

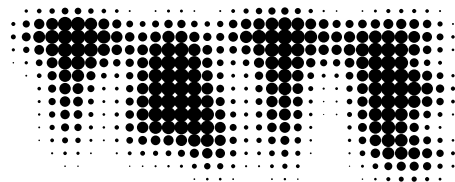
JOAN JONAS

14 March 2018 – 5 August 2018

LARGE PRINT GUIDE



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CONCOURSE

Joan Jonas 1936

Wolf Lights

2004–5

Video, colour, sound

Duration: 2min 49sec

Dancer: Ragani Haas

The video **Wolf Lights** consists of two layers: details of flashing gold and red neon signs on casino marquees in Las Vegas, with a female dancer superimposed on top. The soundtrack for the video is by the American musician and composer Jason Moran. Jonas has also included this work in a larger multimedia installation, in the same way she often reworks and adapts materials from one artwork to another.

Courtesy of the artist and Gavin Brown's Enterprise,

New York / Rome

X66170

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London

ROOM 1

Joan Jonas (born 1936) is a pioneer of performance, video and installation who has pushed the boundaries of art for the last five decades. After studying sculpture and art history she became one of the founding figures of performance when it first emerged in New York in the 1960s and 1970s. Throughout her career Jonas has constantly experimented with different media and continues to influence generations of younger artists.

Drawing inspiration from different cultures and traditions, Jonas's imagery draws on diverse sources, from fairy tales to essays, from myths to local folklore. She adapts these sources so they relate to contemporary life. She uses masks, mirrors and video screens to create a complex layering of images. Both poetic and political, Jonas's work conveys her lifelong interest in movement, music, female identity, the environment, and natural and urban landscapes.

Jonas often revisits and re-adapts earlier works and performances to create new installations and to incorporate a live element into them. The layout and order of the exhibition, which was put together in close collaboration with the artist, is based on Jonas's constant mirroring of recurring themes and motifs. This room shows the masks and objects that surround the artist in her New York loft and which are a constant source of inspiration for her. Here and throughout the exhibition it is Jonas's voice that guides you.

Joan Jonas takes place across Tate Modern, in the Galleries, the Tanks, the Turbine Hall, the Starr Cinema and even outside the museum. In this way it shows Jonas's ability to create her own universe, a universe filled with music, theatre and poetry, which is both deeply personal and highly engaging.

Curated by Andrea Lissoni, Senior Curator, International Art (Film) Tate Modern and Julienne Lorz, Curator, Haus der Kunst, Munich with Monika Bayer-Wermuth, Assistant Curator, Tate Modern

Camera and design of all works in the exhibition are by Joan Jonas if not otherwise mentioned

Supported by Tate International Council and Tate Patrons

The exhibition is organised by Tate Modern and Haus der Kunst, Munich in partnership with the Serralves Museum of Contemporary Art, Porto

Let us know what you think
#JoanJonas



Joan Jonas in her New York loft, September 2017

Photo: © Toby Coulson 2018

“The idea of a prop had a clear relationship to sculpture. Nevertheless, the prop in my work is usually not a piece of sculpture in itself but exists as a part of the whole: the prop can be moved or can move the performer or the set of the performance. The prop generates movement and one such object, or group of objects, partly represents the content of the work.

I always thought the activity of putting one object next to another was like making a visual poem.

Over the years friends occasionally add to my collection. Maybe this desire to collect was inspired by my great uncle’s antique store in New Hampshire.

I started using masks after I went to Japan in 1970 and saw the Noh theater. Over the years I’ve found different masks for almost every one of my pieces. I think they are incredible, very powerful. They hide my face and suggest alternative identities. A friend gave me three very strange screen masks found in Cape Breton thought to be from Masonic rituals. I like theatrical masks of all kinds and have used many from South America and Mexico. I have many wonderful papier-mâché masks representing all kinds of animals – dogs, sheep, fox rabbit etc.

These masks inspire me to move and behave in a different way. If you put a mask on you can enter another world. The perception of movement is transformed.”

Clockwise From Wall Text

Group of Objects (mask and props)

Cat Mask

Purchased while shopping with David Dempewolf in Philadelphia, USA, 2014.

Worn by Jin Jung in **Stream or River, Flight or Pattern** 2016–2017, in the Bamboo Reed scene.

Material: papier-mâché

X71098

Fox Mask

Purchased in Mexico City, 2003.

Worn by Galia Eibenschutz in **Reading Dante** 2008/2010 as she moves in a volcanic landscape. This location was suggested by the artist Carlos Amorales. Also worn by Jonas in **Stream or River, Flight or Pattern** 2016–17 in the Bamboo Reed scene.

Material: papier-mâché

X71099

Wooden Goat Sharp Horns

Made by Sid Howard. Purchased in Cape Breton, Canada, in 2016.

Included in **Stream or River, Flight or Pattern** 2016–17 in outdoor scenes shot in the forest of Nova Scotia, during the summer of 2016

Material: painted wood

X71102

Peculiar Transforming Face Mask: Girl with Black Hair, Possibly Sinister

Purchased in Mexico, 2003.

Worn by Alice MacKinnon in **Waltz** 2003.

Material: papier-mâché

X71074

Rare Patterned Stone

Found on the beach in Cape Breton in 2012.

Included as part of Jonas's personal stone collection, in particular chosen for the raised heart-shaped relief on a heart-shaped stone. Jonas has collected heart-shaped stones for many years and often gives them away.

Material: stone

X71145

Transformative Plastic Face Mask with Painted Features Allowing Wearer to Construct Various Personas

Purchased in 2010 to replace the broken mask worn by Jonas in **Organic Honey** 1972, the first in a series of single-channel and performative video works in which the artist created the character 'Organic Honey'. The original mask was purchased in 1970 in an erotica store in Times Square, New York City.

