

Nefeli Skarnea interviewed by Barbara Clausen, Kristin Poor, and Tracy Robinson, September 17, 2020

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<http://artistarchives.hosting.nyu.edu/JJKB/nefeli-skarnea-interview-september-2020/>

Kristin Poor: Today is September 17th, 2020. I am Kristin Poor and I'm here with Barbara Clausen and Tracy Robinson from the Joan Jonas Knowledge Base. And today we're speaking with Nefeli Skarnea, who we are very pleased to have join us today. Thank you. Nefeli, we're hoping to start with having you tell us about how you met Joan and when and how you started working with her.

Nefeli Skarnea: Hi everyone. It's really a pleasure to be with you here today. And to think back at the process we had with Joan when we were restaging several of her early performance pieces. So how I met Joan. I met Joan in 2012. It was in Kassel during Documenta. Joan was showing an installation in the Aue [Karlsaue] Park. It was Documenta 13 and I joined her only at the last few days of Documenta while she was restaging... She was actually not restaging, but staging for the first time, one version of *Reanimation*, which was a stage work she did together with Jason Moran, a jazz musician and a famous improviser in this piece. I joined her at that time. When I started working at Documenta, I was doing my internship while studying in Leipzig on a curatorial Masters.

Nefeli Skarnea: I used to be a dancer. So due to my background in dance and experience in the theatrical setting, I was given to take care and to manage and to produce and to collaborate with different artists who were involved in Documenta with performance work. So *Reanimation* was one of the projects I had to assist with and produce. And basically what happened was that in preparation of the staged piece, I met Joan in the theater which was a disused cinema that we revived for this performance. And we started rehearsing together and I naturally started talking with her about the work in the same way we do when we work in theater or in dance when we rehearse.

Nefeli Skarnea: And I started talking to her about the dramaturgy of the work, about her movement on stage. And she said to me, "Well, so you used to be a dancer. Maybe you could actually stand on stage for me, and I can see what I look like." And so this was the moment that something really clicked. And I had never seen work like that before. I will tell you more about *Reanimation* in a minute. And it was really fascinating for me to be with Joan on and off stage. And I would take her place on stage and I would use her

movements and her props, and become her for a few moments so that she could see the work she was preparing from the outside. Because as she was in it all the time, she couldn't have an overview of the work apart from making a video and seeing a video, but it wasn't the same in the making.

Nefeli Skarmea:

So in this moment, something really clicked between us and she always talks about this moment also. But something happened and we connected forever, and I feel I could really help her and she could really use the experience I had in theater and in dance. So maybe I will already go back to talk about *Reanimation* and why this work really fascinated me. So my track as a dancer had been...I had quite a linear, let's say, career where I studied ballet, I studied contemporary dance, and then I started dancing with different companies of contemporary dance in Germany and in England, in Switzerland. Let's say in central Europe, more or less. And my experience was really in contemporary dance, in dance theater, in abstract dance, in conceptual dance, in different types of theatrical staged choreography.

Nefeli Skarmea:

And only in the latest years of my career, I started being more interested in more conceptual types of choreographic practices. And I was always very interested in visual arts and that's also why at the end of my dance career, I decided to study curating because I was really interested in this part, in this discipline that was created between dance and visual arts which I will just call now "extended choreographic practices," just for general understanding. And I was very interested in this part where the dance leaves the theater in the traditional theatrical setting and due to the change of space, becomes something else. It has a different relationship to the audience. It has a different relationship to the performer. And everything for me while I was discovering this area, between the disciplines really fascinated me, it was very new for me. It produced knowledge in new ways, and it was a space for me that thinking as a dancer, as a performer, took new ways. And when I-

Kristin Poor:

And this is how you came to Documenta?

