



Machine in the Studio: Constructing the Postwar American Artist

By Caroline A. Jones

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Caroline A. Jones

Taking a fresh look at the art world of the 1960s, Caroline Jones argues that far from the countercultural stance associated with the decade, the artists she examines—including Stella, Warhol, and Smithson—identified their work with postwar industry and corporate culture. Drawing on extensive interviews with artists and their assistants as well as close readings of artworks, Jones explains that much of the major work of the 1960s was compelling precisely because it was central to the visual and economic culture of its time.

"Jones manages to analyze art works in their historical, political, and conceptual context, giving them a thickness of description rarely possible in standard art history. . . . This is one of the best books on the period I have read so far. To paraphrase Clement Greenberg, it gives contemporary art history a good name."—Serge Guilbaut, *Bookforum*

"Though we are some 30 years past the events of the '60s, our world is still largely responding to them, as this marvelous book amply demonstrates."—David McCarthy, *New Art Examiner*

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

Taking a fresh look at the art world of the 1960s, Caroline Jones explores the pervasive imagery of the American artist at work and the implications of those images for understanding their art. The radical break of artists with Abstract Expressionism at the end of the 1950s demonstrates the traditional modernist view of the solitary, suffering artist did not seduce those who came of age in the burgeoning American economy of the 1960s. Jones argues that far from the countercultural stance associated with the decade, the artists examined here - including Stella, Warhol, and Smithson - identified their work with postwar industry and corporate culture and revealed the anxieties of this identification through the slippages and darker implications of their work. Drawing on extensive interviews with artists and their assistants as well as close readings of artworks, Jones explains that much of the major work of the 1960s was compelling precisely because it was "mainstream" - central to the visual and economic culture of its time.

About the Author

Caroline A. Jones is professor in the History, Theory, and Criticism section of the Department of Architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

David Hernandez:

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