Material: plastic

X71094

Wooden Parrot

Made by Sid Howard. Purchased from Robbie MacKinnon in Cape Breton, Canada, 2016.

A late addition to Jonas's collection of bird objects.

Material: wood and glass

X71146

Screen Masks with Painted Features Creating Doubling Effect on Wearer

Gift from Richard Serra. Purchased in an antique store in Cape Breton, Canada, c.2010.

Origin: possibly Masonic

Worn by the artist, Margaret Mustard and Eva Jean Mustard when they played ghosts in the Ghost Story Sequence of **They Come to Us Without a Word** 2015.

Material: metal mesh and fabric

X71075, X71077

Upright Wooden Bird

Unknown maker. Origin: Vietnam.

Gift from the artist Thao-Nguyen Phan in 2017. This object is carved from a single piece of wood and was acquired from a local village in a rural area of Vietnam. Thao-Nguyen Phan's art collective works with the people of these villages.

Material: wood

X71154

Kidney Shaped Rock

Found on the beach in Nova Scotia, Canada, during the 1970s.

Included as part of Jonas's personal clay-like stone collection, in particular chosen for its sculptural form, colour and density. The stone's appearance is like a hand-made piece of sculpture.

Material: stone

X71159

Essential Wooden Rabbit Painted White

Made by Harold Tutty in Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada.
Purchased in the 1970s.

The star of many drawings and photographs, including photographs where Rabbit is seen through a crystal ball in the landscape.

Material: painted wood

X71130

Stone Shaped Like Shoe

Found on the beach in Cape Breton, Canada.
Date unknown.

Included as part of Jonas's personal stone collection resembling shoes, in particular chosen for its uncanny resemblance to the shape of a man's shoe.

Material: stone

X71151

Rock or Large Stone

Found on the beach in Cape Breton, Canada, around 2002.

Included as part of Jonas's personal stone collection, in particular chosen for its shape, weight and form.

Material: stone

X71116

Wooden Owl with Stand

Made by Harold Tutty, 1988. Purchased in Sydney, Cape Breton, Canada, in the late 1980s.

This sculpture was used as the star model for various drawings and photographs from the 1980s until now. It was also included in the stage sets assembled for the video and as a photograph in **They Come to Us Without a Word** 2015, at the Venice Biennale, 2015.

Material: painted wood and tin

X71101

Screen Mask with Painted Features/Doubling Effect

Origin: unknown

Worn in the video **Upsidedown and Backwards** 1979.

Material: metal mesh

X71081

Screen Mask with Painted Features/ Doubling Effect

Gift from Charles Ruas. Friends often add to Jonas's collection, knowing what her interests are.

Origin: possibly Central American theatre mask

Worn in **Brooklyn Bridge** 1988 and **Lines in the Sand** 2002, in the latter case, referring to the spiritual séances attended by the poet H.D.

Material: metal mesh

X71084

Screen Mask with Painted Male Features/ Doubling Effect

This is the first of the screen masks to be added to Jonas's collection. Gift from the artist's mother.

Origin: possibly Central American theatre mask Worn by Jonas in several works including **He Saw Her Burning** 1983.

Material: metal mesh and fabric

X71092

Regal Wooden Seagull Decoy on Stand with Marble Eyes

Unknown maker. Origin: Cape Breton, Canada.

One of the first objects found in Cape Breton, in 1974. Jonas has used the Seagull in many works from 1974 until now, including **Revolted by the Thought of Known Places ... Sweeney Astray** 1992–4.

Material: wood, glass and metal

X71144

Wooden Seagull with Tin Wings That Flap

Made by Harold Tutty in Sydney, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Purchased in the late 1970s. The Seagull features as a still life in many drawings, often with other objects, including a dog-head-shaped stone. It was also used as a prop in the performances and video installation **They Come To Us Without a Word II** 2015, at the Venice Biennale, 2015.

Material: wood and metal

X71160

Heavy Worn Round Rock with Various Continental Patterns

Found on the beach in Cape Breton, Canada, in 2012.

Included as part of Jonas's personal stone collection, in particular chosen for its eroded layers and gradated surface.

Material: stone

X71125

Flat Stone Formed Under Great Pressure

Origin: possibly fossil. Found on the beach in Cape Breton around 2002.

Included as part of Jonas's personal stone collection, in particular chosen for its imprint of a wave pattern on sand.

Material: stone

X71120

Green Wooden Fish Lure

Unknown maker. Purchased in an antique store in Minneapolis, USA, during the 1970s.

This sculpture was used as a model for various drawings from the 1970s until now. It will be included in the performance **Moving Off the Land. Oceans – Sketches and Notes** 2018.

Material: painted wood and tin

X71122

Floating Wooden Fish Lure

Unknown maker. Purchased in an antique store in Minneapolis, USA, during the 1970s.

This sculpture was used as a model for various drawings from the 1970s until now. It will be included in the performance **Moving Off the Land. Oceans – Sketches and Notes** 2018.

Material: painted wood and tin

X71104

Bear Mask

Made by Jonas in Cape Breton, Canada, 2012.

Worn by the artist in the performance of **Reanimation** 2012 while she dances with a large piece of paper during the Ice Flow scene, merging with floating fragments of ice.

Material: papier-mâché

X71097

Bear Mask

Made by Jonas in Cape Breton, Canada, 2012.

Worn by the artist in the performance of **Reanimation** 2012 as she draws animal heads and hearts on paper pressed against her body, while moving in front of the backdrop video 'Mountain Scene', originally filmed in the Lofoten Islands, Norway.

Material: papier-mâché

X71095

Pagoda Structure

Unknown maker. Origin: Nova Scotia, Canada

Purchased from Myles Kehoe's shop 'Myles from Nowhere', Margaree Forks, Cape Breton, Canada.

This is one of 15 different model structures from a model village, including a firehouse, a toy shop and a garage.