Nefeli Skarmea:

And this is how I came to Documenta. So I started studying in 2011, at the end of 2011... I had been to Documenta ten years earlier, in 2002. And that had also formed my interest in visual arts, in these new directions in dance and choreography that I described. And I also started doing more research in contemporary dance, in postmodern dance, in conceptual dance that in the early 2000s it was very, very active, very, very present in Berlin. And so in 2011, I became aware that a new Documenta, the next Documenta, was coming up and I did some

research, and I saw that they were looking for interns so I applied.

Nefeli Skarmea:

And one month later, I moved to Kassel and I started on an internship that was very intense, very interesting. We worked about sixteen hours a day, minimum, and it was really a huge experience for me. It was really a big experience for me. But just to go back to Joan, and the fact that we met during Documenta, this was also a time where I felt that my own practice was changing, and it was a very interesting time to start working with visual artists. And from then on, I almost exclusively worked with visual artists. So this was quite a big shift in my own career.

Kristin Poor:

That's interesting. And so how did you go from working on *Reanimation* with Joan to the next project? What was that, that you did with her?

Nefeli Skarmea:

So after Documenta, I stayed in touch with Joan but only on a personal level, on a private level. And then only a little while later in 2017/18, I was contacted by Catherine Wood at Tate, who were...they were planning a big retrospective of her work at Tate, which was curated by Andrea Lissoni, their film curator, who is now at Haus der Kunst in Munich. And Catherine Wood was curating the performances that were alongside this exhibition. And Catherine was interested in staging as much work as possible. She was interested in staging *Mirror Piece*, which actually had been done in 2010 in Sweden, in a let's say, an early version. So for *Mirror Piece*, there was already a kind of score.

Nefeli Skarmea:

She was also interested in staging *Delay Delay*, which was a piece that hadn't been done since the late sixties, early seventies. And a version of it, let's say, existed as a video piece. It had been done in several versions back then, but only photographs existed. And this is an important point. For Joan, at that time, documentation of performances was not an interesting aspect of the process because video was only used if a video work was to be created, but not to document a performance. So the only elements we had to recreate the piece [were] photographs, memories, of Joan, which obviously...we're talking about fifty years later. So things must have also changed in her mind. And writings. Texts, writings, other ways of remembering elements of the performances.

Nefeli Skarmea:

She also staged *Mirage*, which is a solo piece, and also had not been done since the late sixties. And she also staged a lecture performance together with Jason Moran, where they talk about their practice. And they talk and they show, and they experiment

and improvise together. So you can imagine that not only [did] she have to prepare for the exhibition, for a large retrospective, but she also had to take care of five pieces, which were massive. *Mirror Piece* is a piece with fifteen performers. That is quite a big piece for a theater production. The same amount of dancers, performers were used for *Delay Delay*. So we actually made the cast for *Mirror Piece*, and we used the same group of performers for *Delay Delay*.

Kristin Poor:

Did you do the casting, or was that something you did in collaboration with Joan? How did that process work?

Nefeli Skarmea:

So I did the casting. It was done in collaboration with Joan in the sense that we discussed in advance what kind of people we were looking for. It was clear that we would want to work with some professional dancers because that would make the work easier for them to understand and to incorporate faster. Because in London, we work in very quick rhythm. So if you could do the piece in two days, you could, but for that piece, we actually needed three to four weeks to stage both pieces. But it was a process which I finally did on my own in London with people I knew through the dancing, with people that were suggested to me, with performance artists, visual artists, musicians, actors. So we try to mix people from different disciplines. However, we had a big percentage of professional dancers because we really thought that this would help form the group and make them incorporate the movement easier and faster, in a better way.

Barbara Clausen:

This is so interesting because, if I'm not incorrect, I think Joan has always partly worked also with professional dancers in her early pieces. There have always been trained, and not-so-much-trained people.

Nefeli Skarmea:

I think it was always a mixture. Yeah. There was always a mix of people. For example in the video of *Delay Delay*, which is called—

Kristin Poor:

*Songdelay*.

