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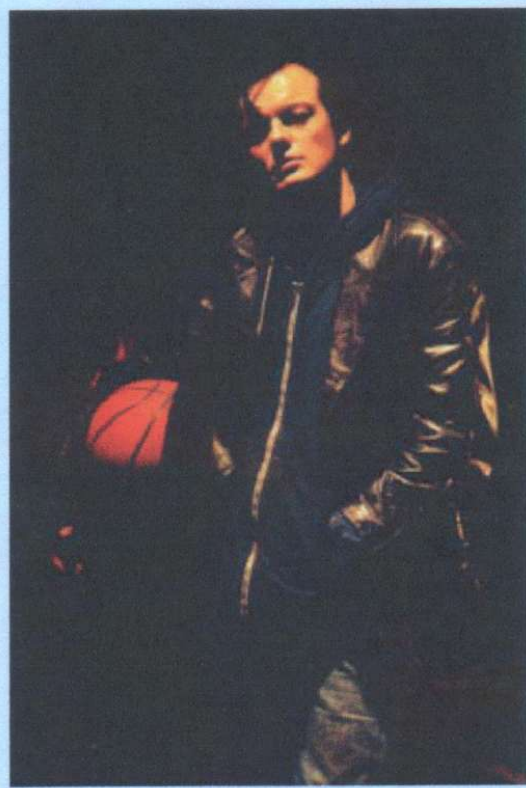
St. Marks Theater
94 St. Marks Pl. near 1st Ave.
Fringe Festival 2001, Aug. 10-26, 2001
SAT 8/18@2 SUN 8/19@5:15 MON 8/20@3:30 MON
8/20@10:45 THUR 8/23@9:15 SAT 8/25@7:15
Tickets: \$12

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Novel approach

Swiss actor Pascal Ulli successfully adapts Jim Carroll's "The Basketball Diaries," bringing the author's tale of his misspent teen years to life on the stage.

By [ROBIN EISGRAU](#)
www.offoffoff.com

In this one-man show, accomplished Swiss actor Pascal Ulli portrays the young Jim Carroll during his days as a promising young teenage basketball player and scholarship student who becomes a heroin addict.

As a book, "The Basketball Diaries" is an engrossing, colorful read as Carroll's flair for language blooms on every page. The film

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version of the book (starring Leonardo DiCaprio and released in 1995) was an anachronistic mess. As crafted for the stage by Mr. Ulli, "The Basketball Diaries" is a vivid, gripping, long hard look at what happens when one becomes addicted to heroin.

Ulli is very effective as the smacked-out Carroll; speaking in a dreamlike slur, his eyes rolling as his hair falls over his forehead. He also sweats like a junkie (though maybe that's just the air-conditioning situation in the theater). Ulli's Carroll comes across as hip and smart, streetwise beyond his years as he matter-of-factly describes his adventures hustling to get dope money.

He paints detailed verbal pictures of getting high in parks and avoiding the cops. Ulli even cooks up something in a spoon, ties off his arm and prepares to inject himself when suddenly we hear a banging on the door and a booming voice announcing that the police are here. Ulli revels in some of the book's best stories — such as Jim and a drug buddy finding out that they just copped some Ovaltine and Jim's not-so-good acid trip where he goes to the Museum of Modern Art.

Ulli is a very gifted actor and he takes command of the stage here. If you've read the book, you'll find that this production captures the vibrant flavor found on the page. If you haven't read it, Pascal Ulli's "The Basketball Diaries" may make you want to pick up a copy.

AUGUST 20, 2001

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- [Basketball Diaries](#) from Susan Winters, Aug. 22, 2001
- [Not what I saw](#) from Mike Deiny, Aug. 22, 2001

JIM CARROLL'S THE BASKETBALL DIARIES

Produced, directed,
adapted for the stage and
performed by Pascal Ulli.
From the book by Jim
Carroll.

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