

Joan Jonas on *Joan Jonas: Performance/Video/Installation* at University Art Museum, Berkeley, interviewed by Barbara Clausen and Kristin Poor, August 26, 2020

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- Barbara Clausen: So, hello, this is the Joan Jonas Knowledge Base. This is an interview with Joan Jonas regarding her exhibition, *Joan Jonas: Performance/Video/Installation*, curated by David Ross at the Berkeley Museum of Art at the University of California in Berkeley, that was presented from May 16th to June 29th, 1980. I'm here with the Assistant Curatorial Research Director, Kristin Poor, Joan Jonas, the artist, and myself, Barbara Clausen. So let's begin by talking about how you met David Ross, who was the initiator of the show?
- Joan Jonas: David Ross was the first, video curator, I think, ever. Yeah, he was the first person to consider video series in that sense that he became a curator of video. And I think that was the beginning of the seventies just when a lot of video work was emerging and that's how I met him. So everybody knew him, who made video, and there was no special time. I don't remember the day I met him, but that's how I knew him because of that. I think he was working in San Diego or someplace near Los Angeles. But I don't know, that might be wrong. I think he was around here too.
- Barbara Clausen: And, did you have a relationship to the University of Berkeley or to that specific institution? Or, how was that link made between the institution?
- Joan Jonas: I don't remember. David, I think he was a curator there. He became a curator there. And then I got to know all the other people who ran the museum or who were curators.
- Barbara Clausen: What was the invitation to do the show initially, Joan?
- Joan Jonas: I'm not sure what that means. They asked me to do a retrospective about my work in the museum and the whole museum was at my disposal, more or less. It's not that big a museum but it's certainly enough space and it's an unusual design. It's like the Guggenheim, only, it's all squares. It's the Guggenheim squared off. The central space.
- Barbara Clausen: There's a real Brutalist architecture feel to it in that space.

Joan Jonas: A ramp that goes around the central space. But I was only in the first level. My work was all on the first level.

Barbara Clausen: How did you approach the idea of a retrospective at that time? Do you remember?

Joan Jonas: It seems like it must've been just simply logic. It was 1980, so I began with...obviously we didn't do the *Mirror [Piece]* performance because I think at that time I wasn't really into redoing performances like that. So it was really based on my video work, put it that way. And we chose the most important video works from the seventies. *Organic Honey*, *Funnel*, not the most important, the video works. *Upsidedown and Backwards* and *Mirage*.

Kristin Poor: The performance works you mean.

Joan Jonas: Yeah. And then I made a big performance at the end of the show. The show went over several months and I guess I performed every weekend for a month.

Barbara Clausen: And, do you remember, did you spend a lot of time in that particular space? Because you mentioned that it wasn't—

Joan Jonas: I stayed...I lived in Berkeley for a month or two months preparing the show. And then I had to be there for a whole month because I was working in ... I think I was developing *Double Lunar Dogs*, which was the performance I did there—it was a new piece—while I was working and developing, figuring out how to put on my video works that I just mentioned. I was also developing *Double Lunar Dogs* and I was living in Berkeley for about two months.

Kristin Poor: How did you make the decision about where to show the work in the end? You said you had the whole building at your disposal?

Joan Jonas: I don't remember whose decision it was, but they gave me the whole first level. So I don't remember if there was any real decision making, but that's the space that I had. It's quite a large space.

Barbara Clausen: And when you mentioned that the exhibition was up for a certain amount of time, and then at the end, there were performances on a weekend basis. What was your decision-making process in presenting these works or parts of these works?

Joan Jonas: I'm sure it was collaborative. *Mirage* was in a theater and that was the first one. We had to present that in the theater because it had projections and there's a lot of light in the main space. So I could only make work in the main space that had video. Except I think *Upsidedown and Backwards*, I performed it at night, so that had a projection. So I just chose and each so-called installation or arrangement of things from that piece came, was put up as I did each performance. So it's not that I put the whole show up. I think at the beginning. I don't think so. Yeah.

Barbara Clausen: Yeah. You can also see on the floor plans, there's really a progressiveness in how the show develops in the sense of, some pieces were moved for some performances. So you in this case, exceptionally performed, if I'm right, in the space that you presented certain fragments of the pieces.

Joan Jonas: Yeah, I think so. Yes.

