

Writers who tackle Scott Treleaven's powerful and exquisitely configured art, no matter how smitten their approach or noble and subservient their intentions, are doomed to dismantle and thereby negate the work's intoxicating spell, thereby providing little more than sincere directions to those who approach elusive, defiant, and inexplicably felt art like Treleaven's as solvable puzzles composed of standard if particularized influences, referents, and telling personal experiences. Google this artist's name and read the samey stacks of names and terms already laid before his work by writers determined to subdivide it into nothing more than neatly parsed out evidence of his oddly concurrent interests in the occult, high romanticism, the cut-ups of Burroughs and Gysin and the messy designs of Queer zine makers, sex, beauty, the trippy formalities of old experimental films, etc. These writers, who it should be noted are often reasonably successful in their background checks and educated guesses, have given the more literal minded art aficionados their beloved explanation while turning something that's meticulously confounding into a mythical treasure map. What these writers haven't done and will never do as long as they see words as visual art's rightful coroner is to begin to demystify Treleaven's powerfully deep, murky, defiantly illogical, mystifying work. So while he deserves these written effigies and will continue to accrue them like all singularly important artists do in the end, what he really deserves are writers who seek to find a way to lose control of their precious, eviscerating language and become his work's helpless, somehow helpfully stammering effigies themselves. This state of grace and act of linguistic surrender that I'm suggesting might do greater justice to Scott Treleaven's art is not what this ultimately off-kilter introduction has achieved in the slightest, but you get the idea.

-- Dennis Cooper