Featured in **The Shape, the Scent, the Feel of Things** 2004–7, **Reading Dante** 2008/2010 and **They Come To Us Without a Word** 2015, where Jonas and others continuously rearrange the models.

Material: painted wood and tin

X71100

Half Screen Mask with Painted Eyes and Nose with Double Effect

Gift from Brigitte Cournand. Purchased in France.
Worn by Jonas in the video **Begin Again** 2006.

Material: metal mesh and ribbon

X71079

Screen Mask with Painted Features/ Doubling Effect

Origin: possibly Central American theatre mask

Material: metal mesh

X71091

Wooden Grey Elephant with Outsized Trunk

Made by J.M. Poirier. Purchased from a roadside stand run by Poirier in Cape Breton, Canada.

This is one of Poirier's earliest works, which this collector preferred, but which rarely sold. Other early works include a reindeer and a spotted rabbit, also part of Jonas's collection.

Material: painted wood

X71153

Deer Mask

Purchased in Barcelona, Spain, 2009.

Worn by Ragani Haas in the first performance of **Reading Dante** 2008/2010, which took place in Barcelona. The mask was also worn in Lena Dunham's web series 'Delusional Downtown Divas' 2009.

Material: rubber

X71073

MY NEW THEATER I: TAP DANCING

“In 1997 the **My New Theater** series began with a desire to continue to perform, but in situations that would not always require a physical presence. I thought of a portable video theater – in miniature.

I saw the shape and size of the box as an extension of the studio. So it’s as though you are looking into a miniature world.”

Since 1997, Jonas has created six **My New Theater** works: wooden constructions which have monitors or projections and sometimes small props inside. This is the first in the series and includes props similar to those on display in this room. The **My New Theater** structures are also sometimes included in larger installations such as **Reanimation** 2010/2012/2013 and **Lines in the Sand** 2002, displayed further on in the exhibition.

Here, Jonas shows a poetic documentary film about a tap dancer from Cape Breton, an island in Nova Scotia, Canada, where she lives during the summer months. Small images and objects – rabbit and owl figurines, bundled sticks, photographs of a Canadian kitchen couch – are placed in front of the film, appearing like small-scale models of the props seen in the projection.

My New Theater I: Tap Dancing

1997

Wood structure, video (colour, sound, 32min 21sec) and mixed media in miniature

Music: Brenda Stubbert

Exhibition copy from artist's proof

X66162

ROOM 2

PERFORMANCES 1968–80

“My early work developed in a particular context and place. In the 1960s, some parts of New York looked like ruins – parts of the Lower West Side, for example, and the docks nearby along the Hudson River. These were places to explore. SoHo was relatively empty, and artists were able to move into old, recently abandoned factory lofts there that had the beauty of another time. It wasn’t expensive to find a place to perform or exhibit one’s work, and you could work on these streets, lots and docks without an official permit. My performance and video reflected that setting. It was an atmosphere grainy and rough. I made my early black-and-white videos and performances near the docks, in my loft, or in ground-floor spaces in SoHo like 112 Greene Street and LoGiudice Gallery on Broome Street”

Clockwise from Wall Text

Joan Jonas 1936

Joan Jonas, 'Mirror Piece I' 1969, performance, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, 1969

1969, printed 2018

Photograph, digital reprint

“One of the underlying concerns of my work is the perception of space, and I work with various devices, such as the mirror, to alter the audience’s experience of a space. My ‘Mirror Pieces’ 1968–71 were performed in large indoor rooms – such as gyms, auditoriums, and lofts – and once outdoors. The performers, holding large mirrors, were choreographed in slowly moving, geometric patterns that echoed the dimensions of the performance spaces.”

Z08533

Wayne A. Hollingworth 1935–2015

Joan Jonas, 'Mirror Piece I' 1969, performance, Loeb Student Center, New York University, New York, 1969

1969, printed 2018

2 photographs, digital reprint

"Mirror Piece I was the first in the **Mirror Series** which established Jonas as a pioneering figure of performance. 15 women carrying mirrors moved in choreographed patterns while two men disrupted their actions. The mirrors were used as both prop and motif. They reflect the surroundings, spectators and performers and can be seen as a symbol of self-perception and identity representation."

Photo: © Wayne A. Hollingworth

Z08534 , Z08535

Peter Moore 1932–1993

Performance view of Joan Jonas's 'Mirror Piece II' at 14th Street Emanu-El YMHA, New York, 1970

1970, printed 2018

Photograph, digital reprint

“In this piece the performers carried out a series of dance-like actions with mirrors and glass. The size and weight of the props meant the performers' movements had to be slow and careful. The constant danger that the glass will break creates a sense of anxiety among the spectators.”

Photo: © Barbara Moore/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

Courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery, New York

Z08520

ORGANIC HONEY

“The idea for **Organic Honey** was the simultaneity of an audience watching someone perform for the camera and seeing what the camera sees, and the discrepancy between the two.”

Both videos shown here are from a project that Jonas created around her seductive alter ego Organic Honey. **Organic Honey’s Visual Telepathy** was Jonas’s first stand-alone video work and it has the same title as her first video performance. Jonas developed this performance into a second version with the title **Organic Honey’s Vertical Roll**. A documentation video of this performance is on display here.

Jonas experimented with showing videoed details of the action as it unfolded: a technique she has used ever since. A camera transmitted a live video feed of the performer’s actions to monitor and projection, allowing the audience to see a detail of the live performance and the projected video simultaneously. The work sees Jonas dressed in various costumes, including a belly dancer’s dress and a green chiffon dress with a feathered headdress. She is concealed behind a mask that depicts the stereotype of an idealised female face, allowing her to explore ideas about female imagery and self-representation. In 1994 Jonas developed

her Organic Honey project further by converting it into an installation. This marked a major turning point still evident in her work today: transforming performances into installations, and vice versa.

