



Connie Coleman
1947-2011

“there will be 2 dates on your tombstone, but the most important fall on the little dash inbetween...”

In the Newsletter of the Hunterdon County (NJ) Rug Artisan's Guild:

Meet Our Member! Connie Coleman: December 2008

Hooker of the Month

Connie grew up in a "Rhode Island Yankee household" where handiwork was the custom. Both her mother and father were very creative.

Her father was a professional photographer and took many photographs of her mother hooking. She worked with a group instructed by Dot Galey. Many in that group worked with recycled wool garments that were over dyed. As was common in the 1950s, most of the rugs were done

in a narrow cut with beautiful shading. Connie fondly remembers her mother's hooking frame being up all the time and cutting wool for her projects. Her bedroom was decorated around

a rug designed and hooked by her mother. Using a frame made by her father, Connie tried hooking a chair seat mat, but never completed

the project.

Making all her own clothing during high school inspired Connie to attend design school. She wanted to be an artist but received little encouragement from her guidance counselor. This was a time when academic emphasis was



placed on the sciences to support the new space program and the arts were not considered of value. However, her parents sent her to Saturday classes at the Rhode Island School

of Design. Connie later attended the Boston Museum School for her freshman year and then transferred to the Textile Program at the Rhode Island School of Design. When she graduated in 1970 there were few jobs, so she started working as a production handweaver using a floor loom given to her as a graduation present from her parents.

Connie became involved with the Rhode Island Craftsman's Guild where she was one of three professional weavers in the state. She also started teaching at Rhode Island College as a "fiber artist" - a new term at the time. That work led to being hired as a designer for a major manufacturer of knit fabrics working in their sampling plant. She worked as a Jacquard designer and "loved the challenge of the intricate patterns." The American craft movement was underway and Connie's personal work was accepted in major juried shows throughout New England giving her a lot of exposure. She started giving workshops and helped establish the first Rhode Island Craftsman's Fair. Her weavings sold, but did not generate sufficient income. Connie decided to teach and returned to Rhode Island School of Design where she earned her Masters Degree. From 1974-1976 she was the Rhode Island Arts Council's Craftsman in Residence under a NEA grant where she conducted workshops from kindergarten age up through senior citizens. Her work also took her to Rhode Island prisons. "This work is where I really learned how to teach", says Connie.

Connie met her future husband, Alan, at Rhode Island School of Design. He was one of the first to get involved with the newly emerging field of video, although he initially wanted to be a sculptor. Connie started to work with Alan when they conducted professional workshops and honed their teaching skills. After they married, they moved to Philadelphia and bought a "shell of an old brownstone building in the art museum area". Connie spent the next nine years renovating it! She also came to the conclusion that it would be too difficult economically to be

a textile artist. She joined forces with Alan forming Coleman and Powell, a video/media firm. For the last 20 years, Connie has taught at the University of the Arts (formerly the Philadelphia College of Arts and Design) where she is a Professor of Computer Animation. She also teaches in the Communications Program at Arcadia University where Alan is an Associate Professor.

In 2006 Connie responded to an article on the HCRAG Camp in the Bucks County Herald. Although she had not hooked in many years, her extensive textile experience and an afternoon reviewing the basics with Mary Jo and Karl Gimber prepared her for her first rug hooking camp. Connie saw this "as an opportunity to return to something from my childhood."



Guild Members' Remembrances

Nina Seaman -- Connie and her husband, Alan came to Nova Scotia to visit me in August 2010. Each day we would walk along the sandy beach at the local provincial park. Some days we would find sand dollars and pick them up to save for the days in NJ when there was no beach to walk. Other days we would see three little foxes playing in the sand. They seemed unafraid of humans and would roll in the sand and scamper about among the grasses. We enjoyed the beauty of the beach, the bright sunshine and the sight of these small animals.

This summer on Connie's birthday, July 19, I was walking on the same beach and found my first sand dollar of the summer. When I called to wish her happy birthday, I told her I was bringing her special sand dollar home to NJ for her to enjoy. Now it will be special to Alan. On the day after she died, one of the little foxes from this season of foxes, came out on the beach and walked a bit of it with me. It was as if Connie was there to comfort and reassure me.

I cherish the time that she and Alan spent with me and my husband, Bob, here in Nova Scotia. Alan presented us with a beautiful painting of Connie on the beach with us. I will treasure that painting and the beautiful memories that I have of Connie.

Dee Rosebrock -- Everyone who knew Connie Coleman through our Hooksome Chatmore Thursday hooking group thought of her as a good friend, and a generous person who was always willing to give of her time and energy in support of the group. When I went with some other hookers to keep her company as her health declined, I was impressed by how many people from various parts of her life spontaneously arrived or contacted Connie to help give her comfort in any way they could. This included people from her job and her church, plus former colleagues and students at the school where she and her husband had taught. People from her quilting group, the Grange and other friends also provided support. They coordinated amongst themselves to make sure she had constant companionship to give her husband respite. It was clear that these people were genuinely concerned about Connie, and it was striking to see how many people Connie had touched throughout her life. To be surrounded by people who care for you is as much as anyone can hope for, and to have such a wide and diverse circle of friends is a strong testament to the way Connie had lived her life.

Connie Coleman, An Old Friend's Remembrance

Connie was my older brother's best friend at RISD, and their friendship continued strong until his death in 1985. Clint started school in Pre-Med at Southwestern at Memphis, spent his junior year abroad in France, and transferred to RISD in 1968. At a time of enormous change in Clint's life, Connie's steady focus and commitment to her craft as a weaver was a touchstone and guiding example as he worked to refocus his career path to painting and printmaking.