Kristin Poor: So when we look at the installation photographs, we can see that some of the sets and related props for three of those performances that you're talking about, *Organic Honey's Vertical Roll*, *Funnel*, and *Upsidedown and Backwards*, were as you said, installed in the galleries, for the remainder of the exhibition.

Joan Jonas: Yes, but it was cumulative. Frankly, I'm not actually sure. But I remember, I think I had to make those paintings for the backgrounds of *Upsidedown and Backwards*. I made those background paintings in the space. So, I constructed each one. So I had four months, and each week I had to work on one piece and figure out where to put it, and how to perform it and what to leave up.

Kristin Poor: What was the rehearsal process like? Do you remember?

Joan Jonas: Frankly, I don't remember. It was like any rehearsal process. I rehearsed in the space. And I had, as you can see, I looked at the program there. I had helpers, I had people working with me and there was a guy named Barney Bailey. That's the only person I'll mention who was in the museum. And he was still in the museum a few years ago, who was the major person in relation to technique and sound and all that. He was great.

Joan Jonas: So that's an installation of *Double Lunar Dogs*. That was the last piece, which isn't included in your archives, but that's *Double Lunar Dogs*. And that's, *The Juniper Tree*. These were, I'm not sure.

- Kristin Poor: So *Juniper Tree*, it looks like you didn't do a performance of that, but there was an early installation version of it included in the exhibition.
- Joan Jonas: I think it was one of the earlier installation versions. Yeah. And I guess I didn't do it. I don't remember. I didn't perform it.
- Kristin Poor: It doesn't seem like you did from the schedule. How do you see that version of *Juniper Tree* in relation to the later one?
- Joan Jonas: It's simpler. All these, I don't call them installations. *The Juniper Tree* is probably the most complete. I see why David calls them installations. They're early, very simple versions of my installations. Which include the costumes, some of the props, photographs, like the blackboard and *Organic Honey* was part of the performance. So, they are a little bit, you could call them installations in the broad sense of the word. But I worked on them quite a bit when I re-presented some of these at the Stedelijk.
- Barbara Clausen: Oh yeah. They're completely different. It's just interesting to see that relationship between stage, performing space, and exhibition space, specifically because you differentiate them normally so much. And I'm just wondering, we're looking at the *Organic Honey* setup, I'm going to call them, or environment, now at Berkeley. I'm just wondering, within that specific *Organic Honey* context that we see here, did you perform within that specific spot or did you—
- Joan Jonas: That, Barbara, I don't remember, but, maybe. I don't remember, but maybe.
- Kristin Poor: And I don't know if this is true, but on the schedule, it seemed to indicate that the *Organic Honey* materials were moved from a different place after the performance. And then, some of the other ones were in the same place, like *Funnel* was probably done—
- Joan Jonas: That might be true. Let me look. Can you show me a closeup of the *Organic Honey* performance? Maybe I can—
- Barbara Clausen: Okay. Do you want to see the photographs of the contact sheets, you mean, of the *Organic Honey* performance?
- Joan Jonas: Yeah. *Organic Honey*. I can't read those plans on my computer. I can't see that, it has to be really bigger.

Barbara Clausen:

Like this?

Joan Jonas:

The ground floor, as you can see from the plans, had various compartmentalized spaces. All open. And it could very well be that I performed in one space and then moved everything to another space and then maybe performed in that space again. But frankly, I'm sorry. I don't remember.

Barbara Clausen:

I think, Joan, looking at this, the contact sheets, carefully, of the performance, you can actually see that that was not the space where you then have the environment installed. It's a very different type of ... So the setup for *Organic Honey* that we see on the Joan Jonas Knowledge Base is a real cove. And on the other side, it really has more of an opening. Maybe it was near there, but it's not identical.

Joan Jonas:

Also this wall on the left, I'm sure that wasn't in the performance.

Barbara Clausen:

No, that was not.

Joan Jonas:

So probably not. I probably moved around. Probably.

Kristin Poor:

Yeah. It's an interesting thing that happened here at Berkeley, because later you never really did this sort of thing. Am I right? That you would perform and then keep the materials on view afterwards as part of the exhibition.

