

[SIGN UP](#)[SITEMAP](#)[CONTACT US](#)[PRESS](#)

- [Home](#)
- [About Us](#)
 - [Our Mission and History](#)
 - [Our Board](#)
 - [Our Staff](#)
 - [Sign Up](#)
 - [Job Openings](#)
 - [Advertise](#)
- [Programs](#)
 - [Classes and Workshops](#)
 - [Documentary Film](#)
 - [Edible World](#)
 - [First Person Festival](#)
 - [First Person Museum](#)
 - [StorySlams](#)
 - [Past Projects](#)
- [Calendar](#)
- [Follow Us](#)
- [BLOG](#)
- [Volunteer](#)
- [Support Us](#)

Get to Know that Quiet Nerd from High School: Interview with Adam Wade

2 November 2011 [No Comment](#) Tagged: [Adam Wade](#), [First Person Festival](#), [Hillary Rea](#), [Spoken Word](#), [storytelling](#)



The morning of my phone interview with **Adam Wade**, I was perusing Facebook and quickly discovered that Adam and I had a peculiar mutual friend. Not that this friend, was peculiar, but the connection was unexpected and exciting. See, Adam went to Keene State College with my favorite camp counselor Chad. Chad led a great creative writing class at camp, influenced me a lot in terms of the music that I grew up listening to, and even taught me how to juggle. And those experiences at summer camp shape a bunch of the stories that I love to tell. I had to bring up this mutual friend at the start of our conversation, and was glad I did.

Hillary: I realize that we have a very funny mutual friend which is my former camp counselor Chad who went to college with you. He was my hero at summer camp and he taught me about cool music and we stayed in touch ever since.

Adam: Yeah Chad is a very good man. Chad helped me a lot creatively too. He was always very supportive of me and he was my first acting partner. I used to open for Chad's band at Keene, that's basically how I started. I was very shy, so to get up in front of an audience with a guitar, tell a little set-up story and then play a song. The guitar was a great prop, a sort of shield. People seemed to like it, it was really fun, and it was just something I always wanted to do. I built the confidence in Keene, NH and I would do the same thing when I moved to New York City and it went alright. I did Caroline's New Talent Night and stuff like that. But I didn't feel fulfilled doing it. After awhile I thought I had more to offer but I just didn't know how to do it. Then I worked a production assistant at Tough Crowd with Colin Quinn and one day we were at lunch and Colin came over to me and he said, "I'm mad at you." And I said, "Why are you mad at me?" I had been working there for a couple of months and he said "I didn't know you did stand-up. Bring in a tape. I wanna watch it." And it was cool, I brought in a tape and he watched it and he went over it with me. And he said, "The most interesting thing about you is you. Not the guitar. The stories in between the songs are actually the sense of you coming out. That's the stuff you should focus on." He gave me ten minutes and we went over the video and I remember going to my little Production Assistant desk and writing everything he said down. It meant a lot. He had seen a lot and he took the time.

Hillary: Can you tell me a little bit about your relationship with the Moth. What is your history with them? How has it shaped your storytelling?

Adam: So I started doing shows without the guitar and just telling little stories. It went really bad just because they were expecting jokes and then the people that booked me were expecting me to bring the guitar. When you're doing a comedy show it's always nice to have a guitar act or a music act cause it breaks it up. That's why I was getting booked. So those shows wouldn't book me again and it was very difficult for me. I was very frustrated. I had read this thing in the newspaper about the Moth and it seemed very interesting, but I was kind of intimidated by it all and I didn't go. And I waited and waited and waited. There was a producer at Tough Crowd who said, "Wait, why don't you do the Moth?" So he kind of kicked me in the ass. I was like "Well, I can't get out of work early to do the Moth." And my regular boss said, "Absolutely, I'll let you leave." So I started going. And I have been doing it for eight years. For me it was really good because there was a strong sense of community and nurturing. Not that the stand-up community was not nice, there was definitely a lot of nice people...

Hillary: The Moth is more tight knit.

Adam: Yeah it was just more tight knit and very nurturing. The producers and the people at the Moth, they knew your names. The founder of the Moth knew your name. There was gentleman who used to go to the Moth that brought pizzas, he would give pizzas out. In each venue I would always have my seat. Another thing with the Moth, too, is even when I started to get to know people, a lot of times I would make sure I stood in line with people or I sat at a table of people I didn't know. I wanted to force myself to meet people. And it was always kinda nice when you're sitting with three or four people you don't know and they're not really giving you the time of day but they're being nice or being cordial. And then you perform and you get back and they're like "Oh we didn't know we were sitting next to this guy." And it always made you feel like a million bucks. It's definitely my home in a lot of ways. I owe a lot to the Moth and to the Moth community. They couldn't have been nicer and more supportive to me.

Hillary: [The Adam Wade from NH Show](#): How did that all come together?

