



“Audiences everywhere deserve to see him.” - NPR

ABOUT SLASH



Best known for his PBS special and Off-Broadway one man show, “The Neon Man and Me,” award winning storyteller, Slash Coleman, has also been featured as an Exchange Place Teller at the 2009 National Storytelling Festival, the 2008 Oral History Performance Conference at Columbia University and at LANES. Slash is also the creator of the acclaimed two-part class for artists entitled “Make More Money with Your Art.” As a result, he’s been featured nationally at dozens of universities, conferences, community art organizations and most recently in the NPR series, “How Artists Make Money.”

STORYTELLING TOPICS

Descended from a grandfather who was a dancer at the Moulin Rouge, a grandmother who was a painter, and a father who is a prolific sculptor, Slash draws much of his material from being raised by an offbeat, creative family. Often addressing the outright humor of being raised Jewish in the south by family of immigrants, his stories also speak of the profound cultural challenges he’s experienced and the inspiration he continues to draw from his own mother who is a Holocaust survivor. With a personal history steeped in a duality of skepticism and faith, discouragement and hope, his fresh Generation X perspective and distinctive voice have been a welcome addition to the storytelling world.

AWARDS



Honors include the 2005 Groucho for Best One Man Show by ComedySportz Improv Theatre and the 2006 Top 40 Under 40 Award by Style Weekly. Last year, for his philanthropic contributions to his Richmond, VA community, (with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, Coleman’s unique productions have helped raise nearly \$80,000 for non-profits to date), Coleman was a finalist for the 2008 Virginia Governor’s Award in the Arts.



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT SLASH 804.353.3799

“Coleman has the gift to change the way people think!” - PBS



SHOWS, CLASSES, KEYNOTES

FEATURED AT:

CONFERENCES

- National Storytelling Festival (Exchange Place)
- Oral History Performance Conference
- LANES

THEATRES

- Teatro La Tea (Off-Broadway)
- Mill Mountain Theatre
- Barksdale Theatre

FESTIVALS

- Roanoke Arts Festival
- North Charleston Arts Festival
- Capital Fringe Festival

NON-PROFITS

- Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
- Young Audiences of Virginia
- Jewish Community Center

UNIVERSITIES

- Columbia University
- Radford University
- Virginia Tech

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Franklin County High School
- Open High School
- Moody Middle School

LIBRARIES

- Richmond Public Library
- Midlothian Library
- Loudon County Library

Sold out audiences around the country are raving about Slash's profound stories, powerful classes and inspiring keynote presentations. Upbeat, positive, professional and considerate of the audience, Slash has been delighting audiences of all ages with his quick wit and Southern charm for over ten years. With original, family friendly songs he plays on the guitar and piano there's something for everyone in the crowd.

A typical show runs 45-60 minutes and includes a short Q&A. He mixes about 45 minutes of stories with 10-15 minutes of music.

But, Slash isn't just a storyteller - he's also a recognized Artist Marketing speaker who teaches classes around the country and offers sage advice for artists of all levels looking to earn a sustainable income as professional artists



Slash Coleman's
2010 CORE VALUES TOUR



The Neon Man
and Me



identity



Storytelling Bootcamp

Super Hero Training
for boys

Make *More* Money
with your *Art*

Keynote

Healing
Community



Featured In



PROFESSIONALS ARE TALKING

“A gifted storyteller and a real professional! We’d definitely hire him again.”

Sally Kemp
Visual Arts Center of Richmond

“Slash’s stories not only stretched our minds, but they challenged us to be more and do more in the world. Kudos on such fine storytelling skills.”

Maureen Neal
Daily Planet Homeless Shelter

“Slash’s ability to reach a wide range of students in a meaningful way and to provide each one with the tools and confidence to express themselves creatively is the foundation of his success. “

Rob Mc Adams
Young Audiences of Virginia

“Slash inspired us all with his stories and was able to bring out the creative and dramatic talents of our children which had not been recognized before.”

Roshon V. Casey
Westminster Canterbury

JOURNALISTS ARE TALKING

“Coleman has the gift to change the way people think!”

John H. Felton
Vice President of Programming, PBS

“Slash is riveting.”

David Espar, International Emmy Winner
Senior Producer, WGBH

“Audiences everywhere deserve to see him.”

Gene Marrano
Reporter, NPR

“A joy!”

Nicole Estvanik Taylor
Senior Editor, American Theatre Magazine

“Good off-beat company.”

Nelson Pressley
Theatre Critic, The Washington Post



'Neon' on the Small Screen

by Nicole Estvanik Taylor,
Senior Editor

VIRGINIA: When solo performer Slash Coleman decided to create a show about the untimely death of his best friend Mark, in a way it was to rescue a part of himself. "He knew stories about me that kind of died with him," says Coleman. The reverse was also true. Coleman wanted to create something that his friend's son - conceived just weeks before the electrical accident that claimed Mark's life in 2004 - could look to someday to learn about his dad.

His aim from the beginning was to tell the story as many times as possible. This has meant extensive touring throughout the South and Midwest, as well as an Off-Broadway stint, allowing community groups to use his tickets as a fundraiser; it has meant teaching workshops on using art to cope with bereavement, funded by the **Virginia Commission for the Arts**; and it has meant spending the last two years raising more than \$10,000 to create a PBS television version of *Neon Man*, finally taped in March. This month, TV-watchers across Virginia will see the results. (For air times check local listings.) National distribution is being negotiated.

To raise the money Coleman created a documentary about the work and showed it in

living rooms of friends and acquaintances. With his PBS special, he'll be entering many living rooms - and, he hopes, raising interest in a Broadway version of the piece, with a jazz orchestra and video projections. (He tried out an excerpt of the new format at Richmond's **Barksdale Theatre**).