Nefeli Skarmea:

*Songdelay*. Thank you. There is, for example, Steve Paxton performing in the piece, but there's also visual artists and there's people that were around Joan at the time and were interested to be part of the work. And it was a very much...I mean, she always talks about this very fascinating period where the borders between traditional forms were breaking down and there was really an intense exchange between people from different disciplines. And that's, I think, how all these forms

flourished in that period. So, do you want to ask me something else so that, to lead a little bit—

Kristin Poor:

Yes. So can you tell us about this... This is all so interesting, thank you. We would love to hear about really the nitty gritty of the process of reconstructing these works. So how was it that you went back to the photographic documentation of *Delay Delay* and of *Mirror Piece*? What was it like to look at the old scripts and what kinds of notes and things was Joan able to find to help jog her memory and help you with the process? Just some of those details would be really great to hear.

Nefeli Skarmea:

Yeah, of course. So first of all, one thing that, for *Mirror Piece*, made our life easier was that she had already reconstructed the piece in Sweden in 2010. And according to that reconstruction, she had created a score, which I have here, and which can be shared. So she has created an A4 with a score of the piece, which looks completely different with the way I would have scored a piece. So Joan with her way of drawing and imagining and making an overview of things, she put everything on an A4. I mean, for a dancer, a performer, a choreographer, this is pretty much impossible. My notes are several pages long and each scene has a separate page almost. So for me to make sense of the movements of the, let's say, sections and transitions between each scene, I had to do almost a book. And it's fascinating that Joan did it on an A4. I love this.

Kristin Poor :

And is she using her own notation there?

Nefeli Skarmea:

It's just very simple drawings. We see mostly the mirrors, and how the mirrors move, because actually this is the idea of the piece. The piece is like a deconstruction of the space, a deconstruction of the bodies through and via the mirrors, a deconstruction of the image of the public in the mirrors. The way the people see themselves reflected both the performers and the public and how the public becomes part of what is...of the space, of the stage, through their reflection in the mirrors. So basically the mirrors are the protagonists in this piece. And so you can see little rectangles that are moving in space and going from one formation to another on this notation that she has created. And then there are of course little numbers and arrows, but the main thing we see are the thirteen to fifteen mirrors.

Nefeli Skarmea:

And what was interesting was that Joan came to me and she said, "Yes, we did this reconstruction in Sweden, which was...there was a video documentation." And for me, this was really helpful because as a performer of stage pieces, I am very used to work[ing] with video. And then we look at videos, we

mirror them and then we..."mirror them." There comes the mirror again. And we're able to stage them easily by learning the movements that we see on a documentation. But then she also said to me, "Look, there are some moments that I have in my mind that were never put on stage yet from back then, and I can show them to you in photos."

Nefeli Skarmea:

And so she showed me some photographs where parts of the performance that she wanted to incorporate had not yet been used. And she said, "yeah, it would be great actually, if this scene could be part of it and if that scene could be part of it." So me looking at the images, I started creating sequences of how these moments could be incorporated in the performance. And because *Mirror Piece* already had a structure, it was not very difficult to restage it. So I learned the piece from the video, I worked on it with the performers, and then we incorporated these new scenes, which in some cases we kept them as I proposed them. In some cases, Joan saw them and said, "oh, well, this is good, but it would be better if it was more to the right or more to the backstage," or "this scene should be faster."

Nefeli Skarmea:

Then there were things on the dramaturgy of the work, on which we worked together, and just refined them. Now, *Delay Delay* was a completely different situation because there was no video documentation that was recent. There was the video, but the video is very fragmented. There is no understanding of a... Well, there is a dramaturgy of the video work but there is no understanding of a theatrical dramaturgy at all. And on top of that, we were staging *Delay Delay* on the two sides of the Thames, which is a river with very strong tide. So we had to find the moments when the two beaches on both sides of the river were visible and less dangerous than other times for the performers. Because the tide comes up very fast and it's incredible.

