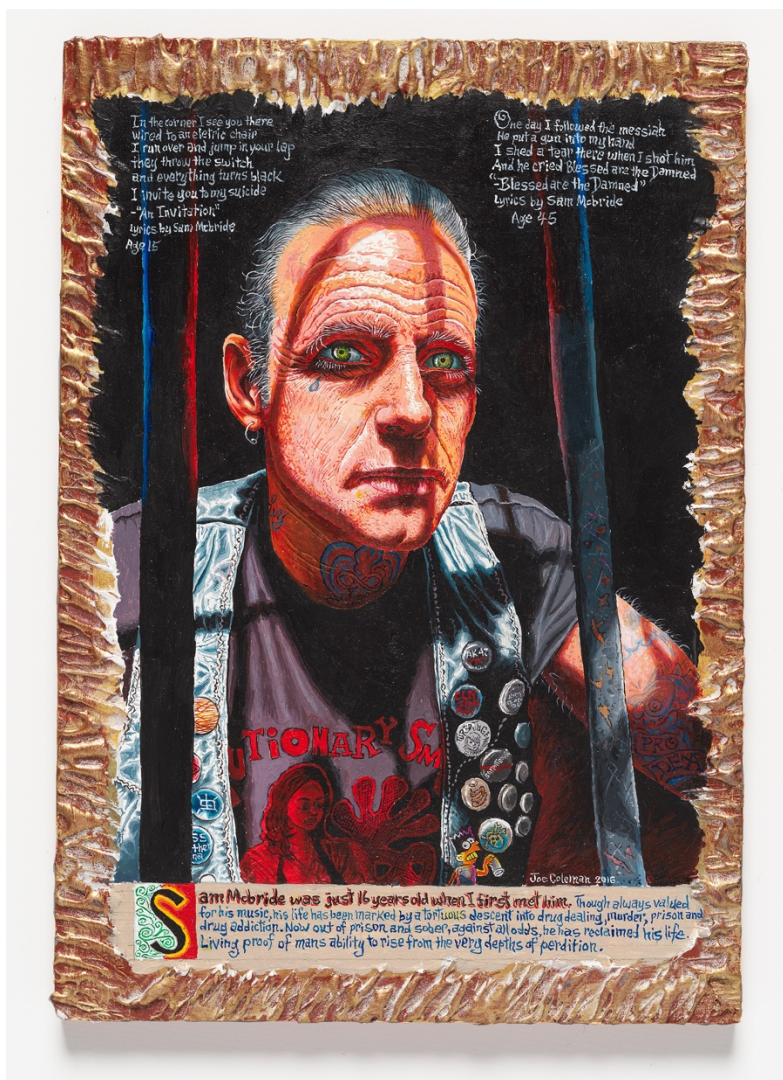


Joe Coleman and The Shadow Self: A Survey of a Giant of Contemporary Underground Art @ Andrew Edlin, NYC

Andrew Edlin Gallery // October 25, 2019 - December 07, 2019
October 11, 2019 | in [Painting](#)



We can't wait to be at this show. One of the legends of underground art, and one of the pillars of *Juxtapoz's* growth over the past 25 years, [Joe Coleman](#) will have a survey show at

one of NY's longstanding outsider art spaces, [Andrew Edlin Gallery](#). The exhibition will feature 19 paintings, many borrowed from private collections, along with a selection of new and more recent works.

Coleman's subjects are at once subjective and self-reflexive; contemplations of the other as reflections of his own identity and abiding sense of humanity. Whether self-portraits, depictions of his friends or— with the greatest affection, his wife and muse Whitney Ward— or invocations of infamy like the insurrectionist abolitionist John Brown, the medieval composer Carlo Gesualdo, who murdered his wife and her lover and then put them on display, or Swift Runner, the Cree hunter, who when facing starvation as a result of the alien European extinction of the buffalo murdered and cannibalized his family, Coleman's art is painted with an impassioned degree of love and understanding that is rare and somewhat reviled in the profession of fine art.



Emerging in the downtown New York scene of the Late Seventies and Early Eighties, a time and place where all manner of transgression seeped into the zeitgeist across myriad domains—most notably underground film, music and club-based performance art— Joe Coleman was fundamental to the great push towards the extremes of expression before the dawn of the culture wars, when what had been a relatively private subcultural conversation became public and politicized. Coleman does not dabble in taboo, he dives deep into the forbidden, an ongoing investigation into the darkness within all our hearts.

Brimming with biographical and autobiographical anecdotes and executed with the painstaking precision of a single hair paintbrush, these portraits exude a supreme act of empathy, like some multifaceted societal communion. The great affection Joe Coleman invests in his portraits is only superseded by a kind of reverence, a faith and a fetish that is ultimately spiritual, seeking transcendence within transgression.