



Subject: CUFF Announces Opening and Closing night films; Lifetime Achievement Award honoree

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE, PLEASE CONTACT: Bryan Wendorf 773-341-6727, [info@cuff.org](mailto:info@cuff.org)

**23rd Chicago Underground Film Festival Honors Tony Conrad with Lifetime Achievement Award & Opening Night Film/World Premiere of Tyler Hubby's documentary "Tony Conrad Completely in the Present"; Closes with Joel Potrykus' SXSW stand-out "The Alchemist Cookbook"**

**Directors Tyler Hubby and Joel Potrykus and Festival Director Bryan Wendorf are Available for Interviews. Screener Links of Full Film & Photos Available Upon Request.**

Chicago (April 14, 2016) – The Chicago Underground Film Festival will open its 23rd festival with the world premiere of Tyler Hubby's documentary film *Tony Conrad: Completely In The Present*, a two decade in-the-making documentary on the legendary artist's extraordinary life and influential work. Conrad is this year's "Lifetime Achievement award honoree, and was scheduled to attend this festival, until his unexpected death on April 9. Festival organizers will still honor the artist and his work through a festival tribute. Hubby's film screens on June 1st, kicking off five days of screenings, bar talks and parties. The festival will close with the Chicago Premiere of *The Alchemist Cookbook*, the third feature by Michigan filmmaker Joel Potrykus. CUFF takes place June 1-5 at the Logan Theater, 2646 N Milwaukee Ave, Chicago, IL 60647. Passes and tickets can be purchased through the festival's website [www.cuff.org](http://www.cuff.org)

*Tony Conrad: Completely In The Present* kicks off the Festival on June 1. The film, directed and edited by Hubby, examines the pioneering life and works of filmmaker, artist, musician and educator, Tony Conrad who passed away from complications due to prostate cancer on Saturday, April 9 at the age of 76. Conrad was one of the great American artists of our time, yet to the world at large he remained criminally under appreciated.

"A world without Tony in it seems inconceivable," said director Tyler Hubby. "He was one of the great stars in the cosmos but sometimes only seen by those who knew where to look. Our mission with this film, from the beginning many years ago, was to erect a kind of telescope that would point the curious, yet uninitiated, in the right direction so that they may have their understanding completely blown apart and put back together just by sheer force of Tony's intellect, personality and work."

Since the early 1960s, Conrad's films and compositions have been the stuff of legend for artists and musicians everywhere. His vast, inter-disciplinary repertoire has single-handedly created and influenced major film and compositional movements. He performed in and recorded the soundtrack to Jack Smith's legendary *Flaming Creatures*; he turned the paradigms of cinema upside down with *The Flicker*, a film composed of only black and white frames; his development and practice of Just Intonation and Minimalism through his work with Stockhausen and La Monte Young still has the music establishment scratching their heads; his pivotal role in the formation of The Velvet Underground has directly or indirectly influenced everyone who has picked up a guitar since; as an early adopter of activist public access television he democratized the emerging medium of portable video. In his later years he continued to perform and make work that pushed the boundaries of reason for which he had finally begun to receive worldwide attention.

Conrad was scheduled to come to Chicago for the film's premiere and accept CUFF's Lifetime Achievement Award. "It had long been a goal of mine to honor the work of Tony Conrad at CUFF, Conrad's constant invention and his ability to consistently challenge and expand prevailing notions of what film, music and art can be made him an inspirational figure to underground filmmakers and artists of every generation," said Festival Artistic Director Bryan Wendorf.

Conrad's visit would have included a program of his own films and videos and a performance of one of his drone compositions. The festival will proceed with plans to pay tribute to this inspirational artist and will share details as they become available.

The Festival will close on Sunday, June 5 with the Chicago Premiere of *The Alchemist Cookbook*, the third feature from critically acclaimed low-budget auteur Joel Potrykus, which premiered at this year's SXSW Film Festival last month.

"Joel Potrykus's films depict outsiders who are heroic and pathetic in equal measure" says Wendorf, "his films come from the same DIY punk spirit that inspired us to start the Chicago Underground Film Festival and are firmly in the tradition of early works by pioneering independent filmmakers like Sam Raimi and the Cohen Brothers".

Potrykus's first feature *Ape* was awarded Best Emerging director and Best First Feature at the Locarno Film Festival and screened at CUFF in 2014. He followed up with *Buzzard* which premiered at SXSW in 2015 and received limited theatrical distribution through Oscilloscope Laboratories. In *The Alchemist Cookbook*, a young outcast Sean has isolated himself in a trailer in the woods, setting out on alchemical pursuits, with his cat Kaspar as his sole companion. Filled with disdain for authority, he's fled the daily grind and holed up in the wilderness, escaping a society that has no place for him. But when he turns from chemistry to black magic to crack nature's secret, things go awry and he awakens something far more sinister and dangerous.

"Underground festivals understand what I'm trying to do, and Bryan and the CUFF crew embraced my first feature, *Ape*, for all the right reasons. They see things that usually go unnoticed. The weird cracks. And besides, us Midwesterners gotta stick together," said Joel Potrykus.

Now in its twenty-third year, the Festival is recognized as a world-class event, showcasing the best in new American and international cinema and providing the movie-loving public with access to critically acclaimed filmmakers and emerging talent from around the world. The Festival is produced by IFP Chicago, a nonprofit membership organization committed to the idea that independent film is an important art form and a powerful voice in our society.

Returning to Chicago's Logan Square neighborhood, with its central hub at The Logan Theater, the Festival runs from Wednesday, June 1 to Sunday, June 5, 2016.

Passes to attend the Festival are currently available to the general public, with special rates for IFP Chicago members. In addition to screenings, Festival passes include nightly parties, concerts and performance events featuring cutting edge artists from Chicago and beyond. Passes are currently available at an early bird discounted rate of \$60 and will go up to \$80 when the complete festival lineup is announced on Monday April 25. General admission tickets to individual films go on sale beginning May 4. Passes and tickets can be purchased through the festival's website [www.cuff.org](http://www.cuff.org)

#### ABOUT THE CHICAGO UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL

Now in its twenty-third year, the Chicago Underground Film Festival, presented by IFP Chicago, is dedicated to the work of film and video makers with defiantly independent visions. Widely recognized as a world-class event, the festival showcases the best in new American and international cinema and providing the movie-loving public with access to some of the most critically acclaimed filmmakers and emerging talent from around the world. Our mission is to promote films and videos that dissent radically in form, technique, or content from the "indie" mainstream and to present adventurous works that challenge and transcend commercial and audience expectations. 25 programs comprised narrative, documentary and experimental features, shorts, and music videos, representing more than 15 countries, make up the main body of the festival, along with nightly parties and music events, discussions and other networking and community building events. To learn more about the festival visit [www.cuff.org](http://www.cuff.org), on Facebook at ChicagoUndergroundFilmFestival and Twitter @CUFF\_Chicago

#### ABOUT IFP CHICAGO

IFP/Chicago is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization committed to the idea that independent film is an important art form and a powerful voice in our society. We provide information, community, education and professional development opportunities for independent filmmakers, industry professionals and independent film enthusiasts. We encourage quality and diversity in independent production and assist filmmakers at all levels of experience in realizing their unique vision. To find out about upcoming programs & events, or to sign up for the IFP Chicago newsletter visit [www.ifpchicago.org](http://www.ifpchicago.org). Find IFP Chicago on Facebook IFP-Chicago and Twitter @IFPCHICAGO.