Joan Jonas:

Well, it depends what you're talking about. I didn't always do that. No. I never performed in an 'installation.' And so I don't know afterwards. I didn't do *Organic Honey* afterwards. I don't remember where I did it. If I did it, I didn't perform in an installation, for sure.

Barbara Clausen:

So, Joan, if we think about what you just said, two points are really clear and we'd love you to perhaps talk about them. Also, looking at what this exhibition did for the future. You do not see that these Berkeley environments that you set up there were already installations. You develop them later. And you also want to make sure that you did not specifically maybe perform in the Gallery B, but there was also the theater. And so maybe some of these roles you performed.

Joan Jonas:

It wasn't just Gallery B, there are several galleries in there. That's just one of the galleries. The theater I performed in once, when I did *Mirage*. For the other ones, I performed in the main space in these different alcoves. I rethought my idea about the word

'installation,' just when I'm looking at this, visiting this again. And I always say, when David says they're installations, I say, 'no, they're not.' But if I look back now, they are in a way installations related to the piece. So the very first attempt. See, they're all those alcoves. So I moved around the space in different ways. But I don't remember how. They were different. I developed my installations over a long period of time. So if I began in 1980, by 1994, I had a different way of showing a piece, an installation of a work.

Joan Jonas: And it was the most developed so far. But I really began here. And by beginning, by just in a very simple way, having a few props and objects without necessarily having video, it was the first version of installations. If you know what I mean. But this is a simple, an example. I'm not sure how long they stayed up after the performance, but this is an example of the exact setup for the performance, *Double Lunar Dogs*. It's exactly what I performed in, in the middle of the space. And it's the only one that was in the middle of the space. And the performance was, I had people on the balconies, the audience was all around the piece, on the ground floor. And you see to the right back there, the *Upsidedown and Backwards* paintings. So that's all, I think that was left of that performance. But that's where I performed that. I remember that, *Upsidedown and Backwards*. Over there to the right of the photograph.

Barbara Clausen: Yeah. And in the middle there's *Funnel*, in the background.

Joan Jonas: I probably did it there. So the audience in each case would be in front of those spaces.

Barbara Clausen: Which I think is also interesting that, given that space and that set up, that you had to really think of the audience being all over the place, not just from one kind of theater stage or cinema type of projector, but that they were really surrounding you.

Joan Jonas: Only in that last piece, they weren't surrounding me in the other pieces. Those are frontal pieces. So they were somehow in front.

Barbara Clausen: So partly they were frontal and sometimes it would be only that last piece they would be all around.

Joan Jonas: Only the last piece, *Double Lunar Dogs*.

Kristin Poor: *Double Lunar Dogs*.

Barbara Clausen: Kristin.

Kristin Poor: There was also Joan a video program. It seems like there were two different kinds of video components. There was a continuous video screening that was happening in the galleries. And then, there was a night where there was a video program that you spoke in front of. And how do you see those? It would be great to hear about how—

Joan Jonas: This show is 1980. I had only been making videos. My first videos came out in 1972. So basically everything was shown. And I don't remember. I'm sure in your notes, you have a record of the video program, which I didn't closely look at when I was just in the last few days. I think that it was just a matter of putting what I had done.

Kristin Poor: The evening video program included *Anxious Automation, Disturbances, Good Night Good Morning, I Want to Live in the Country (And Other Romances)*.

Joan Jonas: Yeah. Those were all not in the show. Probably. I don't remember. I remember it was a lecture and I talked. And I remember I talked much too long, which I was told by David afterwards. I went on too long, but I gave a lecture.

Barbara Clausen: It's also interesting that you gave the lecture, but then you also had this great, sitting area where you had a monitor where people can also, I presume, watch videos. And you also had—

Joan Jonas: And I gave the lecture, I think it was in the theater because I remember. Yeah, it was in the theater. It wasn't here. So this was an area where videos were playing and those are prints from, that I did it at...

Barbara Clausen: There was like a studio kind of program.

Kristin Poor: Was it Crown Point?

Joan Jonas: Crown Point Press.

Kristin Poor: And these prints are related to *Mirage*, correct?

Joan Jonas: Yeah. They're all related to some of the images from *Mirage*.

Kristin Poor: Do you remember any of the photographs that were on view?

Joan Jonas: No.

Kristin Poor: No.

