull Press), published two books of poetry, produced two spoken word CD's and an award-winning documentary, and has had her work placed in dozens of anthologies and compilations.

Alix has graced the covers of *Ms. Magazine*, who called Olson a "road-poet-on-a-mission," *Curve Magazine*, *Lambda Book Report*, *Lavender Lens*, and *Velvet Park Magazines*. In addition, Alix and her work have been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Time Out*, *Go NYC*, *The Progressive*, *Girlfriends Magazine*, *The Advocate*, *OUT Magazine*, *Poets and Writers*, *The Washington Post*, *Woman Rock*, *Venus*, *Lesbian News*, *Gay and Lesbian Times*, *Nervy Girl*, *Salon.com*, the *Lesbian Review of Books*, and hundreds of regional newspaper and magazines.

A recent interview with Olson for *The Progressive* calls her a "word warrior" and gives a comprehensive peek into just what makes her work so compelling. Alix has appeared internationally on *Holland National Radio*, *Australia National Radio*, nationally syndicated *Air America*, *Sirius Radio's Planet Q*, *Progressive Radio*, *WXPN's World Café*, *This Way Out*, *GenderTalk* and *InRadio*, as well as on television's *Oxygen*, *CNN*, *HBO's Def Poetry Jam*, *In the Life* and *Dyke TV*.

Alix was voted "Best Activist" in *Venus Magazine's Hott List 2004*. Olson was voted 2004 *OutMusician of the Year* (*OutMusic*) for best contributions to the artist-activist field, and was a triple nominee for the 2002 *OUTMusic Awards*. In June 2003, Alix (along with Margaret Cho and Nobuko Oyabu) received the "Visionary Award" from the DC Rape Crisis Center for her "exceptional commitment to the promotion of social justice." Past honorees include Gloria Steinem, Tori Amos, Patricia Ireland and Sarah Jones. Olson has also received a *New York Foundation for the Arts* fellowship and a *Barbara Deming* grant. This year, Olson accepted a 2006 *Hedgebrook Foundation Fellowship*.

Howard Zinn (historian/activist) calls Alix "an ingenious poet, a brilliant performer, a funny person, a serious thinker. Quite simply, extraordinary."

Alix tours national and international theaters, clubs and festivals over two-hundred days a year, recently performing at New York City's Lincoln Center. Alix regularly headlines national conferences (*National Organization for Women*, *CodePink*, *GenderPac*, and the *National Lesbian Summit*) has performed at over two-hundred colleges and dozens of festivals, including the *Bumbershoot Arts Festival*, *Michigan Women's Music Festival*, *Rolling Thunder Down Home Democracy Tour* (with Michael Moore), and the *Oregon Country Fair*. Alix performed for one million people at the 2004 *Washington, D.C. March for Women's Lives*.

alix olson

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*To schedule an
interview with alix
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She has headlined international poetry festivals in Portugal and the Netherlands, toured Canada extensively, performed at England's Mardi Gras Festival and at Ireland's Galway Town Hall, and recently completed a month-long tour of Australia, including ten performances at the renowned Woodford Folk Festival.

Notably, Alix has shared the stage with Michael Moore, Meryl Streep, Ntozake Shange, Amy Goodman, Howard Zinn, and recently opened for the Indigo Girls.

Alix is a monthly columnist for Inside Out Magazine and a regular contributing writer for Velvet Park Magazine. She was a 2006 National Poetry Slam Camp instructor and the co-hosted the 2006 OutMusic Awards.

Her documentary *Left Lane: On the Road with Alix Olson* has been featured at international film festivals in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Sweden, Ireland, Israel, France, Paris, Germany, and Hungary, as well as in over twenty film festivals in the U.S., including the Alter Magazine and Puffin Foundation Festivals. *Left Lane* has been the recipient of five awards for Favorite Audience Feature and Favorite Documentary.

The New York Times says Alix is "fueling the never-ending struggle to promote independent thought. Igniting and inspiring audiences wherever she may travel, Olson uses her witty and sympathetic voice to highlight a grassroots struggle against intolerance that is as entertaining as it is poignant," while TimeOut New York calls her "a mesmerizing firebrand, a joyful dyke-feminist preacher."

Of her live performances, *The Progressive Magazine* calls Alix "an electrifying performer who seduces the audience with wit and energy, spinning tales of life on the road between her fiery poems. A sharpshooter with theatrical flair, Olson oozes both love and rage."

Above all, Alix Olson is undaunted by being labeled as "controversial." "I think any artist who confronts the status quo will be targeted as 'controversial'. We will also be called 'angry,' 'aggressive,' 'loud,' or at best, 'idealistic,' so that we are discounted, backed into a corner, and our power is deflated. But I have never been intimidated by words, because they've always been on my side."

Please visit www.alixolson.com for all current tour dates and everything happening in the world of Alix Olson.