Though from different regions of the country -- Clint from Louisiana and Connie from Rhode Island -- they seemed to speak the same language. Connie was about twenty when I met her. I was sixteen. She always told the story of Clint handing off his little brother to her: "Go do something with him." On one of our first visits she drove me to Moonstone Beach - a rocky, cold and foggy walk on the beach in heavy wool sweaters with hot chocolate as the destination. I fell in love with Rhode Island and New England, and we began a friendship of our own.

A mutual love of Christmas created a bond between Connie and Clint and our families that lasted a lifetime. Near Christmas the Harelsons would receive a box of little gifts from Connie, artistic treasures, little handmade animals, small luxuries, all wrapped in carefully chosen papers with handmade tags. As we opened them on Christmas morning we marveled at Connie's choices, imagination, and talent. We treasured her friendship. After the opening of the gifts, we would make a long-distance call with the help of an AT&T operator to speak with the Colemans, from our living room to theirs.

I marveled at Connie's patience with her weaving -- such a slow, and, I thought, tedious process.

But through her life I saw again and again her commitment to process and craft. She worked in the material world, cleaning, stripping and refinishing woodwork and furniture, turning derelict apartments and buildings into homes and studios, sewing, doing needlework, taking care of houseplants (hers were always beautiful!), gardening, and cooking. Connie was a great cook, and we had many wonderful meals together. She loved to fix vegetarian for my partner Richard

and me. Her veggie fritattas and her simple Italian pastas were memorably delicious. Cooking with fresh ingredients, preferably grown in her or my home garden, was always her simple food philosophy.

After RISD Clint moved south and after LSU I moved north. Connie and I had a happy year of friendship as single working adults. Living only blocks

apart in Providence, we made time several nights a week for supper, and enjoyed weekend outings together. She generously introduced me to her many friends: fellow weavers, potters, photographers, painters and teachers. I became a New Englander with Connie's help, and stayed for almost twenty years.

During that year of living in the same neighborhood we dated other people and treasured sharing the highs and lows - mostly lows - of that dreadful experience. We had long talks, laughed a lot, and drank no small amount of bourbon - our mutual drink of choice.

We welcomed each other's partners when we finally found them, and were pleased to discover that Alan Powell and Richard Gibbs had known each other since freshman year at RISD. They had



been dorm-mates at Farnum Hall.

Connie and Alan got married in the backyard of my house in Warwick. Steve Coenen and I built the wisteria arbor beneath which the Coleman-Powells exchanged their vows. I made the paper animals that marched around the tiers of the wedding cake, two by two, like Noah, because Connie said, "Everyone mates."

Their wedding was a joyous occasion, and their marriage a fine union of two artists, teachers, gardeners, householders, and devoted friends and lovers.

Connie was a giver. She gave to us, to her marriage, to her students, to her church, and to mission projects far and near. She loved people

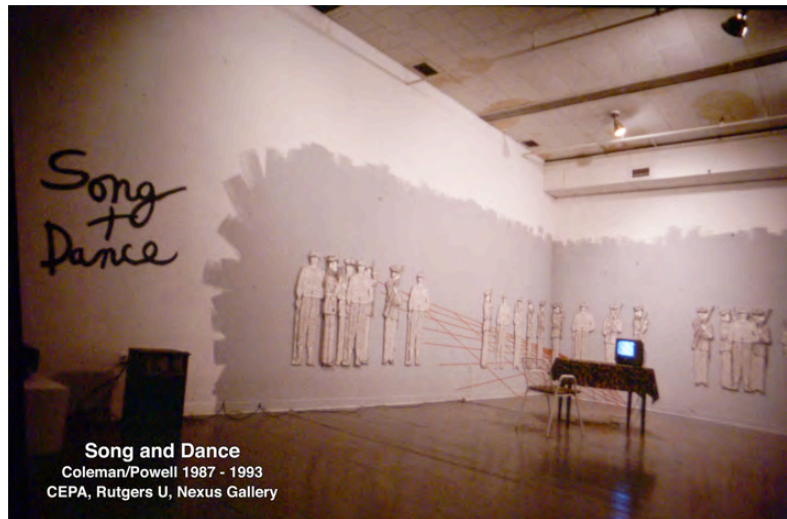
and she loved life - of course she complained about both - but she came to the end of her life with the same patience and steadiness that marked all her life and art.

The last day Richard and I spent with Connie in June, she and Alan took us to their church to see the hooked rug she made, now hanging in the church hall. That rug -- so lovely in its clarity and simplicity -- is unquestionably the sincere work of the artist I met when she was only twenty, and will love and admire always.

--Randy Harelson
New Roads, Louisiana
September 2011



May 20, 1978- Connie and Alan get married



Connie Coleman was my friend, colleague, mentor and inspiration. Connie and Alan belong to the first generation of video artists. They engaged together as true and equal collaborators – partners – and the works they created together were beautiful, socially and politically smart and sometimes very funny. In the early days of video, especially the area of electronic image-making and tool design, most practitioners were men. And in this high-tech arena, Connie always engaged as an equal. She encouraged other women to work with video and to stand up and present their ideas in a rational, generous and open-hearted way. Occasionally she'd gently "yell" at me a bit, encouraging me to overcome my long-held desire to avoid any type of conflict or debate. She remained always true to her sense of ethics and justice but also knew how and when to compromise.

