

Allan Douglass Coleman: Biographical Sketch

While publishing and lecturing internationally as a media commentator and photography critic under the pen name A. D. Coleman, Allan Douglass Coleman quietly pursues creative activity in a variety of forms: photographs, collages and assemblages, music, poetry, fiction, creative nonfiction, and audiotexts, among others.

Born in 1943 and raised in Greenwich Village, Coleman spent several formative years in France during his childhood, becoming bilingual/Francophone as a result. Since 1967 he has lived in Stapleton, a township on Staten Island's North Shore in New York City, where he raised his son, Edward, who is now a master chef in Manhattan.

Over the years, Coleman has been involved in a variety of events and performances. In the late '60s he performed as lead singer/songwriter in a now-legendary local jazz-rock band, the Binding Force. In 1972, Coleman collaborated with noted photographer Neal Slavin (*The Britons*) on a happening and exhibition in New York City, "The Market Diner Bash." In 1991, he had a speaking role in *Last Supper*, a film written and directed by photographer/filmmaker Robert Frank, sponsored by BBC Productions.

Coleman has self-published several artist's books. In addition to these image-text explorations, Coleman's artwork includes small-camera photography, Xerox imagery, offset lithography, collage, and assemblage. He has also generated what he calls an "audio text," a 30-minute sound-piece titled *postscript*, produced on the Amiga 1000 utilizing the "Talker" program.

Works by Coleman in various media have been included in a number of group exhibitions, including several that have travelled. They have been published in *Assembling*, *The Fessenden Review*, *MC*, *Eros and Photography* and the limited-edition portfolio *Crackerjacks*. Bookworks of his are in the collections of the Bezalel Academy, Jerusalem; the Center for Creative Photography, Tucson, AZ; the Center for Book Arts, NY; FAMU, Prague; The Ffotogallery, Wales; Franklin Furnace Archive, New York; Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Amsterdam; Göteborg University, Sweden; l'Espace de la Photo, Paris; the New York Public Library; the Swedish Archive of Artists' Books; the Visible Language Workshop Gallery, Cambridge, MA; and the Visual Studies Workshop, Rochester, NY, among others.

Controversial as a writer since his undergraduate years at Hunter College in the Bronx (now Lehman College), Coleman earned a Master's Degree in Creative Writing at San Francisco State College in 1967. Shortly thereafter, he stopped writing poetry, fiction and plays and turned his attention to criticism, social commentary and reportage, developing an international readership under the pen name A. D. Coleman. In 1988, after two decades of self-imposed silence in poetry and fiction, he returned to those forms.

Coleman has since published in *Nimrod*, *Sanskrit*, *Creative Nonfiction*, *Urban Desires*, and elsewhere, and has read with Joyce Carol Oates, Daniel Halpern, Edmund Keeley, James Ragan, and others, as well as solo in Prague; San Antonio, Texas; Penland,

North Carolina; and Tucson, Arizona, and at various locations in and around New York City. He is a founding member of The Sepoy Rebellion, a Staten Island-based collective of performing poets.

Coleman's first book of creative writing, *spine*, a collaboration with the Finnish photographer Nina Sederholm, was published by minipress in 2000, accompanying a touring installation of this work that includes music by Mikko Hassinen. A web version of the same project was published in spring 2001. At the same time he also received a Council for the Arts and Humanities for Staten Island Performing Arts Award, for the premiere on Staten Island of a multimedia version of *spine* that made its debut that season at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. A DVD version of *spine* is in production.