



NTU CENTRE FOR
CONTEMPORARY
ART SINGAPORE

They Come to Us without a Word

Joan Jonas



NANYANG TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY



“We know what animals do and what beaver and bears and salmon and other creatures need, because once our men were married to them and they acquired this knowledge from their animal wives.”

(Hawaiian Indians quoted by Lévi-Strauss in *The Savage Mind*.)

— John Berger, *Why Look at Animals?* (1977)¹

“If you are going to tell me the story of the dandelion and the honeybee, John, I shall hit you. Lyrical poetry is the most disgusting drivel on earth, not excepting the theology. I'm going to bed . . .”

“When a dandelion calls to a bee with its scent to give it honey, and the bee goes off with the pollen from the flower and sows it somewhere far away—that I call a Super-communion. It would be remarkable if a more super communion could be established, even though intergalactic communications were put in order.”

— Halldór Laxness, *Under the Glacier* (1972)²

NOTES

1. John Berger, *Why Look at Animals?* (London: Penguin Books, 2009), 13.

2. Halldór Laxness, *Under the Glacier*, trans. Magnus Magnusson, 1972 (New York: Vintage International, 2005), 137.

Cover: Joan Jonas, *They Come to Us without a Word*, 2015. Production still. Courtesy of the artist.

They Come to Us without a Word

Joan Jonas

22 January–3 April 2016

Introduction

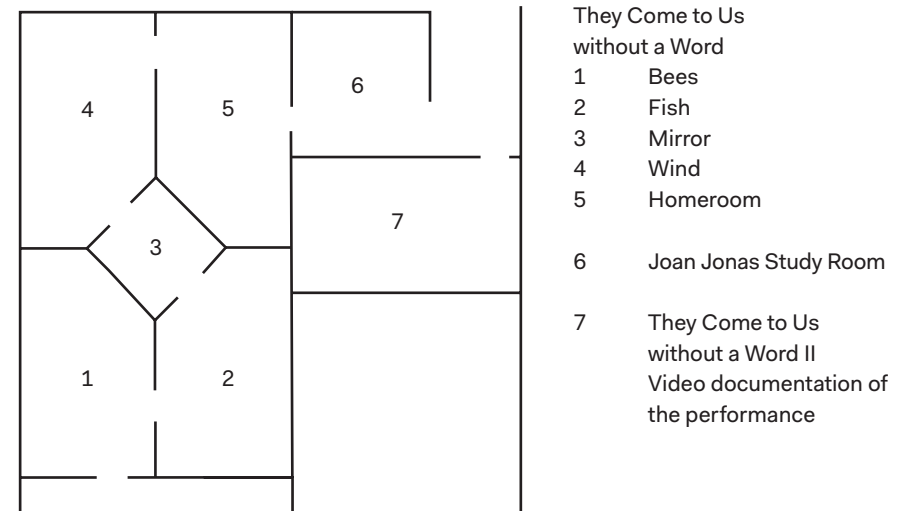
The NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore is honored to present *They Come to Us without a Word*, video and performance pioneer Joan Jonas's first large-scale exhibition in Singapore and Southeast Asia. *They Come to Us without a Word* was commissioned for the U.S. Pavilion, co-curated by Paul C. Ha and Ute Meta Bauer and presented by the MIT List Visual Arts Center at the 56th Venice Biennale. The U.S. Pavilion featuring Joan Jonas was awarded a Special Mention by the Jury. With this exhibition, Jonas evokes the fragility of nature, using her own poetic language to address the irreversible impact of human interference on the environmental equilibrium of our planet. Each room of the exhibition is dedicated to a particular creature (bees, fish), an object (mirror), force (wind), or place (the "homeroom"). Four rooms feature two videos each, one engaging with the central motif and the other a "ghost" narrative. Jonas developed these videos in a studio in Westbeth, New York in 2015 during a series of workshops with friends' children ranging in age from 5 to 16 years old. The children performed in front of video backdrops containing excerpts from Jonas's earlier works, as well as landscape footage shot in Nova Scotia, Canada, and Brooklyn, New York. In a fifth mirrored room full of reflections, crystal beads strung on a chandelier-like structure lie suspended from the middle of the ceiling, creating shadows that move all over the walls. The soundtrack includes songs by the Norwegian *Sami joik* artist Ánde Somby, and music by Jason Moran, while fragments of ghost stories sourced from the oral tradition of Cape Breton in Nova Scotia, the artist's longtime summer home, are part of a continuous narrative linking one room to the next. These spoken fragments function partly as a reference to what remains. Jonas states, "We are haunted, the rooms are haunted."

The simple screen stages installed by Jonas in the exhibition echo the structure used for the recording of the children's performances. Crystal-shaped wooden benches resembling giant chalk sticks invite us to sit and watch. An extensive series of drawings—of bees and fish, objects used in the videos, vitrines containing masks, notes, and other personal items of the artist—expand her installation to an immersive cosmos of which we become part when we enter the show. Kites created by a traditional Japanese kite maker in Kitakyushu, and beautifully colored by Jonas, remind us of a time full

of playful outdoor festivities. The customized light created by Jan Kroeze, renowned lighting designer and a longtime friend of the artist, suffuses the space with the magic of moonlight.