- Joan Jonas: I think they were all the obvious. There are a few props here. I see the *Upsidedown and Backwards* installation had the props that I used in each, in front of each of those paintings. And that's actually how I continue to show this. But, I didn't have very much chance to show such work until maybe the Stedelijk show. I'm not sure.
- Barbara Clausen: Yes. There was definitely—
- Joan Jonas: But this was I think a new piece, pretty new piece when I did in Berkeley.
- Barbara Clausen: Yes. This was for the premiere of *Upsidedown and Backwards*.
- Joan Jonas: Yeah.
- Barbara Clausen: Yes. And *Double Lunar Dogs*.
- Joan Jonas: So I did it in other places, for sure. I think I showed it at Castelli in New York or at Sonnabend. I did. I remember that. Yes, I did.
- Kristin Poor: Looking back, Joan, how did this exhibition impact your thinking about how to show work in a gallery?
- Joan Jonas: I don't think I thought about it that way. I think the way my work is made, I begin in a point and then I develop it, and maybe I'm not thinking about a gallery. I'm thinking about the immediate situation. And so for instance, *Upsidedown and Backwards*, obviously that could exist in a gallery, on a wall. I don't think Castelli showed it, they kept it up for a week, I think. But I didn't have a gallery that showed my installations like that.
- Joan Jonas: So I just thought of it, piece by piece, by the time the Stedelijk show came, I had thought about it quite a bit. And *The Juniper Tree*, that first happened in my loft like that. And it became more elaborate and expanded as I showed it in other places. I adjusted on this four years earlier.
- Barbara Clausen: Right. One has to really remember the time period. That the time between the first time you presented these works and that they were suddenly presented as a group, because these were all new.
- Joan Jonas: These were all new.
- Barbara Clausen: And if I'm right, it was also the first time that you would present numerous works in one space next to each other.



- Joan Jonas: Absolutely. The first time. Yes. And they gave me—to work on that final piece, *Double Lunar Dogs*—they gave me the whole museum. It was amazing.
- Kristin Poor: Wow.
- Joan Jonas: There was nothing else going on in the museum during this time.
- Barbara Clausen: Wow. And were there a lot of people who came, do you remember?
- Joan Jonas: I think so, yeah. Comparatively speaking, for that time.
- Barbara Clausen: Right. Was it an audience that would really come back every week for the performances as well?
- Joan Jonas: Yes.
- Barbara Clausen: So they would really follow. And then of course, unless Kristin, I wanted to go into the Looking Back section a bit more. And Kristin, do you still have a question about the experience of the exhibition and the performance series as well? Joan, do you want to say anything, add anything to that from your memory?
- Joan Jonas: No. I'll just mention one. William Farley was a very important participant. He's a filmmaker and he was one of the people I talked to quite a bit. And he did the camera for *Upsidedown and Backwards*. You'll see his name. So I'll just mention his name as one other person. There are others, of course.
- Barbara Clausen: Yes. And when you look at the contact prints also, you really see there was quite a crowd actually during these performances.
- Joan Jonas: Yeah. No, it was well attended. But it was definitely that San Francisco crowd and some of my friends came from LA. But, it was really packed for the *Double Lunar Dogs* performance.
- Kristin Poor: One thing I think is really interesting about this exhibition, given that it's your first retrospective, is just how central the performances, rather, were to the exhibition itself. It seems like they really are the core. And then as you said, what we're referring to as installations came from those. But that the starting point was really these performances and your videos. And it's an interesting model to think of, for other exhibitions of your work going forward.