She deeply understood the need for structure and substance, in her art and life. I find it interesting that certain of her art practices, video and some fiber arts for example, are based in the concept of scanning – back and forth, endlessly – until art is woven and image is created. Her life bodied synchronization, both in video and as a model for being in the world. The lives of Connie and her partner Alan interleaved, creating a frame composed of two separate and individual fields, coordinated.

I always looked forward to Alan and Con-

nie's visits to work in the studio of the Experimental Television Center. They were early residents and in the 1980s and 90s came often. We would always share a meal and some conversation. And it was always stimulating and inspiring.

Her art was as varied as her garden. She excelled at weaving, print-making, photography, video and sculptural installations. She was a brilliant gardener and excellent cook. She taught me patience and the need for constant self-evaluation and education. I wished to have her eye, her sense of detail and of place. I admired also her deep New England sense of dignity and privacy.

I am thankful that Alan and Connie were able to visit us at our house earlier this year and deeply moved that Alan and Connie and their friends made the trip to NYC this past July to participate as presenting artists at the Experimental Television Center's Tribute Screening at Anthology Film Archives. I was honored to stand beside her at the conclusion of the screening, along with the other artists participating in the show. Connie and I held hands while the audience expressed appreciation for the work of Alan and Connie and the other ETC artists.

Connie Coleman was my friend. She walked gently but purposefully on this earth. And I miss her very much.

- Sherry Miller, Dir. of Experimental TV Center

Connie Coleman was my teacher, mentor, and very special friend for 37 years. Our long relationship began in 1974 when she taught my college textile design classes.

She further encouraged me as a student by inviting me to be her apprentice—hours and hours of experimenting with dyes and working on several woven commissions. It was during this apprenticeship that we truly became fast friends. I remember sitting at the loom weaving away and Connie coming up behind me and whispering into my ear, “Fuck you.” I turned around with shock and terror, not knowing what I could possibly have done wrong. Connie just smiled, and said, “Maybe now you’ll stop treating me like an old professor and think of me as a friend.”

Connie and I had many adventures together: we went with Electron Movers to Artpark as Alan’s assistants (before they were married), we took a trip together to Jamaica. But what I want to write about here is The Egg. Not just any egg, but a double-yolk, sunny-side up egg. Forty feet in diameter.

Connie got a commission; I have no idea how. It was to create an art piece for a national supermarket conference that was being held at the Civic Center in downtown Providence, Rhode Island. Seriously. And Connie was really quite tickled by the idea of doing something quirky and conceptual. She proposed releasing thousands of fortune cookies on tiny parachutes from aircraft over the city. The promoters didn’t like that idea. She then proposed parading a herd of cows through the streets. The promoters didn’t like that idea either. They wanted “art.” They wanted a “thing.” In desperation she said, “What about a giant fried egg hanging from the roof of the Civic Center?” Her idea, and what she thought for sure the promoters would understand and therefore reject, was that she thought they were ridiculous. But of course they loved it. LOVED IT! And so Connie enlisted my help and we started working on the giant egg.

An architect friend of Connie’s, Peter Wilson, drew

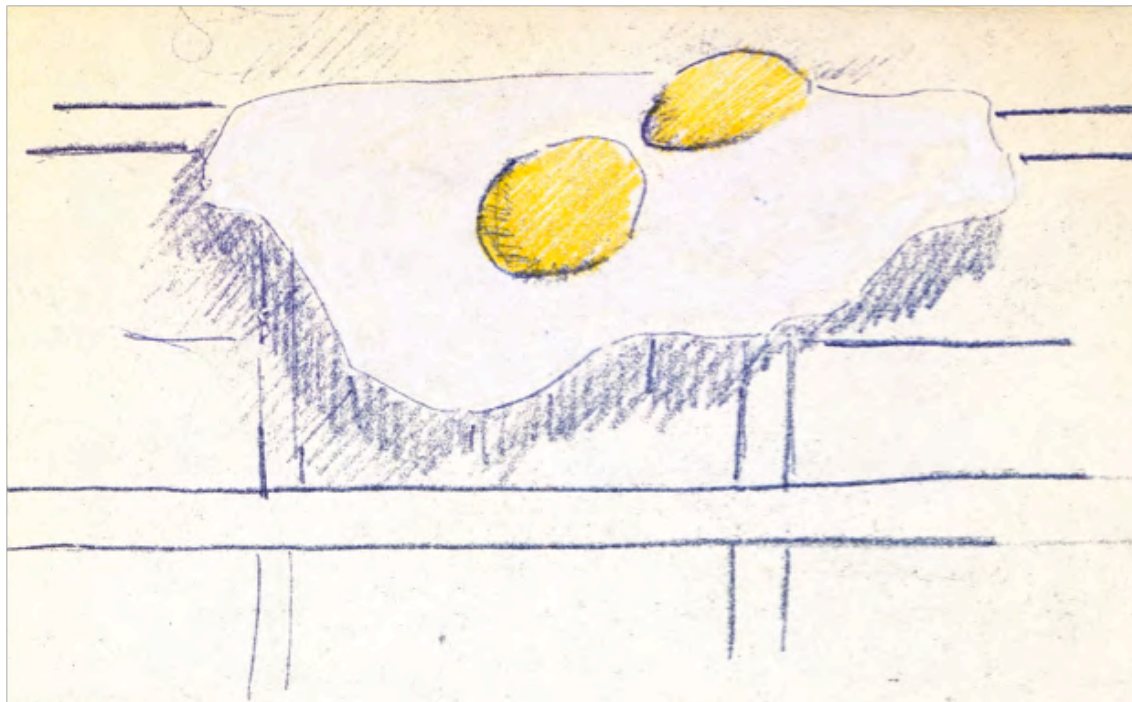
detailed plans and elevation drawings. We purchased the materials: white and yellow rip-stop nylon (parachute grade) on rolls 48 inches wide; and chipped foam (used in pillows) to stuff the yolks, which were each to be about 6 feet in diameter. We worked in a loft with Connie’s portable Bernina sewing machine, sewing together fifty-foot long strips of nylon. I cannot imagine how we actually did it, and because Connie insisted this be strong, all the seams were French. French seams are like the seams that run down the inside leg of a pair of Levi’s. First you make one line of stitches with the sewing machine, then flip the fabric, tuck in the edges, and make another two runs down the length of the fabric. It was hot, dirty, and exhausting work. But we got it done, setting the last grommets to hold the fastening ropes just before the truck arrived to bring it to the Civic Center.