Organic Honey's Visual Telepathy

1972

Video, monitor, black and white and sound

Running time: 17min 24sec

Tate. Purchased with funds provided the Tate Americas Foundation 2016

H00003

Gianfranco Gorgoni 1941

**Joan Jonas, 'Organic Honey's Visual Telepathy' 1972,
performance, LoGiudice Gallery, New York, 1972**

1972, printed 2018

Photograph, digital reprint

"Organic Honey's Visual Telepathy evolved as I found myself continually investigating my own image in the monitor of my video machine. Wearing the mask of a doll's face transformed me into an erotic electronic seductress. I named this TV persona 'Organic Honey'. From a book on magic came the phrase 'visual telepathy'."

Photo: © Gianfranco Gorgoni

Z08621

Organic Honey's Vertical Roll

1973–99

Video, monitor, black and white and sound

Running time: 15 min

Documentation of the performance at Leo Castelli Gallery,

New York 1972

X71797

Larry Bell 1939

**Joan Jonas, 'Organic Honey's Vertical Roll' 1972,
performance at Ace Gallery, Los Angeles, California, 1972**

1972, printed 2018

Photograph, digital reprint

Photo: © Larry Bell

Z08623

Roberta Neiman

**Joan Jonas, 'Organic Honey's Vertical Roll' 1972,
performance at Ace Gallery, Los Angeles, California, 1972**

1972, printed 2018

Photograph, digital reprint

Photo: © Roberta

Z08624

Giorgio Colombo

**Joan Jonas, 'Organic Honey's Vertical Roll' 1972,
performance at Galleria Toselli, Milan, 1973**

1973, printed 2018

Photograph, digital reprint

Photo: © Giorgio Colombo
Z08622, Z08645

Béatrice Heyligers 1947

**Joan Jonas, 'Organic Honey's Vertical Roll' 1972,
performance at Musée Galliera, Paris, 1973**

1973, printed 2018

Photograph, digital reprint

Photo: © Béatrice Heyligers
Z08646

Richard Landry 1938

Joan Jonas, 'Jones Beach Piece' 1970, performance, Jones Beach, Long Island, New York, 1970

1970, printed 2018

Photograph, digital reprint

This outdoor performance took place on a beach near Long Island. Spectators stood a quarter of a mile away from the group of 11 performers, which included Jonas herself. The large distance meant that images appeared flattened and sounds were delayed. The performance explored how distance can affect our perception of actions and sounds.

Photo: © Richard Landry 1970

Z08536, Z08541, Z08563

Peter Moore 1932–1993

**Joan Jonas, 'Choreomania' 1971, Jonas's Loft, 66 Grand St,
New York, 1971**

1971, printed 2018

Photograph, digital reprint

The main prop in *Choreomania* was a wooden wall, a third of which was mirrored, designed by the minimalist sculptor Richard Serra. Following Jonas's choreography, the performers played with it: swinging it, hiding behind it and sliding down it. The mirrors and lights created a mix of real and reflected images.

Photo: © Barbara Moore/Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY.

Courtesy Paula Cooper Gallery, New York

Z08625

Gianfranco Gorgoni 1941

Joan Jonas, 'Delay Delay' 1972, performance, Lower West Side, New York, 1972

1972, printed 2018

Photograph, digital reprint

Photo: © Gianfranco Gorgoni

Z08542, Z08543, Z08545

Gwenn Thomas 1945

Joan Jonas, 'Delay Delay' 1972, performance, Lower West Side, New York, 1972

1972, printed 2018

Photograph, digital reprint

Spectators watched this performance, which took place on New York's Lower West Side, from the roof of a nearby building. Several painted sheets placed at different distances show the number of paces between performers and spectators. Jonas was particularly interested in the delay between an action producing a sound and when the spectators heard the sound itself.

Photo: © Gwenn Thomas

Z08544

Richard Landry 1938

**Joan Jonas, 'Funnel' 1974, performance, Contemporanea,
Parccheggio Villa Borghese, Rome, 1974**

1974, printed 2018

Photograph, digital reprint

In Funnel Jonas performed a kind of magic show projecting images of seaside landscapes onto three different screens. Jonas continuously shifted between drawing and interacting with the video and her various props. Her changes of costume, from a white satin outfit to a red Afghan chadri to a blue silk blouse, show her continual self-reinventions.

Photo: © Richard Landry

Z08547

Richard Landry 1938

**Joan Jonas, 'Funnel' 1974, performance, Contemporanea,
Parcheggio Villa Borghese, Rome, 1974**

1974

Photograph

Collection Joan Jonas

Z08653

Babette Mangolte 1941

**Joan Jonas, 'Mirage' 1976, performance, Anthology Film
Archives, New York, 1976**

1976

4 photographs

Jonas incorporated different art forms, such as drawing, dance, film, video and music into this performance. She performed actions one by one, following a rigid script. A second performer concealed by a screen acted as Jonas's ghostly double.

Collection Joan Jonas

Z08548, Z08550, Z08552, Z08553

Benjamin Blackwell

**Joan Jonas, 'Mirage' 1976, performance, University Art
Museum, University of California, Berkeley, 1980**

1980

Photograph

It is because of the cones that I chose to use the film of different volcanoes erupting. 'Mirage' is partly about transformations of energy, about ritual and game playing to facilitate movement in time and in space.

Collection Joan Jonas

Z08654

Babette Mangolte 1941

**Joan Jonas, 'Untitled (After Mirage)' 1976, performance at
112 Greene St, New York, 1976**

1976, printed 2018

Photograph, digital reprint

Untitled (After Mirage) was the improvised performance of Jonas and British artist James Nares in a gallery in SoHo, New York. The metal cones were used as musical instruments and sound amplifiers. Jonas described the sound they produce as 'between a foghorn and singing'.