- Barbara Clausen: I think especially exhibitions of early works of yours going forward. Where you don't have the feeling that it's just a reenactment of something of the past, or restaging, but actually really a sense of anchoring these works in the space and the context—
- Joan Jonas: And then, it was in collaboration. The catalogue was made in collaboration with Eindhoven, Rudi Fuchs. And then it took another few years for that to happen.
- Barbara Clausen: Can you talk about the role of Rudi Fuchs. And I think also Jan Debbaut, for that catalogue to—and of course Douglas [Crimp]—to come about because it did happen a few, three years after—
- Joan Jonas: Well, right after the show, Pat Steir was going to do the catalogue. She was working at *Heresies*. So for about a year, she and I, I just couldn't get enough. It wasn't her, it was me. I put it off and then, Douglas stepped in. So I'll just say that he came in after Pat had tried. But then Pat wasn't really, professionally working, even though she was, with me, on it, we never really did anything together with it, but she wanted to try to produce it. And then Douglas stepped in and he actually did. He was the editor and Rudi Fuchs and Jan Debbaut, I think I did a show there a few years later and we have to look it up. I can't remember.
- Barbara Clausen: Well, you presented actually *Double Lunar Dogs*, if I'm not—
- Kristin Poor: I think it was *Juniper Tree*.
- Barbara Clausen: It was *Juniper Tree*.
- Kristin Poor: In Eindhoven?
- Barbara Clausen: In Eindhoven.
- Joan Jonas: And I think I did a version of *Double Lunar Dogs*, but it was very, very different. Very different.
- Barbara Clausen: It was very different. And you also performed in Amsterdam. It was really between Eindhoven and Amsterdam. And there were several events around that. But the show as such did not travel to Eindhoven?
- Joan Jonas: No, but they did share the producing of the catalogue.
- Barbara Clausen: Yes. And I would say in that sense also given that Rudi Fuchs, I wonder because Rudi Fuchs was very helpful at that point also

for making the catalogue. And if I'm correct, Rudi Fuchs is also important for you being able to work together with Dorine Mignot on the 1994 show.

Joan Jonas: Rudi Fuchs was absolutely behind that. Not very important, he was behind it and he asked Dorine to work with me. He invited her to work with me. So—

Barbara Clausen: Did Rudi Fuchs see the show at Berkeley?

Joan Jonas: I don't think so.

Barbara Clausen: That's a long way to go, obviously.

Joan Jonas: Yeah.

Barbara Clausen: Yeah. That's interesting. And then of course the catalogue is still one of the most important resources.

Joan Jonas: Douglas and I did that together. I mean, it was Douglas who really was behind it and he wrote that most famous essay for the catalogue, which we've reprinted in my last big book that Joan Simon did. And he wrote a new version of that. And, it's one of my favorite writings about my work. It's one of the best. And he and I did those scripts together. I think I wrote them out and he edited them for the Berkeley catalogue.

Kristin Poor: So that was the first time most of the scripts were ever published. Is that right?

Joan Jonas: First time any of the scripts were published, I think.

Kristin Poor: Oh, wow. Okay. I thought *Organic Honey* might've been—

Joan Jonas: I think before that I made a script for *Paul Revere*. I wrote that. It was published in *Artforum*. That was where I developed the idea about my scripts was for *Paul Revere*, the script for *Paul Revere*. And then I use that idea for all the scripts.

Kristin Poor: Would you talk a bit more about the process of preparing the scripts with Douglas?

Joan Jonas: I made categories and I tried to line them up so that if the video goes with certain actions and the sound and you see it there. And that was the format for the script, and all my scripts follow that format. And trying to describe and recreate the

performance. So it has several parallel lines of things going on at the same time and accompanying each other.

Barbara Clausen: And also as you said, in this case, you were really able to write these scripts also after the performances. Right. So it was really—

Joan Jonas: I always do that always.

Barbara Clausen: Yeah. There were also different artists' writings in that catalogue, different contributions.

Joan Jonas: Oh really, what else? in the Berkeley catalogue?

Barbara Clausen: Mm-hmm.

Joan Jonas: Which artists? What do you mean?

Barbara Clausen: No, not in the Berkeley catalogue, sorry.

Joan Jonas: In the Stedelijk catalogue?

Barbara Clausen: In the Stedelijk catalogue. Yeah. No here you have—

Joan Jonas: In the Stedelijk catalogue, I just asked artist friends, and so on, to write something that you remembered about my performances or my work. But some of them didn't do that. So not everybody did that. So that's why there's a variety of different approaches to writing from the artists in the Stedelijk catalogue.

Kristin Poor: In the Berkeley catalogue or the Berkeley/Eindhoven, I guess more accurately, catalogue, Joan, there's also descriptions of all of your videos. What was the process—

Joan Jonas: I think Lizzie Borden may have helped with that. In fact, she did that. Lizzie was, well of course a friend, but she helped write some of those descriptions.

Kristin Poor: Because she also wrote some of the ones for the Castelli/Sonnabend videotapes.

Joan Jonas: That's right. And that would be why. Yes.

