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California poet's latest work buzzes with energy, inventiveness

PITTSBURGH—"What strikes me first about *The World Falls Away* is Wanda Coleman's musical inventiveness," said poet and editor Kevin Prufer. "These poems are sonically complex and technically riveting—lyric poems buzzing with energy, constantly shifting rhythms, and surprising wordplay. But along with this musical dexterity comes a poetic mind of great subtlety."

The University of Pittsburgh Press just published *The World Falls Away*, Coleman's nineteenth collection. Coleman divides the volume into four intriguingly titled sections: Visitations & Sightings, Channelings, Bleatings, and Throbs.

"Coleman's hard-edged new collection interrogates death's nearsightedness. Mother outlives son. Feet wear out before the heart. And the truth-teller dies before truth frees her," said Douglas Kearney. "These poems don't go gently. Elegy turns protest: 'there is a never and there is a too late.' These are sharp warnings from death's 'small mean domain,' it's not too late to heed them."

A native of Los Angeles, Coleman resides in Marina del Rey with her children, grandchildren, and her husband of three decades, poet and visual artist Austin Straus. Her numerous poetry collections include *Mercurochrome: New Poems*, a bronze medal finalist for the National Book Award; *Bathwater Wine*, winner of the Lenore Marshall Poetry Prize; and *Ostinato Vamps*.

Renowned for her live performances, Coleman is the recipient of fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts, and an Emmy Award as a writer for "Days of Our Lives."

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