Nefeli Skarmea:

So we had to time our performances according to the tide, which was a beautiful realization in [the] moment, as we know where the works of Joan are very influenced by nature, very inspired by nature, very inspired by natural phenomena. So the fact that we had to coordinate ourselves with the tide, with the moon, with performing on different times of the day, was somehow very logical, very fitting to the work. But at the same time, it was complex, because on one hand, at first we could rehearse indoors. So we could rehearse in The Tanks of the Tate, where we also staged *Mirror Piece*. So we had this huge, beautiful space where we could rehearse. But eventually we had to really rehearse outdoors because the theme of the piece is about the

sound delaying most of the time, what we see and what we hear and the space between the two.

Nefeli Skarmea:

And so to make sense of the piece, we had to really try it with the distance. And that was not easy, because imagine trying to give a comment to someone who is on the other side of the river and constantly trying to talk with these notes and ideas, and changes on the script and on the score from the other side of the river. So the group of the performers was split in two more or less. So half of the group was on this side, on the side of the Tate and the other group on the other side, on the side of St. Paul's Cathedral. Which made a beautiful scenery, but also it gave us a lot of issues to solve during the process that were very practical.

Nefeli Skarmea:

So we had the walkie talkies that were sometimes working, sometimes not. We were calling each other on our phones, and we were... It was very interesting and also, at first, very, very difficult. Because when Joan...so the very first... I wouldn't call it the reconstruction yet, it was the very first composition. When she saw the very first composition, she was completely disappointed and she was completely... She was very disappointed about the very first draft, let's say. It was nothing like what she remembered but she remembered something that was done on a beach fifty years ago, or in New York City, in the empty grounds by the river. Just a very very, completely different scenery. And so we slowly had to work from that very first draft to the premiere, to the very first performance.

Kristin Poor:

And where were the movements coming from? You mentioned the film version, *Songdelay*, and then there's the photographs, of course. And were there other materials that you were looking at to—

Nefeli Skarmea:

Yeah. So similarly, I learned the sequences from the film and I taught this to the performers. And when Joan joined us with our rehearsals, she guided us a little bit more specifically to what she remembered each sequence was about. Because what I could offer was a little bit... Let's say, the movements, a little bit disconnected, let's say. I just learned what I could visually see. I could also understand a little bit more about the atmosphere of the piece, but firstly, I just learned the movements, let's say, dry, as we call it in choreography. Dry movement, which would then be put in a context. And so I learned the movement from the video.

Nefeli Skarmea:

I looked at photographs also. Joan told me what the photographs were about because I couldn't see the movement

obviously in the photographs, but just still images, and I imagined things. And then there were also texts that were being performed. There was a dialogue between the two sides. There were sounds that we understand in the film, but then when we put them in live, they were functioning differently. So we had to adjust and shift things. And the final composition of the piece, this was done completely by Joan in the last week before the first performance. So she just took all the pieces of the material and she put them together. And then that's where the magic happens. It's Joan, of course, she knows what she wants. She knows how to make it. And she always comes up with brilliant ideas.

Nefeli Skarmea:

I mean, this is what she is. And always, when things were stuck, and we would work on them this way, the other way, the other way, then Joan would come and say, "you know what, we're going to do it like that." And it worked. So obviously this is her work and she's the one who has the clearest vision on it. And of course I worked technically on the details, but she's the one who puts it really together. And I forgot to mention actually that we staged one more piece. We staged *Mirror Check*, which is the solo where one performer, a female performer, holds a mirror and scans her whole body. It's a ten-minute solo, which was also shown at Tate.

Barbara Clausen:

And which also, Nefeli, is important because it actually was always at the beginning of all the *Organic Honey* performances.

Nefeli Skarmea:

Yes.

Barbara Clausen:

That would be the intro or the prologue.