Kristin Poor: So this moment of your first retrospective was also really this moment of looking back and gathering all of these texts together for the first time.

Joan Jonas Knowledge Base

- Joan Jonas: Well, it's also the first time, formally, trying to organize and describe and catalogue and archive the work in that way.
- Kristin Poor: Is it for you a touchstone, this moment when you think back on it, or is it only now that we're asking you these questions today?
- Joan Jonas: No, it is. But I don't think about it that way as you can see. Maybe that's why I don't remember it that well. Of course it's a touchstone. Yeah. And having that catalogue that, what was the most important thing I had, that catalogue is, it's one of my favorite catalogues. I think it set the pace for all the others after that. It set the form along with Douglas's piece that he wrote for it.
- Barbara Clausen: Yes. We're also fortunate to have interviewed him specifically about this work with you for the catalogue for the Joan Jonas Knowledge Base. So we invite everyone to go and listen and read.
- Joan Jonas: Kristin, thank you so much for doing that. That was amazing.
- Kristin Poor: It was a pleasure, Joan.
- Joan Jonas: Yeah.
- Barbara Clausen: Very important. Do you have any more comments or questions? Would you have anything else that you'd like to say about this specific show?
- Joan Jonas: Nothing comes to my mind, but remember the last time you interviewed me, I immediately thought of, memories came up. But at the moment, no. And I did look, I read through and one other thing I'll say is that when I read through some of the written things you've included, interviews from that time, I see another aspect of myself. So it's interesting too. The way I talk about my work, I talk a lot more about myth and magic and in a different way. I don't talk that way anymore, or speak that way, referring to magical things in the same way. So that was interesting to read back over some of those things.
- Kristin Poor: That's really interesting to hear to how you encounter your own approach to your work.
- Joan Jonas: Yeah. Because you forget what you've said and what your state of mind was.

- Kristin Poor: Well, we're so glad to be able to document your thinking about this today.
- Barbara Clausen: Yes.
- Kristin Poor: It's wonderful to have this. Thank you.
- Barbara Clausen: Yes. And also to have the continuity of your thinking and of your work.
- Joan Jonas: Well, thank you.
- Barbara Clausen: We felt that this show is actually really important as a starting point.
- Joan Jonas: It was. I felt kind of recognized in a way. And it was on the west coast. That was important to be in San Francisco. So to have that audience—
- Barbara Clausen: Can you explain a bit why that was important at that moment?
- Joan Jonas: Well, it's always important to have other audiences. But people on the west coast didn't see my work in New York. And so I always like to have more people see the work.
- Barbara Clausen: Did you feel by the end of the eighties that your work also, obviously had a reception in Europe?
- Joan Jonas: Yeah.
- Barbara Clausen: Can you compare that? Because this is an interesting moment where there's a moment where you're reappearing.
- Joan Jonas: I started going to Europe in the early seventies, to Rome. And for me it was very important to go to different places. If you just stayed in New York, it would be a little provincial. So it was very important to go to different places and share your work. And to have that boomerang and back and forth with New York, to then come back to New York and show your work and then go to the west coast. That is very important for any artist. And in the sixties and seventies, a lot of people I knew were going back and forth to Europe and LA and San Francisco and showing their work. So, it was just very important in the exposure and development of one's work.
- Barbara Clausen: And I guess also your work with David Ross, who also brought your work to Cologne in 1974 to the German context, but also

before that you were in Italy and obviously he was also very familiar with your video works and your practice all along the seventies.

Joan Jonas: Yeah, that's true.

Kristin Poor: Joan, I have one slightly tangential question, but just thinking about you working on the west coast, I wonder if you could speak a bit about working at Crown Point Press and, in general, printmaking for you?

Joan Jonas: Well, yeah, it was really a lot of fun, shall I say. And Crown Point Press, Kathan Brown really purposely worked with several artists who were not painters or necessarily. And she was interested in how they might use the medium of printmaking. So I really enjoyed that, I have to say, and I'd love to do more, but—

Kristin Poor: Was that your first experience collaborating with a printer like that?

Joan Jonas: Yeah, they're etchings, I think etchings. Yeah, I love doing it. It was great. And I was doing that at the same time as I was doing the show, by the way. No, I guess I did those prints before. Yeah, I did.