Photo: Tania Barricklo

"Someone asked me, 'Why can't you just let your friend be dead?'" Coleman recalls. But he says performing *Neon* is a joy: "It was like as an artist I'd created this secret recipe to bring people back to life. Visit www.slashcoleman.com.



Photo: Steven Sulpakas

As soon as you try to put Renaissance man and prodigal son Slashtipher J. Coleman into a box, he jumps out.

This Chester native, a storyteller/ writer/ singer/ artist/ musician/ masseuse/ surfer, paid to have his name changed with his bar mitzvah money in 1985, feeling that “Slashtipher” embraced the spirit of his grandfather, who came from a family of gypsies, danced in the Moulin Rouge and joined the French Resistance. “Slashtipher is the name that propelled me out into the world,” he says, “and it is the name that brought me back [to Richmond].”

Returning in 2004 after a nearly 20-year adventure that took him to Alaska, Hawaii, England, Scotland and all over South America, Coleman is finally

ready to settle down in Virginia — sort of. That is, when he’s not on the U.S. college circuit or the Fringe Festival in New York and Edinburgh, or taking his one-man show, “The Neon Man and Me,” on tour.

The storytelling adventure is a hilarious and moving eulogy to Mark Jamison, his best friend who died in 2004 while hanging neon. A benefit for the family Jamison left behind, the show explores bereavement and recovery. It’s also “a vehicle that embraces all parts of myself,” Coleman says. Sans props or costumes, there’s nothing to obscure the beautiful punch of his story, one Coleman says he’s too passionate about to grow bored with.

Coleman’s CD, “Conversations With a Southern Wonder-Boy,” and his broad collection of whimsical paintings are also full of poetry and strongly lyrical. And he’s at work on his second book, “The Four Delicious Moons,” a semiautobiographical novel about a boy who lives with his alcoholic biker dad and with the help of a drunken rabbi becomes a concert pianist as his ticket out of Chester. Also in the works is a DVD package with a 30-minute documentary about “The Neon Man and Me” and four music videos, one of which will use only Claymation.

Coleman’s next performance, “Herbert Mermelstein’s Big Jew Show,” promises nothing less than a Yiddish three-ring circus, complete with a live band, a surprise guest,

and loads of laughs. Scheduled to premiere in the fall at the Virginia the Virginia Holocaust Museum and the Weinstein Jewish Community Center, the “Big Jew Show” is inspired by the comedy of Buster Keaton, Charlie Chaplin, Woody Allen and Mr. Bean. Coleman will explore the issues and questions that have emerged from the fated union of his French Jewish mother and Italian Catholic father.

After a year at work upholstering furniture for his family’s North Side business, Tinker’s, Coleman plans to join the ranks of the rare breed of artist who is able to quit his day job and live off the fruits of creative effort alone. He received money from the Virginia Commission for the Arts to conduct writing residencies in high schools, and he’s teaching writing workshops at Comedy Alley, C3 and through the Henrico County Adult Education program. Coleman is a one-man band and a whirling dervish of creative resource. But don’t blink as he spirals past — you wouldn’t want to miss a thing.

Coleman will perform “The Neon Man and Me” at the Bainbridge Art Center Friday, March 10, and Saturday, March 11, at 7 p.m. Learn more at www.slashcoleman.com.

All About Kids

MAGAZINE

Creative Expression: Why Kids Need To Be Heard

By Martha Randolph Carr



Creative expression is a powerful tool. It can be used to unlock stuffed-down emotions, spur on ambitions, or teach a child confidence. The kind of confidence they can carry out into the world no matter which direction they eventually head.

A Richmonder using the creative force of creative expression to encourage personal growth is Slash Coleman, a working artist based in our area. He's what they call a "triple threat" – a storyteller, musician, and writer – who has come up with a unique arts program that is developing a following in area schools.

The two-year-old program funded by the Virginia Commission for The Arts in conjunction with



Slash Coleman helps kids use storytelling as a tool to get in touch with feelings

participating schools is called *Healing Community*. The curriculum is a multi-disciplinary program using storytelling, creative writing, and theatre arts as a tool for children to express what's going on in their lives. Short pieces are created, rehearsed and then performed by children. A complete circle.

Most of Slash's kids come from worlds full of turmoil and chaos. They bonded so well with Slash that they opened up and spoke what, at times, can be only described as "dark truths."

This artist's mission is universal and one we can all learn from: Use art to help kids access their emotions in a productive manner that they can use through-out their lives.

"I'm using art to help kids survive emotionally in the environment they're in. I don't have the big answers. Even if I give these kids a respite from their lives for an hour a day that's enough," said Slash. "Change can encompass something smaller and be worthwhile. So far, giving the kids space to express has been pretty heavy. In the school day there just no space for them to give voice to it, and that has led to behavior problems."

The school treats the behavioral problem, but never gets down to what's really wrong. However, in Slash's program expression is encouraged; it's not always a quiet class and acting out emotions becomes a part of the lesson. Slash is able to roll with whatever happens and turn it into a learning experience for his middle school and high school aged students. The result? For these kids, focusing on academic classes becomes easier.

"He has the rare ability to not let tough kids get him down and help them to be able to express creatively," said Jennifer Howard, a ninth grade teacher from Huguenot High School. "They really listened and respected him. He's a working artist and very generous in sharing the process of his early manuscripts and pointing out flaws. It legitimized art for the kids," she said.

Slash's program has the potential to be translated for any school, inner city or suburbs to help children unlock their voice and their potential.