Nefeli Skarmea:

That is correct. I mean, we see over the years that a lot of the materials, a lot of the textures, the ideas are being reused and recycled and reinvented and recomposed in different pieces. And if you look at *Mirror Piece*, I would say it's one of the more minimal pieces of Joan. While later when I saw *Reanimation*, it's a very layered piece where a million things are happening on stage and there is drawing and there is instruments. And she plays and there is a piano and there is music and there is video. There is the overhead projector where there is the live feed and we see what she does with her hands, but we also see how she's painting on the surface of the overhead, it's very complex. It's super complex. It's a very different kind of piece altogether. And when I saw them, the *Mirror Pieces* and *Mirror Check*, I realized that it's very different periods of her work.



Barbara Clausen:

I was also wondering Nefeli if you could tell us a bit about your impression or your thinking around how the Italian context in the early seventies... The performances we look at the Joan Jonas Knowledge Base, specifically *Organic Honey*, *Mirage*, were actually performed for the first time in Italy in the early seventies. Do you... In this European context, and also *Delay Delay*, of course. And so I was wondering if you have any thoughts on that kind of influence, or is there something that she speaks about that was important for her? Do you know anything about this being an important time for her?

Nefeli Skarmea:

I am not sure, to be honest. One thing that we always talk about also with the performers is more that...perhaps because we work a lot with dancers, often, but it is more the postmodern dance in New York. That was a very important time of exchange in her life. She talks about... It is the feminist movement that is very active then, it's the time of the Vietnam War. It is the time of...all these people from different disciplines coming together and exchanging in a unique, new way. And that is really the period that we mostly talk about. She would go to see and discuss with people like Yvonne Rainer and Trisha Brown. And Steve Paxton, like I mentioned was in her video, *Songdelay*, and it's the time of Lucinda Childs, and Simone Forti, who is a friend of hers.

Nefeli Skarmea:

And she also always talks about Simone as someone who gave her a lot of inspiration. And she would always ask her, "but Simone, how do you do that?" And Simone always tells her, "it's just a matter of practice, Joan." So for example when I saw her restaging *Mirage*, after all these years at Tate and she was rehearsing this incredible scene of the volcano where she's actually jogging in front of the volcano for about eight to ten minutes. And I'm thinking, "Joan, how are you going to do this?" And she said, "well, Simone always says, just practice." And so she would just practice.

Nefeli Skarmea:

And that's what we also did for *Delay Delay*, when we saw that it was not easy to bring it together and to make the dancers understand the performance, understand how to make the two sides of the river communicate. But we just practice and practice and practice and it came to life and it was beautiful. And even though Joan was really not sure to manage, to stage so many pieces for the exhibition at Tate, in the end she was very happy to have been challenged like that. And she was very happy that Catherine Wood had put her into this challenge to put all these live pieces together. And it's true. I think we were all very happy to see them from photographs becoming real because a lot of us had only seen them in the books of art history.

- Tracy Robinson: Can you speak about the documentation at the Tate and how these performances were documented? Is there a score for *Delay Delay* now?
- Nefeli Skarmea: So now these performances have been documented like we document choreographic pieces or theater pieces. So we have video material from them. And then the Tate piece became our main archive to restage the piece again. So because we did it then at... I went to Mount Holyoke College, which is the college where Joan studied a very long time ago. And there I staged *Mirror Piece* with the students, which were not at all dance students. Most of them were doing things that have nothing to do with movement at all. And it was great to see that it's possible to also have these aesthetics back on stage that are not the trained dance body.
- Nefeli Skarmea: And just to go back to your question, we use now this archive, if we want to perform the piece again. And the piece was also performed in Serralves, at the museum in Porto, which was also very, very interesting because we did a stage version and an outdoor version. And the outdoor version was done in an old tennis court in the middle of the Serralves Park, which is the park in which the museum is located. And in that version, in the mirrors, we would look at the nature around this old tennis court and the sky. So this was, again, a completely new way to look at the piece and what it meant and what was reflected in the mirrors. But also to say that initially *Mirror Piece* was performed in a park. So it went back to its even more original format, let's say.
- Kristin Poor: And so this archive... Is your understanding of it, this will be the resource for anyone who wants to do these performances in the future, or is this the immediate material that you were working with? How do you see these continuing on in the future?
- Nefeli Skarmea: Well, I think that if *Mirror Piece* would be staged again, it can be staged with the help of video, but it needs to be recreated in collaboration with Joan or with someone else like me. At the moment, I am responsible for *Mirror Piece* and there was a conversation for Tate to acquire the piece. And so if the piece is done again, I will have to be there to cast the performers and teach the piece and continue perhaps to also evolve the piece as long as this is something of interest to Joan.
- Kristin Poor: And *Mirage* is one of our case studies for the JJKB. And I know you weren't as directly involved with it, but it would be great if you have any perspective on the process of putting that together