The installation was choreography. Connie was on the ground across the street from the Civic Center with a walkie-talkie (no cell phones back then!) and I was on the roof with the union crew. The roof was flat, so one third of the egg stayed on the roof with the remaining two-thirds hanging freely down the front of the building. One of the yolks was right along the roofline, half on and half off the roof. The other was totally off the roof—it’s weight keeping the rest of the egg from blowing around too much in the wind. It was really something to see. We’d done it!

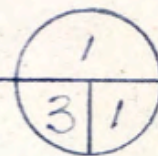
And then it started to rain. It rained and stormed for two days, and each day we’d go check on the egg, not knowing what we’d find. The foam chips inside the enormous yolks absorbed the rainwater and began to sag with the weight (I can’t imagine how heavy they must have gotten), but except for sagging, that egg held its own. Nothing ripped. Nothing came apart. It was those damn French seams.

Since then, every time I see French seams I think of Connie—and I think of them as metaphors for her own strength and endurance.

- Michael Carr

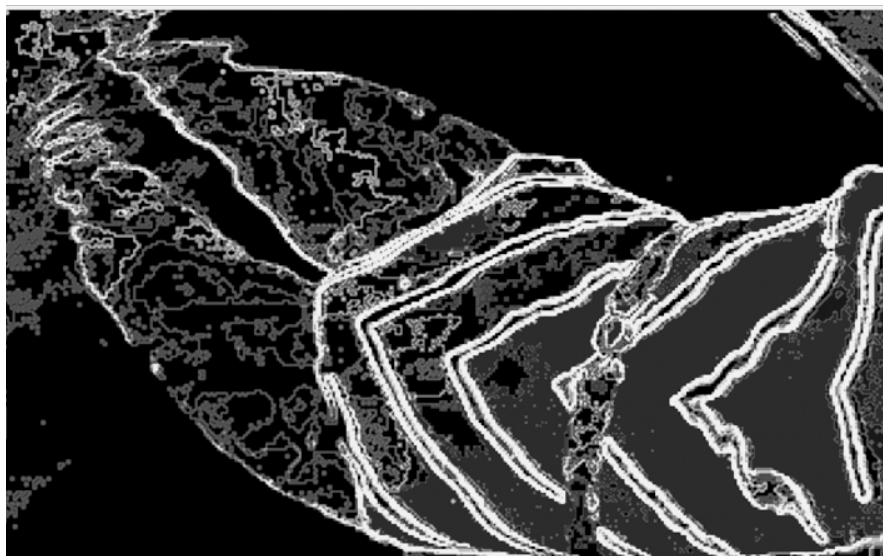


DETAIL - FRONT ELEV.
NOT TO SCALE



© 1977 Constance E. Coleman

PETER CHACE WILSON
ENVIRON DESIGN SYSTEMS
1206 "G" STREET N.W.
WASHINGTON D.C. 20005



Swimmer by Connie Coleman, 1994

For Connie

Connie was a friend, a colleague and an artist who I admired. I met Connie and Alan in 2001 at the Hunterdon Art Museum. I was the new director of exhibitions and Alan was teaching in the summer art camp. Alan introduced Connie to me at an opening at the museum and very quickly we started working on projects together. Connie and Alan created a video installation called *Inside Out* in the museum in 2004. We also worked together on a documentary celebrating the 50th anniversary of the museum's founding in 1952.

After she was diagnosed with cancer, Connie asked me to work with her on an exhibition that she had arranged with the gallery at the University of the Arts where she had taught for so many years. I was happy to do it; I wanted to do something for her. As it turned out, the real value of the project was not in the essay that I wrote or the beautiful exhibition that Connie meticulously designed and installed, but in the time that we spent together reconstructing her past as a printmaker which was separate from the collaborative work that she had done with Alan in video and digital media. In these conversations we talked about art, process, dot matrix printers, textiles, images, memories, technology, politics, other people, and we talked about life.

I think of these conversations and I remember Connie's tenacious intelligence, her stubborn resolve, her toughness, and her desire to protect herself and Alan so that they had space and time to make art, travel, spend time with people they cared about, and work to make the world a better place. But most of all I remember Connie's kindness and generosity and her courage.

Donna Gustafson



Quilting at Plumsteadville Grange

Connie joined the Plumsteadville Grange Quilters in 2002. At that time we were repairing and completing unfinished quilts for other people.