© Babette Mangolte

Z08562

Benjamin Blackwell

**Joan Jonas, 'Double Lunar Dogs' 1980, performance,
University Art Museum, University of California,
Berkeley, California, 1980**

1980, printed 2018

Photograph, digital reprint

Based on a science fiction story from the 1940s, the performance **Double Lunar Dogs** followed a group of astronauts who had forgotten the purpose of their space mission. The special effects and inserted scenes create a stylised and fragmented narrative. The work interrogates the nature of time, space and human memory.

Photo: © Benjamin Blackwell

Z08556

David Crossley

**Joan Jonas, 'Double Lunar Dogs' 1980, performance,
Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, Texas, 1981
1981, printed 2018**

Photograph, digital reprint

Photo: © 1981 David Crossley
Z08559

ROOM 3

THE JUNIPER TREE

“When I started using stories with The Juniper Tree, which is a Grimm Brothers story, there was a continuous voice telling the story and I worked against it. I don’t illustrate the stories, but I represent and react to them – find ways to make my own language in relation to the story.”

The installation **The Juniper Tree** evolved from a performance Jonas originally created for children. It is one of her earliest installations and the first to be explicitly based on a narrative. **The Juniper Tree** refers to the Brothers Grimm fairy tale about a little boy who is beheaded by his wicked stepmother and eaten by his father, before being reincarnated as a beautiful bird with the help of his stepsister. After killing his stepmother by dropping a millstone on her head, he is turned back into a boy and lives happily ever after with his father and stepsister.

The Juniper Tree was performed in a number of different places, evolving radically from its first presentation at the ICA Philadelphia in 1976, through several versions (including at the Whitechapel Gallery in London), to the last iteration performed in Jonas’s loft in 1978. The set, designed and developed particularly for this version, became the installation **The Juniper Tree**, on display here.

Props, relics, paintings and drawings are included in the installation, as well as garments and constructions used in the last version of the performance. The paintings on red-and-white silk were made during each of the performances and added one by one to the backdrop. In an audio soundtrack Jonas recites the story of The Juniper Tree alongside musical contributions and songs performed by the American choreographer Simone Forti. The projection shows photographs from the various performances, highlighting their importance in the development of the work.

The Juniper Tree

1976, reconstructed 1994

24 works on silk, acrylic paint, wooden structure, string of 29 wooden balls, ladder, kimono, mirror, glass jars, 78 slides, box and other materials

Tate. Purchased with funds provided by American Fund for the Tate Gallery 2008

T12923

ROOM 4

VOLCANO SAGA

“With **Volcano Saga** I begin synthesising my development of female character, using the story as mirror and the volcanic landscapes as representations of this particular narrative. Here (in Iceland) the psyche is connected to the elements, which, as in *Wind*, become characters.”

Like many of Jonas’s works, the video **Volcano Saga** evolved from a performance. The artist draws upon a 13th century Icelandic folk epic, the **Laxdaela Saga**, about a woman who marries four times. The protagonist, Gudrun, tells the seer, Gest, about four dreams which Gest interprets to be about Gudrun’s future. Jonas cast Tilda Swinton as Gudrun and Ron Vawter as the seer. By shooting their scenes in a studio then superimposing views of Iceland over them, Jonas creates a deliberately artificial and dream-like effect.

Jonas begins the film by speaking about an accident that happened to her in Iceland: wind blew her car off the road while she was gathering footage for this work. For the artist, this story connects the present moment to the life of Gudrun and the power of nature in Iceland. The sound of the wind can be heard throughout the video, as well as music by the American experimental composer Alvin Lucier. In 1994, Jonas developed *Volcano Saga* into a multimedia installation with the same title.

Volcano Saga

1985–9

Video, colour and sound

Running time: 28min 4sec

Courtesy of Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI), New York

X66166

ROOM 5

LINES IN THE SAND

“When I began working more directly with narrative – with fairy tales, myth, the writings of H.D. – I was exploring the place of women in history, as outsiders, witches, storytellers. I have always been interested in the poetics of how women are depicted, which is political, of course.”

Lines in the Sand explores the myth of the Trojan War.

According to historian Robert Grave it was a trade war and not caused by a woman, Helen of Troy. The work is based on the epic poem **Helen in Egypt** 1961, by American writer and poet H. D. (Hilda Doolittle), in which it is told that Helen goes to Egypt instead of Troy. This is also an early classical Greek tale. In **Lines in the Sand** Jonas refers to this plot and works with the idea that a ghostly double of Helen existed in Troy.

Jonas continues the play with real and fake by transferring the myth’s setting to contemporary Las Vegas, showing footage of the Egyptian-style Luxor Hotel. She also includes photographs from her grandmother’s trip to Egypt in 1910, representing the real.

Inside the **My New Theater** box is a video called **Pillow Talk**, taken from the medieval Irish epic **The Táin**, showing a couple arguing about who has more possessions. Jonas explains: ‘Their often humorous dialogue echoes the trade

war between Troy and Greece and demonstrates how arguments over possessions begin at home.'

The title **Lines in the Sand** refers to how western powers have divided up countries of the Middle East, and to more recent political events. Jonas edited the work before and after the events of 9/11 in New York, and has written: 'When I was editing **Lines in the Sand**, with every choice I made, I was thinking of the situation in the world.'

Clockwise from Wall Text

Lines in the Sand

2002

Main projection (**Lines in the Sand** 2002/2005, video, colour, sound, 22min 49sec), blackboard, radio, wooden structure, paint, video (**Pillow Talk** 2002, colour, sound, 9min 20sec), green wooden couch (copy of a Canadian kitchen couch), sand box, photographs, painting on canvas, chalk on black paper, and other materials

Exhibition copy from artist's proof

X71599, X68145

MY NEW THEATER V: MOVING IN PLACE (DOG DANCE)

“The colour of the landscape relates to colours in the setting and dress of the indoor scene. The box is small and painted yellow. I was interested in the relation of scale and colour to the content and colour of the video.”

