



Mirror Piece I

By Joan Jonas



Artist: Joan Jonas

Size: 40 x 22 1/4 inches (101.6 x 56.5 cm)

Medium: Chromogenic print

Joan Jonas born in New York, who is one of the pioneering forces in body art, performance, and video art. Besides these, there are many artworks of hers provide the foundation of video art.

This artwork is one of a series of works that Joan Jonas began in the late 1960s. This is a rare document that shot by the artist herself. A performer in this artwork holds the mirror towards the camera. In the mirror, it reflects legs and grass. The actual legs connect with the reflection of the legs, in order to form a new shape in the artwork. This artwork is in the context of grass and this is a representative work of the mirror collection because others are in the form of performing art.

Joan Jonas studied art history and sculpture at Columbia University, but she wants to develop her own language. She really likes to relate her works to nature.



This is a photo during a performance, which is related to the Mirror Piece I

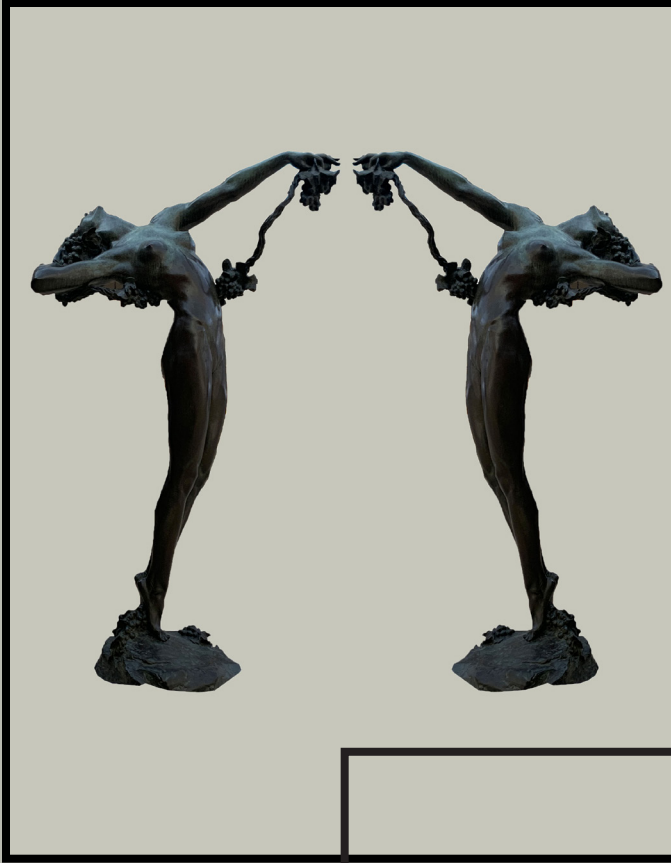


Joan Jonas shot a part of the body and replicate it in the mirror, in order to create an uncanny, almost Surrealist form. She uses performing art to interact with her audiences. The mirror is the main tool to create an unsettling feeling when audiences look at themselves.



Nowadays, people really like to post selfies on social media. These pictures look perfect after doing some photoshop. But when you look at yourself in the mirror, Is this person with an unwashed face in pajama a real you, or the person with fancy makeup and well-designed clothing?





Jorge Luis Borges
"Mirrors," in *Dreamtigers*,
Mildred Boyer
and Harold Morland, tr.
[1960]
(Austin: University of
Texas Press, 1964), pp.
60–61.
Copyright 1964, renewed
1992.

But of gazing even on water that mimics
The other blue in its depth of sky,
That at times gleams back the illusory flight
Of the inverted bird, or that ripples

And in front of the silent surface
Of subtle ebony whose polish shows
Like a repeating dream the white
Of something marble or something rose,

Today at the tip of so many and perplexing
Wandering ears under the varying moon,
I ask myself what whim of fate
Made me so fearful of a glancing mirror.



Joan Jonas chose a nature background in order to compare the unreal world, like the fake world on social media. By holding the mirror by herself, it will be more impressive from this angle. The naked legs can easily associate with sex.

Start from.
poem. (Mirror)

↓
narcissism ↓
 read self
 &
 fake self.

Material

- human body — naked
- mirror
- in the context of nature.

Mirror hold by herself or others?
Which part of the body?
naked or not?
angle → take the picture?

Mirror Piece
I



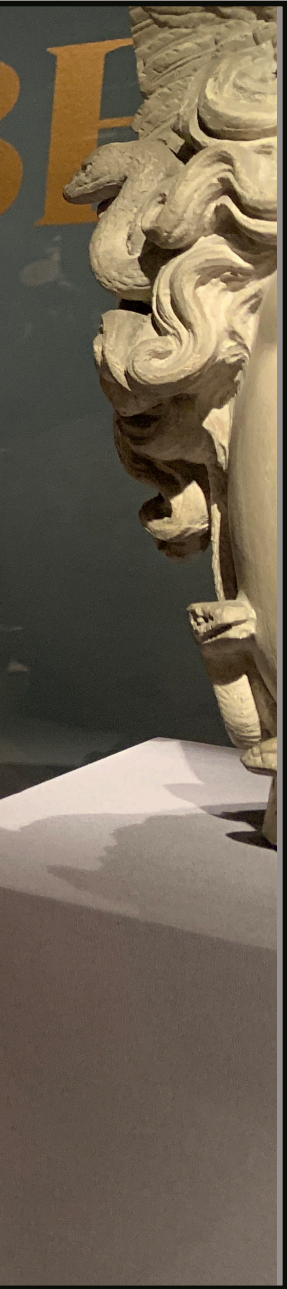
Interact with audience.
↑
part of the performing art.

fragment
female body
reflection.





Medusa in Greek mythology is a woman with snakes in place of hair. She is a really beautiful female but nobody can look at her eyes. Anyone who gazes at her eyes will immediately turn to stone. Therefore, a safe way to look at her is through reflection. Reflection is also presenting in the Mirror Piece I.





I think it will be interesting if hold a mirror in a public park to see the reaction of people walking by. In the park, it has a varied group of people, including children, teenagers, adults and elderly people. To capture some moments of different reactions.