

YVON LAMBERT

Joan Jonas *Reanimation*

April 27 — May 31, 2013

Video Installation



The Galerie Yvon Lambert is pleased to announce an exhibition dedicated to American artist Joan Jonas, one of the pioneers of performance and video. Jonas's 40-year body of work has been and continues to be internationally influential. This is Joan Jonas's third solo exhibition at the Galerie Yvon Lambert in Paris, following those at Galerie Yvon Lambert New York in 2005, 2007, and 2010.

For this exhibition Jonas presents *Reanimation II*, which is a variation of a project she began to develop in 2010 and was shown for the first time in its finished form at dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, in 2012 in a pre-fabricated house in the Karlsau Park. Jonas had been working on this project for two years prior, beginning in 2010. The entire work is based on the novel *Under the Glacier* by Icelandic writer Halldór Laxness, published in the 1960s. As Jonas says, the book "is partly an homage to spiritual aspects of nature, focusing on a particular glacier, but as glaciers are now melting the work *Reanimation* reflects this present-day situation."

For dOCUMENTA (13), curator Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev gave a group of artists the choice of working with pre-fabricated houses in the Karlsau Park. After choosing a house from a catalogue, Jonas removed its internal walls and reconfigured the windows through which her video elements could be viewed to create *Reanimation (In a Meadow)*. The audience could not enter the house. Jonas used her *My New Theater* structures to present three of her videos in three of the windows of the house: *Glacier*, 2010 (in two parts that were featured in two of the windows) and *Fish*, 2012 (in the third window). To create the *Glacier* video element, Jonas had also intercut scenes from two earlier works, *Disturbances*, 1973, and *The Shape, the Scent the Feel of Things*, 2005-2006.

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The fourth and largest window of the *Reanimation (In a Meadow)* house presented the video *Reanimation*, 2012, as well as drawings and, on the floor, a sculpture of suspended crystals through which was projected an untitled video of Jonas drawing with ink and ice. Around the edges of *Reanimation*'s large suspended video screen, one had a partial view of the *My New Theater* structures within the house. The sound associated with the individual videos was heard through speakers attached to the outside of the house. These soundtracks included extracted segments of the text by Halldór Laxness spoken by Joan Jonas, sound effects made by Jonas, and, from the video projection *Reanimation*, Sami singer Andy Samby's songs composed especially for this piece.

For the performance version of *Reanimation* Jonas invited the composer/pianist Jason Moran to again collaborate with her on a soundtrack. This is Jonas's third collaboration with Moran, following their work for the performances *The Shape*, *The Scent*, *The Feel of Things*, 2005-2006, and *reading Dante*, 2008-2010. During the last days of dOCUMENTA (13) in September 2012, Jonas premiered the *Reanimation* performance in the theater of the Kaskade Cinema, where Moran played live. Typical of her practice, Jonas re-edited the videos from the installation to become backdrops for this performance.

Typical also of Jonas's working method is to reconfigure her installations depending on each new situation. She exhibited *Reanimation I* in Tokyo at Wako Works of Art in February 2013. For *Reanimation II* at Galerie Yvon Lambert in Paris she has again redesigned the structures in and on which the original videos are seen. For this installation Jonas designed "imaginary walls" out of paper, based on Japanese shoji screens made of paper and wood, «so the audience could step into the space instead of being kept outside,» as they were for *Reanimation (In a Meadow)* at dOCUMENTA (13). In this way, the viewer has an intimate, concentrated encounter directly with the video and sound. Included in *Reanimation II* is a new edit of the video shots of the crystal structure that had been included in the *Reanimation* video shown in *Reanimation (In a Meadow)* at dOCUMENTA (13) and a re-edit of fragments of the performance soundtrack, which includes the music of both Samby and Moran.