The video **Moving in Place (Dog Dance)**, shown in My New Theater V, evolved from a quiet, spontaneous performance Jonas recorded one night in her studio. At the time, Jonas was working on the installation **Lines in the Sand** 2002, and its stage-set provided the setting for the performance. Jonas dances to rhythmic music with a large heavy stone while her dog Zina repeatedly nudges her to throw her rubber ball. During the editing process, Jonas sped up the scene, so she appears to move very fast while the dog stands still, waiting. The artist intercut this scene with footage of a car slowly moving through the golden landscape outside Las Vegas. Jonas explains: ‘The juxtaposition represents the idea that in one’s imagination one is often in several places at the same time.’

My New Theater V: Moving in Place (Dog Dance)

2002–5

Wood structure, trestles, paint, video
(colour, sound, 6min 11sec)

Exhibition copy from artist's proof

X66164

MY NEW THEATER III: IN THE SHADOW A SHADOW

“As in the 1970s I begin with some thoughts about content in relation to the media and work with materials at hand. If I am the performer then who am I? What role do I play? I consider my age, what that means in ongoing performance practice, and the possibilities of a humorous distance to my situation, with the presence of my dog as companion and willing performer.”

Divided into several scenes, including a swimming dog, and a poem recited over a shadow moving through the grass, **My New Theater III: In the Shadow a Shadow** explores possibilities of performance imagery. The longest scene in the video shows the dancer Maris Vachon performing naked to Kurt Schwitters’s sound poem **Ursonate** 1922–32, alongside Jonas, who changes between various outfits. The two women act as if they are unaware of each other’s presence, and Jonas suggests that the young dancer could be her younger self. Nine stones function as markers between the single scenes: they are shot one after another, as Jonas’s hand draws faces with chalk onto their surfaces.

My New Theater III: In the Shadow a Shadow

1999

Wood structure, bench, video (colour, sound, 9min 55sec)

Exhibition copy from artist's proof

X66163

Lines in the Sand - Performance

2002–5

Video, monitor, colour and sound

Running time: 47min 45sec

Performance at The Kitchen, New York, 2004

X71796

ROOM 6

STREAM OR RIVER, FLIGHT OR PATTERN

“In my works, I’m always experimenting with new ways of making a drawing. These are new bird drawings on the large boards in **Stream or River, Flight or Pattern**. Birds become the dominant element in the piece, partly because of the drawings. The cries of the birds also dominate the soundtrack, with the woman’s song – that links the bird with the human.”

The video projections in this work tell a narrative connected to Jonas’s travels, bringing together images of Venetian mosaics, a bird sanctuary in Singapore, a graveyard in Genoa, redwood forests around San Francisco, landscapes in northern Spain, India and Canada, as well as traffic and the making of local crafts and rituals in Vietnam. In one video, a multi-layered effect is created by performers’ shadows which become part of the projection. Jonas’s drawings of birds have been enlarged and transferred onto the boards. The paper kites are objects the artist found in a small village close to Hanoi, Vietnam. They reflect both Jonas’s interest in the materiality of paper and her practice of working with objects she collects during her travels. Here they also suggest the idea of flight, as the installation’s individual elements are tied together by the theme of the bird. Investigations into nature and animals, especially

endangered species, have taken on greater importance in Jonas's work in recent years, also appearing in installations such as **Reanimation** 2010/2012/2013, on display as part of this exhibition in the East Tank, Level 0.

Stream or River, Flight or Pattern

2016–17

3 screens, videos, colour, sound, 14 painted boards (wood, aluminium, paint), 10 kites (paper, colour, wood)

Courtesy of the artist and Gavin Brown's Enterprise,
New York / Rome

X68144, X71452, X71441

ROOM 7

From front to back

GLASS PUZZLE II

“I called the work **Glass Puzzle** because it was a puzzle in the space of the monitor. I was interested in making a sensual space. It’s also a puzzle about two women, about whom there is no explanation.”

This installation is a reworking of a video Jonas made 25 years earlier, also entitled **Glass Puzzle**, which can be seen projected on the paper screen. The video was inspired by early 20th century photographer E. J. Bellocq’s photographs of prostitutes in New Orleans. Dealing with the illusion of the monitor’s boxed space, four scenes are set in various constructed configurations. Together with the artist Lois Lane, Jonas dances, moves, crawls, and carries out different actions. Playing the double, Lane imitates Jonas’s gestures. In other moments, the two shift and pose in opposite ways in each configuration of space. A camera occasionally captures images playing on the monitor, reflecting the space as the images are superimposed.

The two-channel video installation includes a small monitor on the floor showing colour footage from a particular scene in **Glass Puzzle**. A copy of the child’s desk from the early version, with small props inside, completes the installation.

Glass Puzzle II

1974/2000

Videos (Glass Puzzle 1973, black and white, sound, 17min 27sec, Tate. Purchased with funds provided by the Tate Americas Foundation 2016, H00008; Glass Puzzle unedited 1974, colour, sound, 40min), paper screen, wooden pole, monitor, wooden desk with props

Camera by Babette Mangolte

Exhibition copy from artist's proof

X66167

MERLO

“The objects I use are not literal adaptations of the elements in the story or concept, but are symbolic, archetypal. The cone was an instrument to channel sound to the audience. I could whisper in their ears, look through it, listen to it, yell through it, sing – always directing sound to a place.”

In **Merlo**, which means ‘blackbird’ in Italian, Jonas is dressed in a chadri that fully covers her head and body. In several scenes, she holds a long white cone that functions as a megaphone. She hums a song, howls like a dog, then calls out the word ‘merlo’ through the cone. Shot in Tuscany, every scene is in a different setting: near a small excavation site, on a field, at a lake. In the last scene, a group of dogs howl while Jonas stands upon a balustrade overlooking a picturesque landscape. As she performs an elegant and bird-like choreography, the wind constantly lifts up her cloak until she raises her arms and the garment is blown away. **Merlo** could be seen to be about the perception of sound and image from varying distances, as well as exploring the motion of the body in interaction with its environment.

