



JOAN JONAS: Stills from *MERLO*, 1974, b/w, sound, 20 min.

This tape, shown at the Long Beach Museum, uses the cones that Jonas also employed in her performance, *Cones*.

JOAN JONAS PERFORMANCE

Los Angeles

On March 27 Joan Jonas performed *Cone* at the Performance Conference at the Woman's Building. On the 12th and 13th of April Jonas will perform *Bluebird Bluebeard* at LAICA. (Following the Conference, I talked with Jonas about the LAICA work. *Bluebird...* will use some of the materials from *Cone* in other ways. In format and length the work will resemble an earlier piece, *Organic Honey Vertical Roll*.)

Cone is structured in the language of dreams. Recalling the work, describing it, is recounting a dream.

Three small television monitors, one with no image, illuminate a triangular area within the darkened performance space. At the edges of the space are seven paper cones. Six performers sit just outside the lit area. Jonas enters, dressed in a shadri, a transparent garment covering her from head to ankles. Her first action is a slow spiral movement down into a crouch. She rises, spiraling to a standing position. She picks up a cone and begins walking, singing, megaphone-like. The repeated wordless song leads Jonas in a circular motion. The melody evolves into a drone. Still turning, phrases are whispered. The cone passes quickly around, whatever's being told is blurred.

The cone is set down in silence. Jonas begins an audible phrase, *I washed them out, I washed*

them in / They told me it was a sin. Over and over. I washed them out, I washed them in / They told me it was a sin. She walks to a monitor and covers it with the shadri. Light clothes her. The phrases and audio level of the monitor are modulated together. Sounds fade and Jonas rises with sleigh bells. Rhythmic belling. One by one they fall to the floor. The seated performers rise. They put the cones to their mouths and begin emitting a creaking sound. The cones slowly rise and lower. A shadowy figure passes around the circle of the audience. She wears a white silhouette of a thin man in a hat. Slowly the performers lower their cones; the sound changes to breathing. The cones are placed on the floor. The performance ends. □

JOEL GLASSMAN — FROM LONG BEACH TO SWEDEN

Bay Area artist Joel Glassman is exhibiting videotapes and photographs at the Long Beach Museum of Art, through April 27. He was also selected for inclusion in the video section of the Biennial at the Whitney Museum, New York, and is showing videotapes and photographs at the Malmo Konstahlls, Malmo, Sweden.



LOS ANGELES IN THE THIRTIES: 1931-41, an exhibit of planning and architecture during the decade of the thirties, is the subject of an exhibit at the University Art Galleries, UC Santa Barbara. The image that, during the dark depression years, represented a dream of plenty, security, fun and play for a nation-wide audience is represented in this exhibit. Although the image was a stage set,

it did in fact rest on a certain reality since Los Angeles was the only major U.S. urban center to recover quickly from its economic woes. By 1935 it was well on its way upward and onward.

This exhibit, which continues through May 11, was organized by David Gebhard and Harriette Von Breton. (PP)

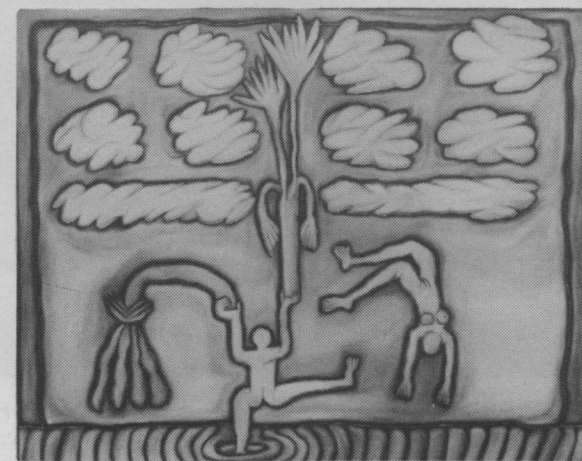
CARON COLVEN PAINTINGS

Santa Monica

June Chase

How many of the nuances a viewer finds in an artist's work are put there by the artist and how much is supplied by the viewer's own life imagery? The paintings of Caron Colven, at The Point Gallery, are highly individualistic, intensely allegorical and splashed with the bright colors of a Mexican primitive, yet I kept finding in them fleeting references to artists of the past. This doesn't imply that Colven consciously uses techniques found in other works, but that she has seen them, assimilated them and those that are closest to her own vision penetrate her individual approach. Or, perhaps, the references are in my own point of view.

Brightly colored as these paintings are, there is the feeling of torment, the torment found in the twisted figures of Bosch's view of hell or those extraordinarily black etchings from Goya's series on war. The shadowy figures insinuating themselves from amorphous material seem to be



CARON COLVEN: CONCERNING THE SPIRITUAL IN ART #3 OR: LAMENT FOR THE END OF TIME, 1975, oil on canvas, 24"x 30", at The Point Gallery, Santa Monica.

those primitive forces dating back to the dawn of time, always feared and always needing to be kept under control. Her colors are used with the daring of Mexican folk art, yet there are none of the death's head figures that represent that culture's acceptance and defiance of death. Colven's paintings are fascinating, with much allegorical and psychological content to unravel.

Firmly based in Southern California, Colven's work abounds in palm trees and her own interpretations of the local scene — but always as a key to some deeper meaning. Her figure drawings recall those of cave and rock artists and hold some of the same power found in those, perhaps some of the magic as well. Unexpectedly, the drawing seems to become more and more simplified as the series progresses.

Most interesting for me is the series *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, the most recent pieces in the show. Here Colven has dulled her palette somewhat without losing the lyrical, yet nightmarish quality. Complete with painted borders, the colored central squares moved this viewer to wonder if they represented the painted "sky" backdrops used by movie makers.

I felt the greatest impact from one of the largest pieces in the show. *Lust in Marina del Rey or: Beware the Pointed Seas of Life Least They Damage the Billowy Substance of the Sky* seems to bring together the artist's fascination with palm trees, genitalia and folded cloud-like shapes, combining them with grotesquely positioned and cavorting human figures. There seems to be an amalgamation of all the visual stimuli Colven has received in a Southern California lifetime, everything from the ritual figures of pre-literate art to bill-board techniques, all coming together in a powerful statement by an artist with an intense and complicated mind-set.

In a sense this show offers a retrospective view. The earliest piece here is from 1972, and the *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* series was completed just prior to the show's opening. There is evidence of growth and change. Colven's palette seems to be muting, the bold juxtaposition of primary colors is apparently being discarded and the sometimes over-busy backgrounds are becoming simplified and minimized, though the tortured, allegorical quality is still there. The energy remains constant, with swirling brush strokes that add to the feeling of movement, torment and electricity.

Caron Colven's show will be at The Point Gallery, 2669 Main, until April 14. □