

PRESS RELEASE

Corrected press release,
November 10, 1981

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"DOUBLE LUNAR DOGS",

A MULTI-MEDIA PERFORMANCE WORK BY JOAN JONAS

PERFORMED BY JOAN JONAS AND JILL KROESEN.

OPENING WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, AT 8 PM

PERFORMANCES WEDNESDAYS THROUGH SUNDAYS,

DECEMBER 9 - 13 AND DECEMBER 16 - 20,

AT 8 PM

THE PERFORMING GARAGE,

33 WOOSTER STREET

TICKETS \$5.00 OR TDF + \$1.00

EXCEPT SATURDAYS \$7.00 OR TDF + \$3.00

RESERVATIONS: 966-3651

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Performance artist Joan Jonas will premiere "DOUBLE LUNAR DOGS", her first New York performance in two years, for ten performances only, Wednesdays through Sundays, December 9 - 16 and December 16 -20, at 8 PM, at The Performing Garage, 33 Wooster Street (between Broome and Grand) in Soho. Tickets are \$7.00 (TDF + \$3.00) on Saturdays, and \$5.00 (TDF + \$1.00) on all other nights. Reservations may be made by calling 966-3651.

"DOUBLE LUNAR DOGS" is a multi-media duet for two women, Joan Jonas and Jill Kroesen. It has sets, lights, costumes and masks by Joan Jonas; a short film by Michael Oblowitz featuring David Warrilow; NASA space animation films' a sound score that includes music composed by Richard Teitelbaum; and songs by Jill Kroesen and Simone Forti.

Just as all of Jonas' recent works have found their formal structures in abstractions of tales, so "DOUBLE LUNAR DOGS" uses metaphors of a science fiction story -- in which, on a spacecraft embarked on a voyage so long that the succeeding generations of travellers have distorted and forgotten the purpose of their mission. Using one individual's private quest for truth, Jonas presents her personal concerns: the images of search, inner conflict, penetration, punishment, escape and resolution.

Joan Jonas was one of the originators of performance art in the 1970's. Her works include "UPSIDE DOWN AND BACKWARDS" (1979), "THE JUNIPER TREE" (1976), "MIRAGE" (1976).

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325 Spring Street, New York, New York 10013 (212) 243-6153

Jonas' performances are structured as series of images anyway, and in this anthology format it was sometimes hard to tell where one piece stopped and the next began. In certain ways her work is seamless and yet in other ways its not. Jonas is a wizard who reveals her techniques. She "bares the devices," as the Russian formalist critics put it. She fiddles with images, numerology, masks, repetitive movements (like rocking, stamping, marching, running, swaying hips, circling a ball in one hand and a mallet in the other, or spiraling a small mirror down and around her nude body).

She's interested in symmetries and reversals of colors and shapes: she paints a heart or face on white satin with red paint, then on red satin with white paint when talking about the two children in Grimm's THE JUNIPER TREE. She holds a mirror up to her own face so that the audience sees a single face that is half flesh, half glass. She projects a slide of a strange dog's face, with eyes that seem to stutter—one double eye white and one black. Then she draws the dog's image and holds it up to the mirror, where it is recorded by the video camera, so that in the end we see five images. Then she splits the video screen so that when she draws this same face in splintered fragments it coheres on the screen. She bangs a big spoon violently against the mirror which lies flat on her small tilting stage (which is also a blackboard) and we see, on the monitor, the squiggly path of the spoon's invisible trajectory, suddenly made visible on screen . . . she seems to be clapping while we hear clacking noises that strengthen the visual illusion.

Jonas' work is sometimes irritating to watch. You want the images to hang together in some sensible way, especially in the two later works, which use fairy tales as content, and yet those images often seem deliberately obscure and disconnected. You are thrilled by the sudden sparks of magic when the concentrated moment ignites—when Jonas saunters down the ramp, dressed as a burlesque queen, to rock music that seems strange and powerful, for instance, or when she completes the video mirage, or when her reiterated motions take on an incantatory power. But the dialectic of illusion-making and -breaking never emerges as an explicit theme of the performance, which seems to waver between two poles. . . . In the darkness and stillness and with the height of the rotunda, the music coming from all points did weave a magical spell.

Sally Banes, DanceMagazine

Joan Jonas is known internationally as one of the major figures of "mixed-media" performance. She was trained as a sculptor and her work shows her preoccupation with our perception of space. In the mid-1960's she became interested in performance and began combining elements of dance and theater with physical objects and the manipulation of perceptual phenomena. In the early 1970's she began using video as a means of transmitting and transforming her images. Jonas' personal vocabulary of gesture, movement and sound is combined with the conventions of the Noh and Kabuki theater traditions of Japan to create mixed-media performances of unusual richness and density of content and texture.

Joan Jonas received a Video Artist Fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation in 1981-82 to be administered by WNET/Thirteen. She is currently the recipient of a DAAD Artist Grant for a six month residency in Berlin, West Germany commencing in March, 1982.

RECENT PERFORMANCES AND INSTALLATIONS:

1980-82

Houston Museum of Contemporary Art, Houston, TX
Palazzo Cataneo, Genoa, Italy
Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven, Holland
Kunstmuseum, Bern, Switzerland
The American Center, Paris, France
University Art Museum, Berkeley, CA
Kunsthalle, Basel, Switzerland
Los Angeles Institute of Contemporary Art, L.A., CA
Performing Garage, New York City

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