

CHANNELING NORMAN MAILER

STEPHEN MAILER

IN HONOR OF MY FATHER I'm first going to clear my throat. (He clears his throat) ... I forgot what I was going to say.... Good afternoon, thank you all for coming. My name is Stephen Mailer, I am the sixth child of my father, his second son. And I'm known as the wild card" in my family—because nobody ever knows what I'm going to say or what I'm going to do. There are a lot of family members right now who are sweating bullets. And there are other members of my family who are chomping at the bit that I may do something off-the-wall. But I'm going to turn this time over to the real wild card in my family, my father Norman Mailer.

I'm going to channel him for your viewing pleasure. I've never done this before. I don't know what to expect, so please bear with me. Okay Dad, here you go, man, Carnegie Hall baby, I'm all yours! (Stephen falls to the floor as if struck by lightning. He slowly gets up and walks back to the podium as his father).

Hmm, [as Norman Mailer] Can you hear me in the back? How do? (He clears his throat) Carnegie Hall. Carnegie Hall. Well why the fuck not? I think it's the perfect place for my memorial. In deference to the joke my sister Barbara told, I practiced my ass off, dammit! So I'll take it. Thank you.

Now, it was reported in the *New York Post* that my son Stephen sang a sappy version of Elton John's "A Candle in the Wind," at my funeral. When, in fact, he sang a sappy version of Elton John's "Your Song." And on completing this number, he gave the stage to his older brother Michael, who turned to Stephen and said, "Stephen, Dad would've been appalled by that song! But you sang it, well." And while I was appalled at that song, I was touched. Because, you see, the song is about writing. It's about writing a love song. And writing is a gift that I hope to have left to all of my children, and my nephew, and their children, and so on and

so on. (He turns to the other Mailers on stage). So keep on writing, you rat fucks!

Now, in terms of my being a candle in the wind, that is the worst fucking metaphor for myself and my life I have ever heard. If anything, I was a forest fire in a hurricane!

And Stephen, I've got one more thing to say to you. (He places his fist against the side of his chin). I love you, buddy. (He gently punches himself, spins once, and collapses onto the floor. Stephen gets up, dusts off his suit, and heads back to the podium).

Wow! [As Stephen Mailer] Well, I think that gives a whole new meaning to "the father's shadow." I recommend it to everyone. Thank you very much.