



TAYLOR MALI

A poet and a teacher, Taylor Mali is generally considered to be the most successful poetry slam strategist of all time, having won the National Poetry Slam a record four times. He was also one of the original poets on HBO's *Russell Simmons presents Def Poetry*. And since June of 2000, when he said goodbye to his last sixth grade homeroom class, Mali has made a living as a poet, traveling the country and the world reciting, reading, teaching, and lecturing about poetry.

Because of his dynamic performance style and practiced articulation, it comes as no surprise to many that Mali attended drama school (at Oxford University). And this poet has never strayed too far from the theater. His one-man show "Teacher! Teacher!" won the jury prize for best solo performance at the U. S. Comedy Arts Festival in 2002. Taylor Mali is a tenth-generation New Yorker with an M.A. in English literature who loved teaching math at a private school in Manhattan. "There is a poetry in numbers unlike any that can be found in words," he says. Mali spent nine years in the classroom and has performed and lectured for teachers all over the world.

Taylor Mali has released one book of poetry (*What Learning Leaves*), one DVD (*Taylor Mali & Friends: Live at the Bowery Poetry Club*), and four CDs of spoken word, most recently *Icarus Airlines*. A YouTube video of his performance of "What Teachers Make" has been viewed almost one million times. He was also the "golden-tongued, Armani clad villain" of Paul Devlin's documentary film "SlamNation," which chronicled the National Poetry Slam Championship of 1996.

- ☆ "To watch Mali is to watch a full-body poetic assault-with humor as his central weapon." **(The Portland Phoenix)**
- ☆ "Not since Taylor Mali, has there been a poet of the likes of Taylor Mali—which is to say he is a man of unique properties. He is tagged as a performance poet, but his performances, rather than being frontal assaults, are leavened by charm and wit and could survive happily on the page" **(Billy Collins)**
- ☆ "Taylor Mali speaks of the world of the teacher with power and grace. His work is filled with the energy, joy, pathos and humor of everyday life in the classroom. Strong and compassionate, his voice is our voice. He's been there."
(Michele Forman, National Teacher of the Year 2001)

"I want to reform education in America from top to bottom. I want to be the individual responsible for making an entire generation of college graduates consider teaching before business or law school. I want to get America ready for an Education Tax if that's what it's going to take. But most of all, I want to be the spokesman for teaching's nobility, the poet laureate of passion in the classroom."

—Taylor Mali