We soon realized that this was not satisfying our creative abilities, so Connie began to design quilts which we could piece and hand quilt from beginning to end.

Meeting with us once a week was a high priority and she was serious about the commitment and the opportunity to leave the world behind for a few hours. Arthritis had made her hands too stiff for small needlework, but she used her talent for color and design to help put the quilts together. Always vocal about her opinions, she was not satisfied until the pattern looked right in her eyes, and finally all of the quilters were in agreement that we were ready to sew.

Connie was our quality controller. She taught us to take off our glasses and squint hard so that we could see colors in proper perspective. She wouldn't allow short cuts and if mistakes were made it was "rip out and redo." She was very frugal and wouldn't allow any material scraps, however small, to be thrown out.

Our aim was to produce one quilt each year and raise money by raffling them off. Connie insisted that this money should be used for the continuing renovation of the Farm Market Barn. She lived to see her dream of electricity and water connected to the barn.

The first time we met after Connie passed away, we sat down to lunch as always. Nicky and Nancy had brought a platter with nine candles on it. We passed the plate around, each one of us lighting a candle and saying a few words of remembrance. Everyone had a different comment - the memory of a kind word said in private during a troubled time, a generous act helping with a personal project, being the first person to welcome a newcomer to the community, and her commitment to community service. Above all, Connie had an undying belief in the human spirit.

After lunch we went back to quilting. We sewed some sorrow into this quilt in the summer of 2011. But the bright colors are a good memory of her last work, and remind us that life goes on. Although it's not always easy, we will try to remember the prayer she often said before lunch, "Let us be mindful of the needs of others."

-Plumsteadville Grange Quilters:

Sally Hetrick, Mary Ellen Brehm, Meg Lomax, Anne & Kelly Reilly, Patsy King, Betsey Wertz, Lorraine Broomhall, Karen Moss, Nancy Greenberg, Nicky Heller





My husband Rowland and I became acquainted with Connie in 1996 when they first came as volunteers on the Discovery Service Project trip to Mexico after hearing us give a report at the Plumsteadville Grange. She and Alan ended up going on nine DSP service trips to Central America, helping construct and rehabilitate buildings for needy communities. Many of the trips also involved sewing projects, and here Connie's skills with fabric were well utilized, as she was able to teach quilting techniques to the local people with whom we worked.

Connie and Alan came to our home where Rowland led group discussions. Connie had long left her childhood religious training and had many questions. After several years of dialog and inquiry she came back to her faith in God, joined the Episcopal Church with Alan and became an active member.

Connie designed 15 of the t-shirts our international volunteers wear to smooth their way through airport security and customs. Each year, Rowland would have a theme for the project and the shirt, and Connie would go to work to create a pleasing and striking design. Then she would show us her preliminary plans for discussion. Connie was never reluctant to say "No, Rowland, that's not artistic." They'd each give a little, but Connie always persisted in having a very artistic design. One year Rowland lobbied hard for a long scripture text in large

print. The text did get included, but appeared in a graceful spiral. Compromise was always possible.

After our mission project in Dominican Republic where we worked on a community building for a church and were able to have wells drilled to provide clean water for a village of Haitian sugar cane workers, Connie designed and prepared a brochure about the project. Then in 2005 she designed another colorful brochure to promote the work of Discovery Service Projects.

Connie was a unique person. Not many people have her combination of abilities as an artist and her drive for connecting with her community. She was a natural teacher. Nearly everything I know about computers I learned from Connie and Alan. I knew how to type and correct errors and not much else! They taught me how to save a document, make folders, do spreadsheets, scan and download photos, make power point presentations, etc, etc. Whenever I had a problem, I could call on them. When I offered to pay, they said that this was their contribution to Discovery Service Projects. What a gift!

Beyond her involvement with DSP, Connie was just a very dear friend. A visit with Connie was always an interesting visit. She loved gardening and was accomplished in so many avenues of art. She cared deeply for her friends. She had strong opinions, yet we could always discuss things. I will miss her. No one can take her place.

- Barbara E. Carlson

Student Reflections

When I first met Connie, I was in my third year at the University of the Arts. I had just changed my major a year prior from writing to animation, hoping to find something that I couldn't grasp in myself my freshmen year. The idea of taking Computer Animation seemed foreign, surreal and scary. I saw myself as a writing major trying to pull off the switch to animation. I still had a lot of doubts about jumping into something so unlike myself.

Connie's classroom was different from any other classroom I had ever been in. It was an intimate computer lab filled with a class of students just as anxious as myself. The things we learned in there went beyond the software and the projects. Connie had a unique way of combining nurturing teaching while encouraging independent thinking. She was stern and challenged us all as students. If I went to her for an answer, she would come back at me with more questions. I loved the way Connie would turn a challenge into an opportunity to learn something new. She wanted me to development the confidence to troubleshoot my way through my own creative blocks.

I remember always leaving her class with my mind feeling full and tingling with new ideas. Something about what I was learning and how I was learning it finally ignited a purpose within myself.

Connie had seen something in me too and encouraged me to be a tutor in computer animation my last two years at UArts. It was a wonderful opportunity to experience how fulfilling it was to help others learn. Many years later, she encouraged me once again to become a teacher. I took the methods I learned from her and applied it to the way I instruct my students. Every time I teach file management or explain TV aspect ratio, I think back to when I first learned those things from her.

