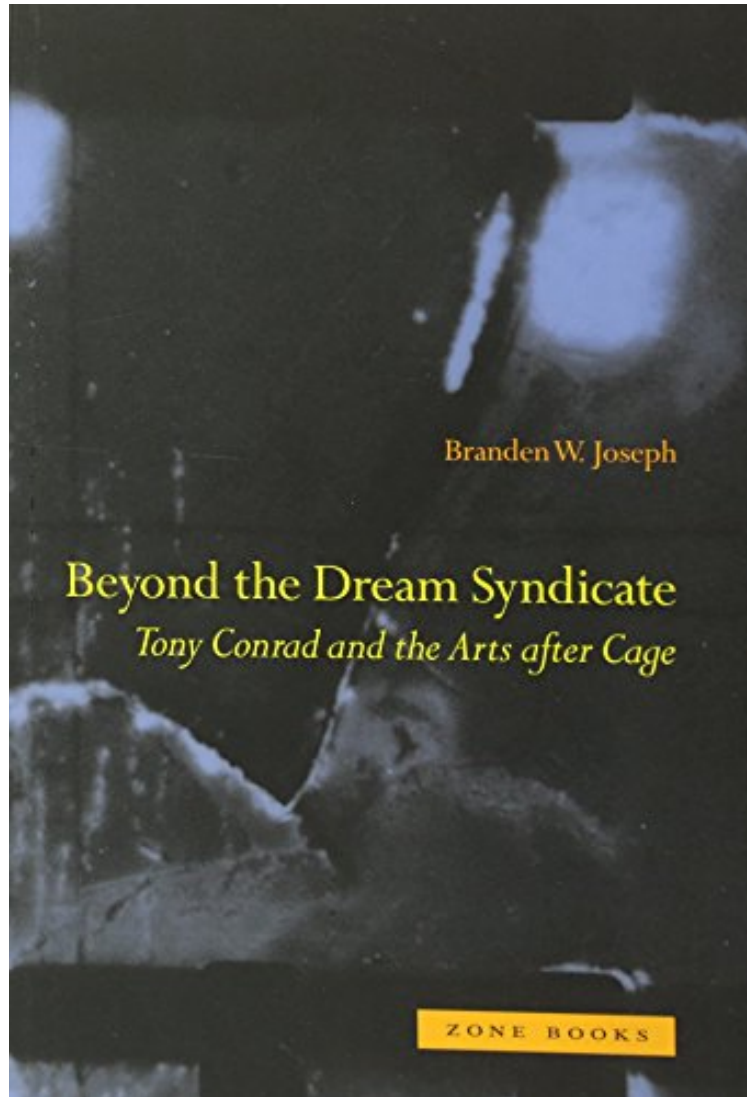


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Beyond the Dream Syndicate: Tony Conrad and the Arts After Cage

Branden W. Joseph

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Branden W. Joseph : Beyond the Dream Syndicate: Tony Conrad and the Arts After Cage before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Beyond the Dream Syndicate: Tony Conrad and the Arts After Cage:

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful. The art in between. By Dan Allen Beyond the Dream Syndicate is more than a history of Tony Conrad and the arts; post-modern, Deleuzian perspectives abound. It's a tough read, but then Conrad is a "minor" tough artist to pin down. Don't even try. If you are looking for straight forward history, this is a toughie. It borders on philosophy, and if you like reading Foucault, this might be for you. Beyond the Dream

Syndicate: Tony Conrad and the Arts after Cage
5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. very worthwhile read
By David Ruder
This book sheds great light onto the early to mid-60's work of Conrad, Henry Flynt, Jack Smith, and other New York artists with whom they were in contact. Valuable for the reader not yet familiar with these artists their ideas, and valuable for its analysis and incorporation of documents for the reader who knows this scene well. Hopefully a sign of more scholarly work to come in this area!