Merlo

1974

Video, monitor, black and white and sound

Running time: 16min 13sec

Tate. Purchased with funds provided by the Tate Americas
Foundation 2016

H00007

DOUBLE LUNAR RABBITS

“In **Double Lunar Rabbits** 2010, I explore the image of the rabbit in the moon, familiar in Japan. Finding a similar myth in the Aztec tradition, I juxtapose the two stories in an installation involving fragile sculptural forms as a doubled stage for projected video ... I thought to design curved screens as a way to display **Double Lunar Rabbits**. Later such screens were designed for **Reanimation**.”

The two-channel video **Double Lunar Rabbits** is never completely visible: the curve of the screens mean images disappear from view as the spectator walks past. Shot in different locations across Kitakyushu in Japan – including a narrow brick tunnel, a street, and a field –the work is projected onto paper and wood screens inspired by traditional Japanese **sho-ji** (room dividers or screens). The narrative, from the traditional Japanese fairytale, revolves around a rabbit who sacrificed itself as food for others. Gods save the rabbit and reward its selflessness by drawing its image onto the moon. In Jonas’s video, all characters of the fable are played by a young dancer wearing different masks and costumes assembled from local Japanese markets.

Double Lunar Rabbits

2010

2 wood and paper curved screens, projected video

Running time: 4min

Produced by CCA Kitakyushu, Japan

Exhibition copy from artist's proof

X66169

MY NEW THEATER VI: GOOD NIGHT GOOD MORNING '06

"I am addressing the viewer from a room inside a long narrow wooden box. I am looking out at them. This particular box was designed with a twist in its length. The entire work was recorded as reflected in a convex mirror, a device I had been working with for several years exploring spatial distortions."

This work restages the video **Good Night Good Morning** Jonas shot in New York and Cape Breton in 1976. Over three separate weeks, Jonas recorded herself saying 'Good Night' before going to bed, and 'Good Morning' after waking up. The original video is black and white, but the remake shown in this **My New Theater** box is in colour. Shooting in a house in Canada, Jonas placed her camera in front of a convex mirror and addressed the reflection of the camera in the mirror. For every take she changed the position of the mirror, varying the perspective of the room. The soundtrack includes sound fragments from a Canadian radio station, as well as music by composers David Lang and Morton Feldman. The box displaying this work is very long and slightly twisted, giving the impression that the artist and the room are inside

My New Theater VI: Good Night Good Morning '06
2006

Wood structure, trestles, bench, paint, video (colour, sound, 16min)

Exhibition copy from artist's proofs
X66209

EAST TANK

Clockwise From Reanimation Wall Text

JOAN JONAS

WIND

“When I made **Wind** it was filmed outdoors on the coldest day of the year, though it was based on an indoor piece. The wind became a character and a force. The wind turned what could have been a familiar everyday movement into a comedy of chaos.”

Wind is a silent film set on a snow-capped beach in Long Island. Jonas and artist Keith Hollingworth play a couple dressed in mirror-covered costumes, first worn in another performance she created that year, and introducing the use of mirrors to her work. The idea of the double also features here, a theme which continues to run through Jonas’s work. Their subtle movements contrast with the playful actions of a larger group of performers in capes and black masks, who try to overcome the immense power of the wind blowing across the beach. Shot by artist Peter Campus, this was Joan Jonas’s first film, as well as her first outdoor piece.

Wind

1968

Film, 16mm, shown as video, high definition,
black and white

Running time: 5min 37sec

Tate. Purchased with funds provided by the Tate Americas
Foundation 2016

Preserved by Anthology Film Archives

Laboratory services by Colorlab Corp

Preserved through the National Film Preservation
Foundation's

Avant-Garde Masters Grant program and The Film
Foundation

Funding provided by the George Lucas Family Foundation
H00002

JOAN JONAS

REANIMATION

“**Reanimation** started with Halldór Laxness’s 1968 novel *Under the Glacier* and continued my interest in Iceland. It also introduced the imagery of bees and marked a shift toward more environmental thinking.”

Reanimation is an immersive installation in which layers of sound and image overlap and intertwine. It celebrates the beauty of glaciers and the natural landscape, pointing to the fact that glaciers are now melting. Two of Jonas’s **My New Theater** structures are included – sculptural units specially designed to present what she calls ‘performances in miniature’. In one of the theater boxes, Jonas is heard reading selected passages from Laxness’s **Under the Glacier**.

Originally developed as a lecture-performance in 2010, Jonas continued to work on **Reanimation** to make an installation and performance, shown for the first time at the art exhibition dOCUMENTA 13 in 2012. The videos that comprise the installation were mostly shot in the Lofoten Islands, Norway, showing snow-covered mountains in different light conditions, as well as animals such as seals, goats and fish. Jonas includes footage of her drawing animal heads in the snow with black ink, and mixing the

ink with chunks of ice. In doing this she connects the act of drawing to nature. Additional sounds from two of the projected videos include a yoik song in the tradition of the indigenous Sami population in Norway, performed and composed by the Norwegian singer Ánde Somby, as well as excerpts of American musician Jason Moran's soundtrack composed for the performance.

Joan Jonas 1936

Reanimation

2010/2012/2013

Wood and paper screens, metal stand, crystals, drawings, wooden benches (design: Edward Gavagan), paint, videos, colour, sound and other materials

Exhibition copy from artist's proof

X66192

Joan Jonas

Reanimation

2012

Documentation of video performance, HangarBicocca,
Milan 2014

Performer: Joan Jonas, Jason Moran

Music: Jason Moran

Running time: 51min 30sec

Courtesy of the artist and Gavin Brown's Enterprise,
New York / Rome

Z08655

CREDIT

ACTIVITY

Joan Jonas draws from stories, fables and imagined worlds to create art about the things that matter to her, like the environment. You can do the same.