One of my last memories of Connie was from this past spring when she came to visit me in my computer lab at Arcadia University. It's amazing how things have come full circle over the past 11 years. I truly would not be who I am today without her influence. I feel the same is true for all of her students that have had a privilege to share her classroom. It's hard to define an important person in your life by a single role that they had played in it. For Connie, she was more than just a teacher to me. She was a mentor and a colleague, but most importantly a dear friend. I will forever be thankful for all of the wonderful gifts she has shared with me.

- Christine Kemp



My first memory of Connie was in Merida, Mexico: “Now everyone wash your hands in this bucket with soap and water and bleach them in the second bucket before eating.”

Bleach? I thought, isn't that a little drastic? Well it was, but it was necessary drastic. Connie knew what to do and how to do things and that is something I loved about her; she was always sure of herself.

Connie made me want to better myself. I don't even think she realized she had that effect on me. Her presence alone spoke a thousand words. She was one of those people that you loved to be around, someone full of great stories and advice. As a college student trying to figure out this world, I thought of Connie as more than a professor. She was the light at the end of the tunnel, and I thought, “If I can be a little more like Connie, I can certainly succeed in this world”.

It is hard to believe that she's gone. I'm still trying to understand how all of this happened, and the only thing I can find comfort in is the fact that Connie lived a great life, had a great love and a husband. I can only hope to live such a fulfilling life. Connie, I want to thank you for being such an inspiration and for always comforting me with some great advice. Your words will always remain alive and your strong personality will forever carry me through. I love you!

- Nina Fazenbaker



Dear Connie,

I was asked to write about you and have tried, but I can't. How do I put your impact on my life and what you mean to me into 500 words? It is completely impossible, especially for me. I can't even describe my breakfast in 500 words and you are far bigger than breakfast

My experiences with you have blessed my life with countless memories and moments from which I have grown so much. You shared with me your wisdom, opened your gentle, humble heart to my chaotic life journey, and gave me through your patience my own to light my path to a better self. Although we have shared many conversations and adventures, what has made the biggest difference in my life were seven words you spoke while in Honduras.

What I was going through in my head and heart during my time in Honduras is something that I still have trouble expressing. Without ever needing to be told, you could see that struggle between pain and joy in my life. When we first arrived in Honduras, I was one week out of withdrawal from drugs I was using to get through law school, these pills that became the worst best friend I've ever had, and still holding onto bulimia, the teammate of my drug addiction. Every time you looked me in the eyes, the urge to run and hide would quiver in my legs. Guilt sat heavy in my heart as you longed for me to succeed while I continuously and selfishly sabotaged my life. Talking with you reminded me of how sorry I was for being so selfish during this time.

One of our conversations while we were there contained those seven words that made all of this guilt make sense. There was a leader on our trip named Hector that reminded me so much of a man named Roger from our trip to Mexico two years prior. They both had contagious laughs, ones that came from their bellies, and they radiated warmth that you wanted to surround yourself with at all times. Outside of my service trips, I lived without this warmth. Constantly, I was searching to find that again and the only place I found it was when I went on these trips and spent time with you and Alan. Occasionally, it would pop up when I was teaching dance or speaking with a stranger, only to last a few moments and then disappear. If only I could have this light, I wouldn't need the drugs.

When I went to you to point out the resemblances between Hector and Roger, you said, "Because there is something spiritual about them." That was it. That is what made everything make sense. How could I have not seen this before? After we spoke that day, I turned that thought over and over again in my head. Later that evening, I sat with you and Alan as you pleaded with me not to leave law school. As you held your chest, you said, "You really don't see your potential. You can do great things if only you don't give up and we want so badly for you to succeed." When I returned from Honduras and notified Rutgers I would not be returning, I heard you. I heard everything you said, and now I long to make you proud.

My life now is filled with that light. I gave my heart to Christ in April of 2009 and haven't looked back. No longer do I need drugs or bulimia for strength, because I am loved. Even alcohol is a thing of the past and I would have never thought that possible. Never am I without this peace and joy in my heart because my relationships and life are covered in this. Through my church in Colorado, I have started a Women's Dance Fellowship. The goal of this fellowship is to encourage women to not judge their worth by the shape of their bodies, but to celebrate their health and uniqueness given by God. I long to reach out to women with such passion in the way you did to me and speak to them words that will speak to their hearts. Many things you have said have influenced my life, but those words were the beginning of my new life.

I am sad I can no longer sit in a room with you and find peace in your presence. But I am truly thankful knowing that you have won this long, painful battle and are finally at peace. I had a dream you were sitting under a tree with leaves the color of lilac atop a green hill. The sky was lit up with oranges and blues as the wind blew softly, causing the leaves to dance all around you. Your skin had a soft, silver sparkle and you were laughing. Off in the distance, I heard your voice say, "I'm OK." Even in your eternal life, you are still looking after me and are with me. I am deeply sorry for my old self and I hope I make you proud.

- Lisa King



Connie

By Laurie McDonald

In early April of this year, Connie and Alan traveled to Santa Fe for a week; Alan to investigate the possibility of a summer class for his students, Connie to be with Alan and to relax and have fun. This was the most time I'd spent with Connie since our Rhode Island days. On Wednesday of that week, Alan had business to attend to, so Connie and I were on our own to do whatever she felt like doing. We walked around Santa Fe's beautiful downtown plaza, where I bought her a pink scarf that added extra color to her cheeks. We ate lunch, and headed up the mountain to a beautiful Japanese spa for a soak and a massage. Connie was in the best of spirits and enjoying life that day. First we went to the women's tub for a soak, and when Connie disrobed, I saw the catheter that is placed under the skin for delivery of chemotherapy installed in her chest. It was shocking, to say the least, and brought the reality of her ordeal into sharp focus. But Connie had discontinued chemo some weeks earlier, so the hair she had lost had started to grow back. She said, rub my head, it feels just like a tennis ball. And it did. The excellent massage therapist gave her a relaxing and healing treatment.

