



PRESS RELEASE
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TATE MODERN

Joan Jonas

14 March – 5 August 2018

Tate Modern

Adult £18.50 (without donation £16.80). Concession £16.50 (without donation £15)

Open daily 10.00 – 18.00 and until 22.00 on Friday and Saturday

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Next spring, Tate Modern will present the largest survey of Joan Jonas's work in the UK. Jonas (b. 1936, New York) is regarded as a pre-eminent figure in performance art who continues to influence a younger generation of artists. Reflecting the way Jonas works across many different disciplines, this groundbreaking survey will be the first of its kind at Tate, combining a gallery exhibition, a ten day live performance programme in the Tanks which will feature live performances by Jonas herself, and a film retrospective in the Starr Cinema. It will show her powerful impact on contemporary art and her dedication to pushing boundaries to this day.

The immersive exhibition at Tate Modern will celebrate Jonas's astounding contribution over five decades, uniting some of the most important pieces from across her remarkable career. Early and late works will sit alongside each other, reflecting Jonas's interest in revisiting her own history as can be seen in *Cones/May Windows (After Mirage)* – an installation originally created in 1976 which she re-made in 2011. Early works will include the iconic video *Organic Honey's Visual Telepathy* 1972 which explores female identity via the artist's sexualised alter-ego, while recent installations will include *Reanimation* 2010/13 and *Stream or River, Flight or Pattern* 2016-17 which broach the issues of climate change and animal extinction – subjects that are central to Jonas's current practice.

Jonas originally trained as a sculptor but quickly began experimenting with performance art, video and props after meeting influential choreographers Trisha Brown and Yvonne Rainer in the 1960s. Her revolutionary early practice in New York's downtown arts scene would inspire a generation of performance artists and thinkers. A unique display of photographs by her contemporaries including Richard Serra and Peter Campus will illustrate this seminal moment in performance art history. Tate Modern will also reveal a range of important items from Jonas's personal collections, such as masks, crystals and items collected on her travels, which have inspired or featured in her work.

Key themes from Jonas's five decades of performance will be explored, from her use of sound to the influence of Japanese noh theatre. Her passion for story-telling will be seen in works such as *The Juniper Tree* 1976/1994, in which Jonas uses 29 wooden balls, a ladder, a kimono and more to retell a Brothers Grimm fairytale about an evil stepmother and her family. A later installation and performance created for Documenta 11, *Lines in the Sand* 2002, reworks the myth of Helen of Troy to reference contemporary political events.

In addition to this exhibition of installations and video works, Jonas will be the subject of this year's *BMW Tate Live Exhibition* – an innovative ten day programme of live performance art in the Tanks. Jonas herself will perform some of her most famous works such as *Mirror Pieces* 1968-71 alongside works by close collaborators. A specially curated selection of Jonas's influential film works will be screened in the Starr Cinema in May, adding a third dimension to Tate Modern's long-awaited survey of this performance art pioneer.

Joan Jonas will be curated in close collaboration with the artist by Andrea Lissoni, Senior Curator of International Art (Film), Tate Modern and Julienne Lorz, Curator, Haus der Kunst, Munich with Monika Bayer-Wermuth, Assistant Curator, Tate Modern. The exhibition will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue and a programme of talks and events in the gallery. The show will tour to Haus der Kunst, Munich, in 2018.

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