at the Tate. If you know anything about the rehearsal process, the reconstruction, anything you can share with us.

Nefeli Skarmea:

So, it's true I was not very involved, but I was there for the rehearsals and I watched a few rehearsals. So Joan used notes that she had from the past, from the original version. And she also worked together with her assistant at the time who flew over to London and she remembered a lot of how the things looked. So she was there to remind her how things could... Of course you can remember, maybe, the separate scenes, but what is harder to remember in being on stage is the transitions. And the transitions are very important but they are not as natural as the actual scenes. So the transitions, maybe it's the thing we work most on in theater. After all, actual things are more clear of what's going to happen, but what's going to happen between the scenes...

Nefeli Skarmea:

That's a real craft. And one of the things that really struck Joan while she was rehearsing for the piece, it was that she presents... Some of the videos that she made at the time are presented in their original form. And so she is in the videos there as a young woman and when she was performing *Mirage* back then, it was the same person in the video and on stage. And of course now it's still the same person on video and on stage, but it is fifty years later. So it's very interesting to see the younger Joan and the older Joan at once, which was not part of the original piece. So it is put in a different atmosphere and in a different context. And then well, yes, the other fascinating story was the story I already described about the scene of the volcano where she's running in front of the screen, of the projected image and she's inside the projected image. So we see her as part of the projection and she's truly jogging. I don't know how it's possible, but yes, she was amazing.

Kristin Poor:

As for an extended duration, you really felt the length of that moment.

Nefeli Skarmea:

Yes. And it is a long piece. And I think not only for Joan in her age, but for anyone putting on stage a one-hour piece, a one-hour-twenty piece, solo, is hard work. It's not easy. So I think it was a big achievement to actually bring this piece back and a very enriching part of the program.

Kristin Poor:

From your experience now, doing this with Joan, do you have any advice or thoughts about people who might want to restage a performance by her in the future? Important considerations to keep in mind, cautions or other concerns that you think are really important to keep in mind?

Nefeli Skarnea:

That's an interesting question. I can only imagine reworking pieces of Joan with her being present. Her ideas and her presence are so valuable. And she's so clear in what she wants, in what the piece needs. In the meantime, I do have also an understanding and also in the parts that let's say I proposed to be part of the pieces when they were staged. Even though we agreed I couldn't have taken the final decision without her. So yes, I don't know. I think it's definitely important that she's around and she's aware of any reproductions, restagings of her work. And together we also understood quite well how to find the right performers, what kind of people are interesting to be seen in the work. I understood also well about the aesthetics that she's interested in, how the performers are not... It's not a theatrical piece even though we're doing it on stage. Her pieces are not theatrical... Or they're theatrical in a non-theatrical way because as she comes from visual arts and as she has been influenced by this more pedestrian aesthetics of postmodernists in dance, the performer is really... Without saying that the performer can be themselves, it's just that the performer doesn't need to perform.