Access to Jonas's creation of *Reanimation* and its variants is afforded by the documentary *Joan Jonas: Reanimation* (Michael Blackwood Productions, 2013; interview by Joan Simon) and through the "Tate Live" series, which made its debut as an online performance venue on February 28, 2013 with Jonas's *Draw Without Looking*, for which she performed within the projection of the "crystal video" sequence of *Reanimation* and after which she was interviewed by curator Catherine Wood. It may be seen on YouTube at: <http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/music-and-live-performance/bmw-tate-live-joan-jonas>

A conversation between Joan Jonas and Joan Simon has taken place at the Centre Pompidou, April 22, 2013. Joan Simon is the author of the forthcoming *In the Shadow a Shadow: The Work of Joan Jonas* (Gregory R. Miller and Co.) which documents four decades of Joan Jonas' pioneering and innovative work in performance, video, and installation.

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Born in New York in 1936, Joan Jonas first studied sculpture, then modern poetry and Chinese and Greek before finally obtaining her Master of Fine Arts from Columbia University in 1965. From the mid-60s, her involvement with the New York avant-garde scene, at the time made up of such figures as Andy Warhol, John Cage, Allan Kaprow, Jonas Mekas, George Maciunas, the Fluxus group, and Bruce Nauman, led her to discover performance art. At the time, the art world was dominated by pop art and minimalism. Joan Jonas however, totally transformed the status of the artwork by adopting the idea of art as a process. Her performances were first performed in exterior spaces in order to explore all of the possibilities of the space and sound, as was the case with *Mirror Piece* in 1971. The same year, Joan Jonas introduced video into her work as can be seen in the piece *Organic Honey's Visual Telepathy* which would be included in the performance of the same name the following year and signalled the artist's definitive rupture or break away from the minimalist aesthetic. Indeed, in this piece the artist incorporated a reflection on folklore and the representation of female archetypes through costumes and masks. Influenced by feminism, Joan Jonas's approach is at once introspective, narrative and symbolic. In some of her performance pieces, the artist explores the role played by women on a universal dimension.

From 1972 onward, the artist began once again to use the gallery space and continued to produce performances combining the videos, installations, sculpture, paintings, photography and drawings which precede or extend the performance work or whose themes are similar to those explored by her *oeuvre*, namely mythology, tales and cultural archetypes. From the beginning of the 80s, Joan Jonas has sought new sources of inspiration and has turned to historical and literary texts based on Icelandic medieval sagas, as well as the work of female poet H.D., and more recently the writings and biography of the renowned art historian Aby Warburg.

Joan Jonas has been the subject of several major retrospectives : currently at the Contemporary Arts Museum of Houston (with Gina Pane), at the MoMA in New York (2009-2010), at Castello di Rivoli in Torino (2006), at Queens Museum of Art in New York (2003), at the Staatsgalerie in Stuttgart (2000), at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam (1983, 1994) and at the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven (1979).

The artist has been invited to participate in 7 editions of the Documenta in Kassel included Documenta XI (2002) for which one she re-performed *Lines in the Sand* (then showed at the Tate Modern in London and at The Kitchen in New York in 2004).

Joan Jonas has been the subject of several major retrospectives and she had performed and exhibited her work extensively, working internationally with institutions too numerous to list (here a selection) : Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (1974); The Kitchen, New York (1975); San Francisco Museum of Art (1976); Kunstmuseum Bern (2004); Renaissance Society, University of Chicago (2004) ; Le Plateau and Jeu de Paume/ Hotel de Sully, Paris, France (2005); Dia:Beacon, Beacon, New York (2005, 2006); Sigmund Freud Museum, Vienne (2006); Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelone(2007); University of California, Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive (2008) ; Biennale de Venise, reconstitution of *Reading Dante* (2009) ; Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofia, Madrid (2010); Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin (2011); Tate Modern, Londres (2013).

Joan Jonas is a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and received in 2009 Guggenheim's first annual Lifetime Achievement Award.

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Reanimation views of Documenta (13), Kassel, 2012

Joan Jonas, *Reanimation*, 2010-12, (With *Melancholia*, 2004, *Disturbances*, 1973, *The Shape, the Scent, the Feel of Things*, 2004), Singer: Ånde Somby, Mixed media, Wooden house, video, sound, garden, Dimensions variable, Courtesy the artist; Wilkinson Gallery, London; Yvon Lambert, Paris

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