Start by choosing four or five words from the glossary (overleaf) to create a story about your environment: it could be the environment of your bedroom, your community, a forest, desert or mountains, the whole planet earth, or a solar system. It could also be an environment of your dreams or emotions, even a mixture of both. Let your imagination run as wild as a wolf.

Create it together as a group or on your own.

Write it down, draw it, perform it, tell it to someone.

FILMS, EVENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Visit tate.org.uk or call 020 7887 8888
for more information and to book

TALK

Behind the Scenes: Joan Jonas

Monday 16 April

Gain exclusive insights into the exhibition from Tate's conservation experts.

Shapes of Decay: A Discussion about Art and Ecology

Tuesday 24 April

Look at how contemporary artists and writers are exploring environmental issues.

Artist's Talk: Joan Jonas with Marina Warner

Friday 1 June

Telling Tales: Myths, Masks and Other Media

Every Monday, 11 June – 2 July

Explore the diverse work of Joan Jonas in a course inspired by the artist.

Curator's Tour: Joan Jonas

Monday 23 July

Join Monika Bayer-Wermuth for an exhibition tour

STUDIO

Intergenerational Studio – Joan Jonas

Saturday 31 March – Sunday 15 April

Drop in, improvise, compose and play in this interactive studio inspired by Joan Jonas's work.

PERFORMANCE

Joan Jonas: Moving Off the Land.

Oceans – Sketches and Notes

Thursday 31 May

A new multi-layered performance by Joan Jonas drawing on an array of literary and mythological references.

Commissioned by TBA21–Academy

FILM

Joan Jonas: Mystic Knots

Saturday 2 – Sunday 3 June

A four-screening survey of the artist's films and videos, drawing in the works of filmmakers who have been influential to her practice.

Tate Film is supported by In Between Art Film

BMW TATE LIVE EXHIBITION

TEN DAYS SIX NIGHTS

16–25 March 2018

BMW Tate Live Exhibition celebrates the work and legacy of Joan Jonas, and gives an opportunity to see live performances of her work. It takes place in the Tanks, Level 0 of the Blavatnik Building. Daytime performances and installations are free. Tickets for evening performances can be bought at tate.org.uk.

INSTALLATIONS

EAST TANK

Reanimation 2010/2012/2013

Wind 1968

TRANSFORMER GALLERIES

Stage Sets 1976/2018

Cones/May Windows (After Mirage) II 1976/2014

DRUM

I Want to Live in the Country (And Other Romances) 1976

FOYER

Jumana Emil Abboud A Happy Ending III: Tate Tales 2018

PERFORMANCES

SOUTH TANK

Mirror Piece II 1970

LOW TIDE ON THE BANKS OF THE THAMES

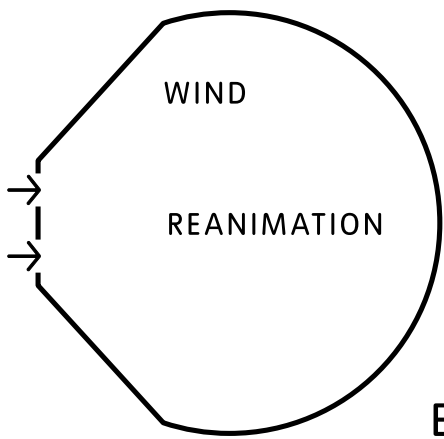
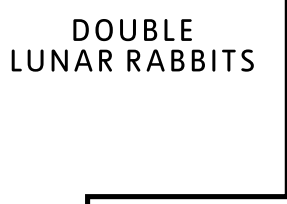
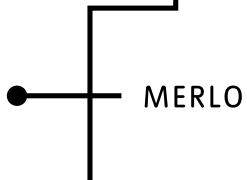
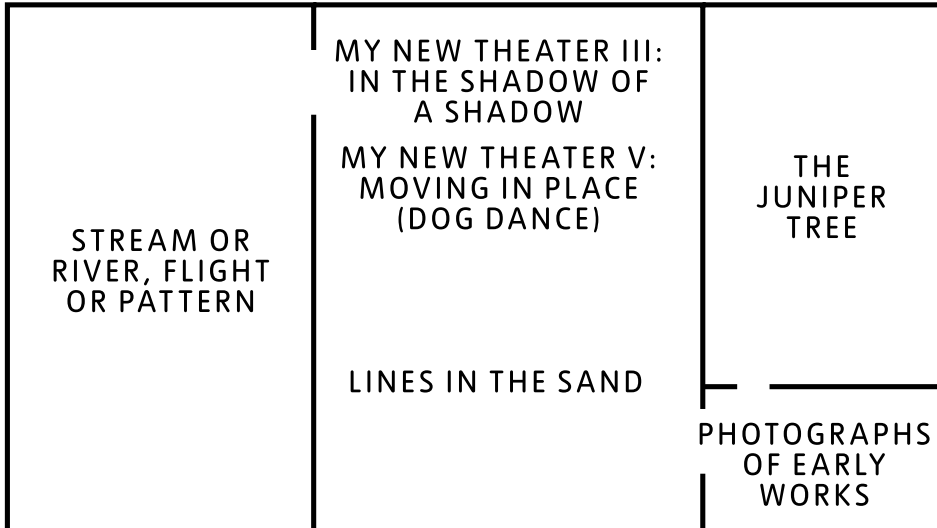
Delay Delay (London Version) 2018

For information on the six night programme of ticketed performances visit tate.org.uk

In partnership with



LEVEL 2



LEVEL 0
EAST TANK

MY NEW THEATER VI:
GOOD NIGHT,
GOOD MORNING '06