Adam: I did another show at the Theatre Under Saint Marks by Seth Lind, who works at *This American Life*. He does a monthly show there, which is incredible and I was a part of that. And then I just met his producer and she's a producer of the theater and I went out to have coffee with her one time. The thing with the Moth, I felt like for me personally, I wasn't having more than 5 to 8 minutes to tell a story. I wanted to have more time and be a little bit more creative. My whole style at the Moth is very fast moving, and you have to be because of the time limit. I wanted to work on slowing things down and do something for an hour or 45 minutes. My goals were to slow things down and to get chops. My friend Peter Aguerro has an improv story band and basically we discussed it and decided that Monday night I was gonna do a thing for an hour and then his band was gonna come on. We made a pact with each other that we would do this. And now his show regularly sells out and The Adam Wade From NH show does too. It really grew. Peter Aguerro is my rock in that sense. I'm nervous before every show no matter what it is. And I'm nervous the day of. But once I get there, I get there early, I start talking to the tech guy and Peter shows up and I'm fine. I don't need a beer, as long as I have my asthma inhaler. I calm down and it's like performing for friends.

And basically what I try to do after the show, the best I can, is try to talk to everybody and thank everybody individually for coming. I am very grateful that people are coming.

Hillary: On the subject of nerves, you mentioned a couple of times that you still get nervous before every show. Does it go away once you start? How do you combat that?

Adam: A lot of times I'm nervous all day and now, once I'm on stage, I'm fine. That's when I feel most comfortable.

Hillary: Well, I guess that's everything.

Adam: I'm really looking forward to coming back to Philly, and to working with you.

See Adam perform in *The Adam Wade from NH Show* as part of the First Person Festival at the Khyber Upstairs Friday, November 11th and Saturday, November 12th. I will also be performing a special opening set of stories on childhood, crushes, and other uncomfortable experiences.

Tickets available online [here](#) or by phone at 267-402-2055.

-Hillary Rea

For more information about these 2011 First Person Festival artists, be sure to visit their official websites at the addresses below.

[Adam Wade](#)
[Hillary Rea](#)



 **Leave your response!**

Add your comment below, or [trackback](#) from your own site. You can also [subscribe to these comments](#) via RSS.

Be nice. Keep it clean. Stay on topic. No spam.

Name (required)

Mail (will not be published) (required)

Website (optional)

You can use these tags:

` <abbr title=""> <acronym title=""> <blockquote cite=""> <cite> <code> <del datetime=""> <i> <q cite=""> <strike> `

This is a Gravatar-enabled weblog. To get your own globally-recognized-avatar, please register at [Gravatar](#).

[Spam Protection](#) by WP-SpamFree

Recent Posts

- [Get to Know that Quiet Nerd from High School: Interview with Adam Wade](#)
- [Davy Rothbart's First Person Festival Picks!](#)
- [No Crossing for Cold Cuts](#)
- [The Best of the Bad Ideas](#)
- [Tonight! First Person Arts launches new Social Justice Series](#)
- [Behind the Scenes: Performance Takes Center Stage at the 2011 First Person Arts Festival](#)
- [Get to know... storyteller R. Eric Thomas](#)
- [Get to know...storyteller Chris Oberlin](#)
- [Behind the Scenes: Planning the 2011 First Person Arts Festival](#)
- [Get to know... storyteller Olga](#)

Around the Web

- [100 Memoirs](#)
- [A Storied Career](#)
- [Art Sanctuary](#)
- [Artjaw](#)
- [Docs In Progress](#)
- [Fray Magazine](#)
- [FunnelPages](#)
- [International Storytelling Center](#)
- [Mural Arts Program](#)
- [My American Melting Pot](#)
- [Phildebrity](#)
- [Photo / Arts Magazine](#)
- [SMITH Magazine](#)
- [The Moth](#)
- [The Nervous Breakdown](#)
- [The Story](#)
- [This American Life](#)
- [Uwishunu](#)
- [Vandalog](#)

First PersonSphere

- [American Goulash](#)
- [Amy Childs](#)
- [Beth Harpaz](#)
- [Conrad Gleber](#)
- [Dan Hoyle](#)
- [Elna Baker](#)
- [Gerald Lantz – Stories That Work](#)
- [James Dupree](#)
- [Jean Haskell](#)
- [My Salvation has a First Name](#)
- [Rita Bernstein](#)
- [The Names of Places](#)
- [The Painted Bride](#)

Archives

- [November 2011](#)
- [October 2011](#)
- [September 2011](#)
- [August 2011](#)
- [July 2011](#)
- [June 2011](#)
- [May 2011](#)
- [April 2011](#)
- [March 2011](#)

- [February 2011](#)
- [January 2011](#)
- [December 2010](#)
- [November 2010](#)
- [October 2010](#)
- [September 2010](#)
- [August 2010](#)
- [July 2010](#)
- [June 2010](#)
- [May 2010](#)
- [April 2010](#)
- [March 2010](#)
- [February 2010](#)
- [January 2010](#)
- [December 2009](#)
- [November 2009](#)
- [October 2009](#)
- [September 2009](#)
- [August 2009](#)
- [July 2009](#)
- [June 2009](#)
- [May 2009](#)
- [April 2009](#)
- [March 2009](#)
- [February 2009](#)
- [January 2009](#)
- [December 2008](#)
- [November 2008](#)
- [October 2008](#)
- [September 2008](#)
- [August 2008](#)
- [July 2008](#)
- [June 2008](#)
- [May 2008](#)
- [April 2008](#)
- [March 2008](#)