Kristin Poor: And then, when you came back to New York, were you interested in finding another printer to work with?

Joan Jonas: Well, I would have been interested. I regret that I wasn't, that I didn't push it a bit more. Maybe I would now if I could.

Barbara Clausen: Especially also drawing, I feel like this show, when you look at these photographs of the installation, one really gets a sense of how important drawing, printmaking, of course, and then some are painting, but really drawing is in your practice.

Joan Jonas: It is from the very beginning. I was drawing before I began doing performances, but I just wanted to bring it into my work. So it comes into every piece in some way or another and different forms, and different techniques, and mediums and so on. And it's like an everyday practice for me.

Barbara Clausen: Was that notion of everyday practice of drawing, also something that plays out in your notebooks?

Joan Jonas: No, that was more like a keeping notes every day, with making little drawings. It's very different. Now I'm actually making

drawings. I'm making drawings and working with watercolor, but I don't see it as a major... I'm not sure where that will lead right now. It's a way of keeping my hand in and I've included some of these in my show, with Gavin Brown.

Joan Jonas: It's a way of keeping my hand in the drawing and developing ways of drawing. You have to keep drawing in order to... For me, it's like practicing piano. You have to keep practicing or you lose the touch. So at that time I was really drawing, but I didn't say it's everyday activity, but I was writing in my notebook a lot and making little diagrams and drawings in the notebooks.

Barbara Clausen: And your drawing practice is something you also do now every day. Now, it's really something that accompanies you all the time.

Joan Jonas: Yes, I continue. Yeah.

Barbara Clausen: Joan, I have now one more question going back to the exhibition. And that is sound, because we realized as we've gone along with the Joan Jonas Knowledge Base, we've realized what an important role sound plays for you. Not just in work collaborating with musicians and composers, or when you set up a show like in Milan where this overlapping of sound takes such a role. So of course I have to ask you, do you have any memory of, if and how sound played a role in that Berkeley show?

Joan Jonas: Well, sound played a role in that each piece had its own sound, which was evident in the performances. And as I remember, of course sound... And so there's always sound, and I always consider sound as an important part of the work. And it alters the image. It adds another dimension and it's simply something I'm interested in. And then in the *Double Lunar Dogs* performance, I used the whole space and I had live performers on instruments.

Joan Jonas: Barney Bailey was the guy who helped me a lot with the sound, and we had people making sound in all the ramps above the audience's heads, and so on. So I really worked a lot with sound.

Barbara Clausen: I guess, sound really also became something—if I understand it right, if I think of Milan, and now I'm really jumping several decades—to work with the space, almost like—

Joan Jonas: I always considered sound from the very beginning as partly coming from the space and, as part of the space. Like in the outdoor work, sound of course was one of the major



components and concept of those outdoor pieces. So, it's always been important. Yeah. The sound idea was what Douglas was writing about in "De-Synchronization..."

Barbara Clausen:

Yes, absolutely. Well, any more questions or comments?

Kristin Poor:

One final question. Just because we have been, in addition to *Organic Honey*, focusing on *Mirage*. I noticed that in, again, this installation schedule, of course you perform *Mirage* in the theater. And then there was some reference to moving *Mirage* into the Gallery B spaces. Do you remember including any props or other materials from *Mirage* in this exhibition? It doesn't seem to be in any of the photographs?

Joan Jonas:

Well, no, because I think those prints I made at Crown Point, are the only reference to images from *Mirage*. But *Mirage* really depended on video. And I don't think at that time I was showing videos of *Mirage* in the way I do now at all. So *Mirage* is an installation that I worked on slowly over the years to develop.

Kristin Poor:

Okay, great. Thank you. That clears up that question.

Joan Jonas:

Yeah.

Barbara Clausen:

Thank you. I think now we've asked you everything we've ever wanted to know about Berkeley.

Joan Jonas:

I have a feeling I'm not going to have more to say, we don't have to do this over again.

Barbara Clausen:

No. This is perfect.

Kristin Poor:

So interesting. Thank you, Joan.

Barbara Clausen:

Thank you so much, Joan.

Joan Jonas:

Thank you.

Barbara Clausen:

Thank you.

*This transcript is intended to provide an accessible form of interview audio content. It has been edited for factual accuracy and clarity. Any alterations are noted with brackets.*