



An Evening with a Luminous Mind: John Dolphin Allen  
Inventor of Biosphere 2 and Arts Guru of the Avant-Garde  
Friday April 17, 2009 at Museum of Nature & Science

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John Allen, aka Johnny Dolphin, author of the recently released *Me and the Biospheres: A Memoir by the Inventor of Biosphere 2*, the definitive autobiography of one of the most luminous minds of our time, will speak Friday, April 17 at 8 p.m. at the Museum of Nature & Science, 1318 Second Avenue in Dallas' Fair Park. Tickets are \$15 general admission, \$10 students and members of WordSpace and Museum of Nature & Science. Call 254-495-9976 or go to [www.wordspacetexas.org](http://www.wordspacetexas.org) for tickets and more information. This event is produced by WordSpace and is sponsored in part by the City of Dallas Office of Cultural Affairs.

Johnny Dolphin is the nom de plume of John Allen--an explorer, author, poet, playwright, scientist and heroic guru of the avant-garde. He has authored dozens of scientific articles, many books of poetry, prose, and plays, including *The Dream and Drink of Freedom* and *39 Blows on a Gone Trumpet*, taught hundreds of actors, and performed all over the world. His latest book, *Me and the Biospheres* is an awe-inspiring glimpse into a luminous mind and his project-by-project chronicle of man's potential to sustain the environment while interfacing it with art.

Born and raised in Oklahoma, he left a successful post-Harvard career in New York in the early 1960s to live in the Tangiers art scene then ventured through the secret back trails of war-torn Vietnam and Tibet. He began meeting the people who partnered his creation of Synergia Ranch, the Theater of All Possibilities and his historic environmental and cultural projects. He is the inventor of Biosphere 2, co-creator of the RV Heraclitus Planet Water Expedition, Rainforest Enrichment and Sustainable Forestry Project (Puerto Rico), Pastoral Regeneration Project (West Australia), The October Gallery (London), Les Marrisoniers (France), Institute of Eco Technics and Caravan of Dreams (FW). His conferences and collaborations on culture and science include such diverse members of the world's intelligentsia as Timothy Leary, the Dalai Lama, William Burroughs, Ralph Metzger, Yvgeny Yevtushenko, Buckminster Fuller and Ed Bass, He is a Fellow of the World Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Linnean Society, and the Royal Geographical Society.

The Biosphere 2 project was surely one of the great scientific and technological enterprises of our time. Building a working model of the Earth's biosphere is essential preparation for the coming era of space travel and manned exploration of other worlds. In this memoir by the multifarious genius inventor/explorer John Allen, we learn how he used his knowledge and experience in engineering, metallurgy, design, ecology, large-scale organizational finance, agriculture (and other fields), to draw together and inspire an extraordinary team of highly skilled and knowledgeable collaborators from a wide range of scientific and technical disciplines. He relates amazing stories from his years of travel in all parts of the world, doing ecosystem restoration projects, building a research ship that (still!) sails the seven seas and co-creating a travelling theatre in which he and his friends explored the mythic and

moral dimensions of the multifaceted adventure of life in the biospheres. An astonishing book! Inspiration guaranteed!

-Ralph Metzner, Ph.D., author of The Unfolding Self and Green Psychology

## About the Author



**John Allen** - traveler, author, poet, playwright, and scientist - studied anthropology, classics, writing and history at Northwestern, Stanford and Oklahoma universities. He served in the U.S. Army's Engineering Corps as a machinist, later receiving his MBA with High Distinction from Harvard Business School and became a Union organizer on Chicago's south side in 1951-52.

In the late 1950s, Allen headed a special metals team at Allegheny-Ludlum Steel that developed over thirty alloys to product status. He subsequently worked with David Lillienthal's Development Resources Corporation in the U.S., Iran, and Ivory Coast, giving up his career in 1963 to journey around the planet.

On this journey, Allen contacted the avant-garde and Berber scenes in Tangiers; hitch hiked across North Africa and studied the origins of civilization in Egypt before heading south to explore the origins of humanity. Meeting with tribal chiefs and shamans from South Sudan to Lake Victoria; he journeyed through Uganda, Kenya, to the sacred Zambezi River; north to Swahili Mombasa, taking third class sea passage with refugees to the Rann of Kutch. Having wandered through the physical and metaphysical realms of Hindu Karma yoginis and Tibetan Lamas, Allen encountered America again working as a journalist and a volunteer with a hospital located on the Ho Chi Minh trail.

Allen has since led expeditions exploring ecology and early civilizations of Nigeria, Egypt, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Nepal, Tibet, Turkey, India, Mexico and the Altiplano. His rich personal history alongside the social history of his many destinations is chronicled through novels, poetry, short stories and plays. Allen emerged as an accomplished author with his trilogy of the sixties, beginning with *Thirty-Nine Blows on a Gone Trumpet*.

Allen writes his fiction and poetry under the pen name Johnny Dolphin; he has read for audiences around the world in venues such as George Whitman's Shakespeare & Co., Paris, in New York accompanied by Ornette Coleman on saxophone; October Gallery, London (on occasion accompanied by fellow poets such as Ira Cohen, Sebastian Barker, Jack Hirschman, Pops Mohammed, Taiwo Jegeday, and Aidan Dun); Caravan of Dreams Performing Arts Center, Fort Worth, Texas and City Lights Book Store in San Francisco. His plays have been performed on every continent, from ICA London and Theatre du Soleil in Paris to villages on the Amazon and streets in California. He has set up ten acting studios, instructed some 200 actors and still performs annually with poetry and drama readings.

Of two dozen publications to Allen's credit, about half are scientific. A fellow of the Linnean Society, Explorer's Club, Royal Geographic Society and the World Academy of Art and Science, Allen co-founded the Biosphere 2 project - the world's largest laboratory for global ecology ([www.biospheres.com](http://www.biospheres.com)). As Executive Chairman, then Director of Biospheric Research, Development and Engineering, he led the world class science and engineering teams that created Biosphere 2's materially closed life system and development of spin-off technologies.

He currently serves as Chairman of Global Ecotechnics Corporation, an international project development and management company with a Biospheres Division engaged in preparing to build the second generation of advanced materially closed biospheric systems and ecologically enriched biomes ([www.biospheretechnologies.com](http://www.biospheretechnologies.com)). He also chairs the EcoFrontiers Division which operates ecological projects he helped design in France, Australia, Puerto Rico and England ([www.ecotechnics.edu](http://www.ecotechnics.edu)), and is director of the non-profit Institute of Ecotechnics whose research ship, the Heraclitus, has sailed over 250,000 nautical miles exploring Planet Water and the ethnosphere ([www.rvheraclitus.org](http://www.rvheraclitus.org)).

An accomplished speaker, Allen continues to lecture at international forums on the emerging science of biospherics, the implications of Biosphere 2 for health, environment, science, and culture, the future role of space biospheres and on humanity's place within the biosphere.