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DENVER  
**Westword**

## Another 100 Colorado Creatives: Joseph Coniff

July 29, 2014

### #64: Joseph Coniff

Like many of Denver's notable emerging artists, Joey Coniff got off to a fast start after leaving the Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design and the mentorship of Clark Richert, climbing aboard with Rule Gallery right out of the chute. It's not hard to see why: His utilitarian and unironic works can appear starkly simple, but that's just an artifice for all the busy thinking and subtle jokes going on underneath the surface. As in his works, Coniff says a lot using few words, as evidenced by his 100CC questionnaire, which follows.



Portrait by Monique Atherton

**Westword:** *If you could collaborate with anyone in history, who would it be, and why?*

**Joseph Coniff:** I appreciate the idea of collaboration, but it's not for me.

*Who in the world is interesting to you right now, and why?*

People doing psychological and sociological research are of great interest to me. Both are limitless fields of study.

*What's one art trend you want to see die this year?*

Robert Hughes wrote and talked about the ongoing depreciation of traditional skills within art, "the nuts and bolts of the profession," in his book and documentaries, *The Shock of the New* and *The New Shock of the New*. I side with his argument.

Making things on your own, that is without the help of fabricators or assistance, is something that should not be undervalued. It's important to test strengths and weaknesses and understand the value found in learning, failing and succeeding.



"Dead," neon, metal frame, transformer, electrical cord. 2012.

*Who is your favorite Colorado Creative?*

Clark Richert.

*What's on your agenda in the coming year?*

No agenda really. Currently, I'm working on a book.

*Who do you think will get noticed in the local arts community in 2014?*

Zach Reini will be having an exhibition at Rule Gallery soon. Tyler Beard is also great and deserves a lot of continued notoriety.

*What's your day job?*

I do odd jobs.

*A mystery patron offers you unlimited funds for life. What will you do with it?*

I would make things and be a teacher.

Joseph Coniff, "Diet Husband," acrylic, rope and moving blanket on canvas. 2014.

*What's the one thing Denver (or Colorado) could do to help the arts?*

Go see shows and buy the things people made.



"One of the Roughs," acrylic and blanket on panel. 2014

*Joseph Coniff's solo show, (in parentheses), is on view at Rule Gallery through September 6. Learn more about Joseph Coniff online and at the Rule Gallery website.*

*Throughout the year, we'll be shining the spotlight on 100 superstars from Denver's rich creative community. Stay tuned to Show and Tell for more, or visit the 100 Colorado Creatives archive to catch up.*