The next day, Connie felt good enough to hike at the Kasha-Katuwe National Monument, a magical place on a local pueblo featuring a geological formation commonly known as "tent rocks," volcanic tuff eroded into distinctive tent shapes. After the hike, we visited a Native American drum maker at his home on the pueblo, and Alan bought a drum. Connie savored every minute of those experiences, a lesson for all of us in our everyday lives. We must live every day as if it is our last.

A few weeks later, I received a card from Connie:

The drum arrived safely; thanks so much for packing and shipping it!! We had a wonderful time with you and want you to know how much it means to us to be able to spend time together after all of these years... It's been warm enough off and on to be able to work in the garden. The activity of weeding and just generally cleaning up makes me happy – even though I can barely move afterwards. Our magnolia tree has just started to bloom and the bluebells are also working hard. The birds are singing like crazy – really great bird songs.

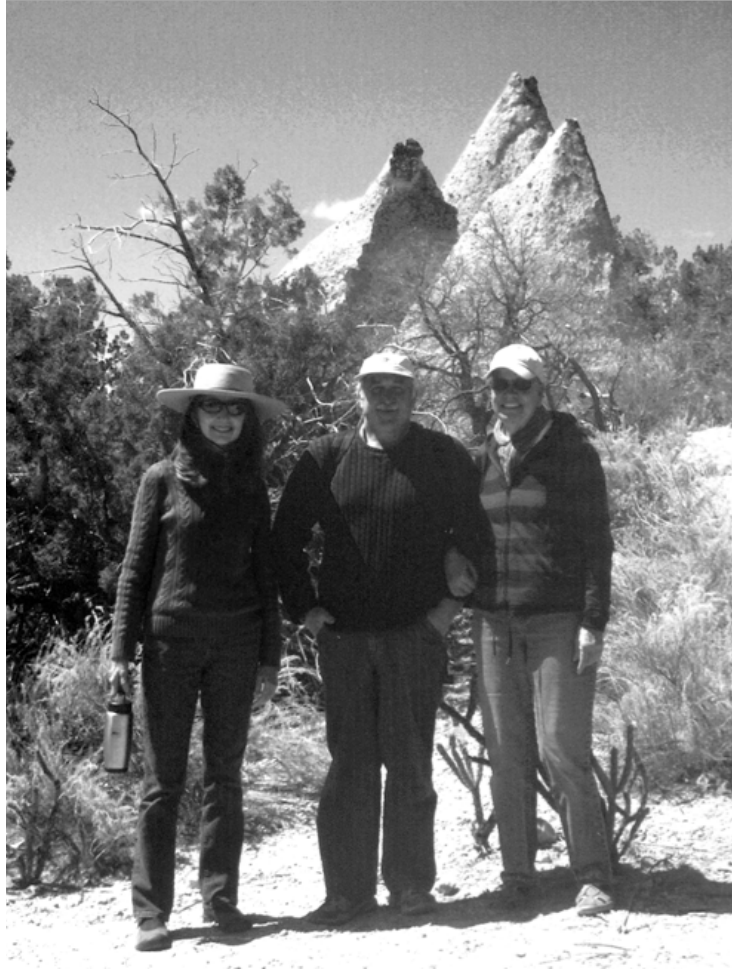
When I sat in treatment last Monday it was neat to close my eyes and reimage the desert and tent rocks and the tasty lunches we shared. All of it good and healing.

Thank you... I sure wish you were closer!!!

Much love,

Connie

On May 13th, I was shopping in the local grocery when I received the call from Alan – Connie's cancer had spread to her brain. I burst into tears, and he suggested I go stand next to the onions so my tears made sense to other shoppers. I turned around; that's exactly where I was standing already. He put Connie on the phone, and she consoled me when it should have been the other way around. She told me she wasn't afraid to die; what a statement of courage. What heroism.



Then Connie lost her sight. Again, on the phone, she was cheerful and not afraid. And right before she completely lost her ability to communicate, she phoned me and talked non-stop for over an hour. I knew it would be our last conversation and that she was saying everything she wanted to say. Without actually saying goodbye, that's what she was doing.

One of the things I loved most about Connie was how devoted she was to Alan. Yes, she would scold him often for certain trademark Powell behaviors, but she truly loved him and took great care of him, offering unwavering support, respect, understanding, and love for nearly four decades; a priceless gift. Here's a poem that reminds me of Connie:

*When your time comes to die, be not like those
whose hearts are filled with fear of death,
so that when their time comes they weep and pray
for a little more time to live their lives over again
in a different way.
Sing your death song, and die like a hero going home.
-- The Teaching of Tecumseh, Shawnee leader*

Excerpts from “CE Coleman: **Drawing the Time In-Between**”