Nefeli Skarnea:

So the performance is not in a certain state or something. The performer is almost like a tool, almost like a prop without objectifying the performer. And I'm saying this also because for one of the performances, I had to jump in for one of the performers who couldn't do it. So I suddenly was really on stage and it was natural for me to be there but at the same time, I realized that I was just being myself. There is no theatrical expression in the face. There is narration, but it's not linear. The people that are watching the performance, we look at them... There is this questioning of the fourth wall. There is no fourth wall, we are all in the same space. So there is all these ideas that question the traditional format of theater, which is also what really interests me in this work. And I think it's very important that this is understood when trying to stage a piece by Joan, because we talk about staging them. And at the same time, they shouldn't be too staged.

Tracy Robinson:

How has working with Joan impacted your own work as an artist?

Nefeli Skarnea:

So first of all, I wouldn't call me very much an artist. As a dancer, I've been...interpreting my whole career, I haven't created my own work. That doesn't mean I haven't been creative but I also don't see myself really directly as an artist, and with Joan I have been calling myself a movement director or a rehearsal director depending on the occasion. I've also been a producer of her work and a curatorial assistant. So I'm kind of between roles and

jumping from one to another. But it's true that, like I mentioned in the beginning, it really opened up a new world for me. And since then I worked... Also because I was in that stage in my career, perhaps, but I didn't want to go on stage and just roll around the floor and do very physical work and use lots of energy and break my body and all that. I was really interested in this new window that opened through the work of visual artists. And since then, I exclusively worked with visual artists from that moment on, because it created a new way of thinking about dance for me. And I don't know if it is more interesting but it's definitely at that time, it was more interesting for me. I hope that answers your question.

Barbara Clausen:

Thank you so much for sharing all this really rich information for us. I think this is going to be so important also for other artists and writers and researchers, conservators, curators to listen to you. I was wondering if you could maybe share with us... I mean, obviously you're in touch with Joan Jonas. But maybe is there a question that you would have for the artist? Is there something that you think is particularly important for, maybe not just us now, here, as the JKB team, but perhaps for future curators who want to work with Joan on a performance or for other performers who would join? Is there a question that you think is important to ask? Or is there advice you would like to share?

Nefeli Skarnea:

I don't know if I have a question directly for Joan. I always like to find out from her what is important for her in the work. But sometimes this not only in the work, we talk also about life and that is also the work or the work is life. And there is an exchange between the two all the time. And so it's good to try to understand, I think for... Let's say for me as a curator, it's important to understand what is really important to try not to make importance out of things that are popular in curating right now. We talk about, oh okay...and so how to connect different parts of knowledge that maybe are not so important for the artists, but we curators, we try to sometimes make things out of nowhere and to make things more important [than] they are, or to trick the artist into something that they never thought about or they don't care.

Nefeli Skarnea:

And so I think it's still interesting to find out what the artist genuinely wants or finds important and stay with that. Don't overdramatize things. I'm glad you say that this is... The painting behind me is a dog because I'm always thinking it's a wild animal. And this is actually one of the paintings that...comes from *Reanimation*, it's one of the paintings that Joan does on stage. And where she holds a piece of paper in front of her, and then she paints it on her body or she paints it on the floor and

there is drops falling from other brushes that she uses for another drawing.

Nefeli Skarmea: And so I always think this is a big wild animal and you said, "ah, what's the dog behind you?" And so I think it's interesting to think about how we would change things inside our head. And Joan is also very clear about what is important to her. And it's always fascinating to listen to that and exchange about what is important for us, and always be in this conversation with her in as honest way as possible and not get carried away by what's happening in the market or in curatorial influences, et cetera.

Barbara Clausen: Absolutely. I think if we don't have any more questions, Tracy, Kristin, would you still have a question or are we good?

Kristin Poor: I feel like this is a great way to end what's been a really wonderful and informative interview. Thank you so much.

Tracy Robinson: Yes. Thank you.

Barbara Clausen: Thank you so much Nefeli.

Nefeli Skarmea: I'm really honored and very flattered to have this conversation with you. And I hope it will be useful.