

Dinnerview: Denice Frohman

written by Danielle Susi | July 5, 2017



Denice Frohman is an award-winning poet, writer, performer, and educator. She is a 2014 CantoMundo Fellow, 2013 Women of the World Poetry Slam Champion, 2013 Hispanic Choice Award winner, and 2012 Leeway Transformation Award recipient. Her work has appeared on ESPN and in the Huffington Post, while her poems have gone viral with over 5 million views. She has a Master's in Education and works with The Philly Youth Poetry Movement. She has been featured at over 200 colleges and universities; hundreds of high schools, non-profits, and cultural arts spaces; and performed at The White House in 2016. She currently tours the country.

Here, she talks about a whole plethora of final food requests, putting love into the plate, and "Hail Mary"-worthy wings.

On her all-time favorite meal:

I don't think I can pick one all-time favorite meal, because food conjures up different memories for me depending on what I'm eating, but there's a hotel in D.C that has incredible chicken wings. I travel a lot and have been to a ton of hotels – most of the time the food is decent at best – but I stumbled on these chicken wings at 2 a.m. and nothing was the same after that. They were so good I called a bunch of my friends to meet me in the hotel restaurant to eat some and one of them exclaimed, "Hail Mary!" afterwards (so now that's the running joke). I ordered chicken wings for three nights in a row – which I've never done before. I have no regrets.

On what the light looks like during her favorite meal of the day:

I'm always a sucker for a good sunset, but to be honest, it doesn't really matter. I don't look up (or around) much when I'm eating, which is something people in my life make fun of me for. I'm kind of focused on the "blessing" in front of me and totally unashamed about it. When the food is good – sun up or sun down – I'm there.

On snacking while writing:

I snack right when I sit down to write. Usually I've got a bag of popcorn or something quick and small. Anything too fancy becomes a distraction and gets in the way of me typing. I recently started drinking coffee (went down to Miami and had a cafecito that changed my life), is that fair game to include? If so, good coffee is always a requirement with writing.

Her go-to late-night snack:

Salami and mozzarella cheese, every time.

On her food quirks:

I feel like there are two kinds of people when it comes to fixing a plate: those who mix everything together and those who need their food laid out separately. I'm captain of the latter. For me, I can't have the rice, beans and meat all mixed together for no reason. It messes up my vibe. I believe there's an art to making a nice plate and it isn't about fancy presentation – it's about putting love into it. If someone cooks for me or if I cook for them, it's all about hooking up that plate.

On her final meal request:

This is a big question so I'm going to list a bunch of different things I've got to have: my mama's bacalao with arroz con gandules, fried chicken with some mac and cheese, green beans, jerk chicken from this spot on my block, and banana pudding that my student makes. My favorite memories of eating are with my mom in the apartment I grew up in in New York City, so that's where I'd want to be. Home. Always home.