By Donna Gustafson

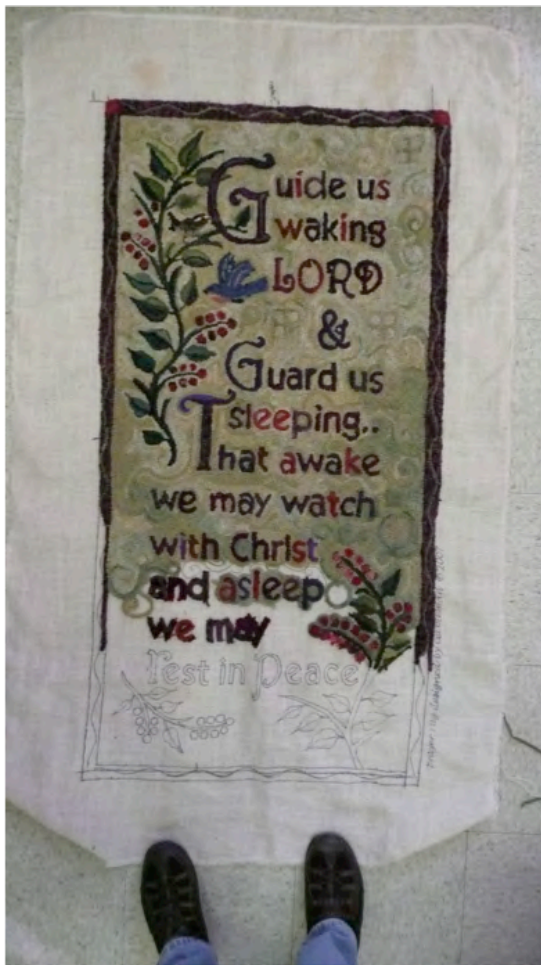
Drawing the Time In-Between is a survey of 25 years of Connie Coleman’s work on the edges of the moving image and between time. While some of these works have been seen before in public spaces, this mid-career retrospective of works on paper is the first close examination of these works as a coherent group. The thirty eight prints in this exhibition include examples made with dot matrix printers, plotters, thermal printers, and include videographic giclees, Cibachromes, digital photographs, offset lithographs, and drawings that utilize felt marker on paper. Selected by the artist, the exhibition is a balanced self-assessment and an acknowledgment of her continuing interests, processes, and ideas. Her artistic forebears include Marcel Duchamp, Man Ray, John Cage, and Eadweard Muybridge whose own experiments in photographically capturing all the steps of human and animal locomotion come to mind when confronted with Coleman’s experiments in stopping time and capturing images in motion. Much of the work in the exhibition reaches back to a time when electronic and digital media were relatively new media and Coleman, like other artists who were involved in the early history of video and computer manipulation of images, found themselves at the forefront of new technologies. In many cases these artists were pushing the edges of the known in search of ways to bend technology to their own ends. The prints in this exhibition, many of which capture the fragile and ironic beauty of the handcrafted technological image, provide evidence of Coleman’s contributions to the use and some might say misuse of these new technologies for artistic purposes.

Coleman is best known for her work in

video and media art with her long-time collaborator, Alan Powell. Her densely packed resume include artist’s residencies at the Brandywine Graphic Workshop, Maryland Center for the Arts, Rhode Island State Council on the Arts, the Experimental Television Center in Owego, New York, WXXI-TV Rochester, NY, WHYY-TV Philadelphia, PA and CEPA in Buffalo, NY. She has exhibited widely and won awards from the National Endowment of the Arts, the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts and the Pennsylvania State Council on the Arts. She is also a dedicated teacher who has worked within the academy and outside of it to bring her knowledge and vision of video, computer animation, and visual literacy to a wide audience. Her early training at the Rhode Island School of Design was as a textile designer and printmaker but she quickly and decisively switched gears to embrace what she and others have described as the tools of the Pop-Industrial Information Age. Coleman has consistently worked in a wide range of media from fiber arts, weaving, quilting and rug hooking to sophisticated digital media. I suspect her view of this range--from the decidedly low tech, hand-craft of rug hooking, which is traditionally associated with women’s work to the traditionally oriented male work of high technology and computer engineered image production would be a shrug by way of saying that there are no boundaries and all are tools for the exploration of images and idea.

.... Asking questions and pushing against what are perceived as boundaries in order to investigate a discourse, for example, girls and

math, or a medium like television, is one of the things that Coleman does best. In collaboration with Powell, Connie Coleman has produced videos that create interventions in the mass media of television and commercial video in order to more closely examine how history, politics, cultural ideas, and information are disseminated to the public. The mass media might pretend to disseminate information and or knowledge in an open forum of ideas, but as we have come to realize through the tools of deconstruction, the media presents carefully scripted views that purport to



be truth, or at least factual. Coleman and Powell have also spent many years working to bring clean water and better living situations to families in Honduras in such actions their commitment to public service and the individual's responsibility to the community extends beyond the studio to real life practice. Because the exhibition features the individual and somewhat more private works of Connie Coleman, it provides a unique opportunity to explore her artistic personality alone and in her studio.

....Coleman, as an artist who came of age in the post-Marshall McLuhan era, sees both the medium she uses and the visual information that she offers as carriers of meaning. Her openness to chance, to collaboration with new technologies, and a keen insight into the complexity of the mediated world of still and moving images in which we are immersed is at the heart of Coleman's success. These prints are personal explorations, drawings in an artist's journal, but they are also informed by an interest in perception and the invisible codes that govern image making and delivery. In the physical world the only stilled images we encounter are those without life. In the floating world of media images in which we now find ourselves, still images live forever. The paradox therein is Coleman's dilemma and the subject of these unique and extraordinary prints.

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Her final piece



Connie E. Coleman 2011