Examining Tony Conrad's collaborative interactions as a guiding thread by which to investigate the contiguous networks and discursive interconnections in 1960s art. Tony Conrad has significantly influenced cultural developments from minimalism to underground film, "concept art," postmodern appropriation, and the most sophisticated rock and roll. Creator of the "structural" film, *The Flicker*, collaborator on Jack Smith's *Flaming Creatures* and *Normal Love*, follower of Henry Flynt's radical anti-art, member of the Theatre of Eternal Music and the first incarnation of The Velvet Underground, and early associate of Mike Kelley, Tony Oursler, and Cindy Sherman, Conrad has eluded canonic histories. Yet *Beyond the Dream Syndicate* does not claim Conrad as a major but under-recognized figure. Neither monograph nor social history, the book takes Conrad's collaborative interactions as a guiding thread by which to investigate the contiguous networks and discursive interconnections in 1960s art. Such an approach simultaneously illuminates and estranges current understandings of the period, redrawing the map across medium and stylistic boundaries to reveal a constitutive hybridization at the base of the decade's artistic development. This exploration of Conrad and his milieu goes beyond the presentation of a relatively overlooked oeuvre to chart multiple, contestatory regimes of power simultaneously in play during the pivotal moment of the 1960s. From the sovereign authority invoked by Young's music, to the "paranoiac" politics of Flynt, to the immanent control modeled by Conrad's films, each avant-garde project examined reveals an investment within a particular structure of power and resistance, providing a glimpse into the diversity of the artistic and political stakes that continue to define our time. Branden W. Joseph is Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art in the Department of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia University and an editor of the journal *Grey Room* (MIT Press). He is the author of *Random Order: Robert Rauschenberg and the Neo-Avant-Garde* (MIT Press, 2003.)

Pivoting on Tony Conrad's seminal role as artist and theorist, this groundbreaking book reexamines the post-Cagean milieu of early sixties New York where visual art, music, film, and performance increasingly overlapped and hybridized. Richly detailed, scrupulously researched, Joseph's brilliant analysis deploys a Foucauldian model to reformulate crucial questions of artistic authorship, tease out the political and social implications of Conrad's prescient production and interactions with his peers, and reconfigure a broad swathe of American vanguard culture so that the imbrication of these artists' practices in structures of power stands newly revealed. (Lynne Cooke, curator, Dia Art Foundation) Joseph moves across and between disciplinary genres of scholarship, and thereby challenges the reader's capacity to think outside familiar categories. This study sits at the fringes of several academic disciplines and, to its credit, fits squarely within none. (Stephen Petersen Leonardo s) A superb book. (Daniel Birnbaum Artforum) [A] meticulous and imaginative study.... a vital argument for recasting in unlikely, counterintuitive or even absurd ways the cultural histories we think we know best.... a compelling and exemplary history. (Art) Branden Joseph has emerged as one of our most accomplished and significant cultural historians. Ranging across film, music, and art, his new book focuses on the myriad accomplishments of Tony Conrad. The combination of its detailed scholarship across a very wide cultural field, the incisiveness of its analyses, and its ease in moving dialectically from the most precise formal details of works of art to their general social and political implications is remarkable. Overall his demonstration of the interrelatedness of different cultural spheres presents a radical challenge to the hermeticism of orthodox art history and to the simple-minded high/low binaries of affirmative cultural studies. It's hard to imagine, let alone find, a work in sixties' cultural historiography of comparably broad insight and originality. (David E. James, author of *The Most Typical Avant-Garde: History and Geography of Minor Cinemas in Los Angeles*) Branden W. Joseph's new book *Beyond the Dream Syndicate: Tony Conrad and the Arts After Cage* is a necessary and timely one. In sum, Joseph has succeeded in substantially altering our notion of the so-called expanded field of art and film. With its meticulous research and precise mode of argumentation, *Beyond the Dream Syndicate* sets an important standard for future scholars... (Texte zur Kunst) Branden W. Joseph's new book, *Beyond the Dream Syndicate*, is a major contribution to our thinking about this period.... an immensely engaging -- and important -- book. (Modern Painters) *Beyond the Dream Syndicate* is Branden W. Joseph's admirable step outside the art historian's typically crisp disciplinary boundaries. Joseph's gambit is to use the brilliant, improbable Tony Conrad as his guide through one generation's challenge to make art after John Cage. In the course of this expedition, we encounter rigorous meditations on minimalist music and visual art, Henry Flynt's *Concept Art*, daily life with Jack Smith, the hilarious head-on collisions that resulted in the *Primitives* and the *Velvet Underground*, and the stroboscopic consequences of Conrad's 1966 film *The Flicker*. This is a highly original, rewarding book, and one that will catch people by surprise. I imagine that this is a book for which many people have unconsciously been waiting. (David Grubbs, Drag City recording artist) In the avant-garde, Conrad knows no peers. He is so fundamentalist that his only rival in the whole of the

Universal music scene could be Sky Saxon of the Seeds. (Julian Cope, Krautrock sampler) Joseph writes powerfully... and with a brio most academic writers can only dream about.... a major book (The Wire) About the Author Branden W. Joseph is Frank Gallipoli Professor of Modern and Contemporary Art in the Department of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia University and an editor of the journal Grey Room (MIT Press).