They Come to Us without a Word evolved out of Jonas's earlier work *Reanimation*, which was partly inspired by the writings of the Icelandic author and Nobel Laureate Halldór Laxness and his poetic portrayal of the natural world. Herself an accomplished writer, Jonas often takes inspiration from the writings of other artists. "Although the idea of my work involves the question of how the world is so rapidly and radically changing, I do not address the subject directly or didactically," says Jonas. "Rather, the ideas are implied poetically through sound, lighting, and the juxtaposition of images of children, animals, and landscape."

Jonas was first presented at the NTU CCA Singapore in 2014 with the video installation *Lines in the Sand*, featured in the exhibition *Theatrical Fields*.



Curatorial Remarks

They Come to Us without a Word, the project Joan Jonas created for the U.S. Pavilion at the 56th Venice Biennale in 2015, sums up six decades of work and a lifetime of experience. A pioneer in her early practice and experimentation, Jonas was inspired by her artist friends, the second-wave feminist movement, and SoHo, the neighborhood in New York City where she has lived and worked since the late 1960s.

When she arrived, SoHo was teeming with artists, who occupied raw loft spaces in still-active warehouses and used the abandoned piers on the Hudson River as open-air “studios.” Lofts offered space away from conservative museum politics and were home to small theaters and other arts entities. At venues and organizations such as the Living Theatre, Saint Mark’s Church in the Bowery, the Wooster Group, La MaMa, the Merce Cunningham Dance Company, the Black Gate Theatre, Anthology Film Archives, and Franklin Furnace, artists exchanged ideas and developed work with each other and for each other. SoHo’s lofts and streets served as playgrounds for artistic experimentation.

Although trained in art history and sculpture, Jonas developed her practice as a performer and video artist at a time when New York’s art scene was embarking on new ventures, including Beat poetry, Minimalist music, modern dance, experimental theater, happenings, performance, installation, and Land Art, most of which took place outside the confines of traditional art institutions and galleries. It was a time of artistic exploration and access to a brand-new medium: video. This new technology, in which a portable, battery-operated Portapak camera provided thirty minutes of uninterrupted videotaping, not only allowed artists to document artistic actions, but served as an immediate mirror, a space of reflection, a tool of interaction. Video became a “mediatic” dialogue partner for artists, and Joan Jonas was one of the first to take advantage of it in its many iterations.

Finding this new art form compelling, the Castelli-Sonnabend Gallery in SoHo began to produce and exhibit videos by artists including Jonas, and the dealer Howard Wise closed his gallery on West Fifty-Seventh Street to found

Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI), a not-for-profit organization that rents video productions to schools and art institutions for educational purposes. For many years, ordering tapes through EAI or the Video Data Bank at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago provided the opportunity to see Jonas’s important video works, which continue to influence younger artists today.

Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, off the eastern coast of Canada and hours from the nearest airport, is Jonas’s summer home. Joined by artist friends and their children and, of course, her dogs (Sappho, then Zina, and now the poodle Ozu), and without the everyday interruptions of urban New York, Jonas finds the time required to let ideas flow. She spends productive weeks in a small house by the ocean, in surroundings that serve as her “canvas,” where she creates and records scenes and sketches for many of her pieces. Other places and cultures Jonas has discovered on her many journeys also find their way into her performances, videos, and spatial displays: rituals, iconic objects, mirrors, masks, and things that cast shadows or make noise are all sources of inspiration. The novels she reads often serve as points of departure, as do the props she finds or makes, crafted objects and wood sticks as well as artist’s materials—paper, chalk, and ink.

For Jonas, Cape Breton and SoHo are like *yin* and *yang*. They are the two main sites where she translates what she has read, sensed, and thought into her own artistic vocabulary. They are the places where her new pieces take form.

They Come to Us without a Word was developed, in part, in Cape Breton, where fishermen’s stories are still told. During fall and winter 2014/2015, Jonas used a studio in Westbeth, New York for a weekly series of workshops, where she created and recorded several of her friends’ children in playful performances that were later screened in the exhibition. Fragments of earlier videos are interwoven with new ones, this time narrated by (ghost) stories from the past told in Cape Breton. Kitakyushu, a former industrial town on Japan’s southern island, Kyushu, is where Jonas created the blue-ink fish drawings, with their many curious shapes, and the intensely colored kites of bamboo and Japanese paper were made by a local kite maker. A school of fish, a fleet of kites, bees dancing, shadows cast on mirrors by blinking glass

crystals on a chandelier-like circular construction—all remind us of a time when each image, each movement and object, recalled its own history and meaning.

They Come to Us without a Word embodies the artist's concerns about the condition of the world we inhabit. Jonas suggests that humans should more carefully share their ecosystem with other creatures. We tend to forget that bees, fish, and other animals are facing extinction, and that we must care for the elements—the air, water, wind, and fire—that provide all of us with what we need to live. *They Come to Us without a Word* is a ghostlike reminder, like shadows of a past that might haunt our future, that we don't pay attention to. *They Come to Us without a Word* is a mature work by a senior artist, a masterpiece.

Ute Meta Bauer, Founding Director NTU CCA Singapore and Co-curator of *They Come to Us without a Word*



Joan Jonas and her dog Ozu. Photo by Moira Ricci.

Artist and Curator Biographies

Joan Jonas (b. 1936, New York, United States) is a world-renowned artist whose work encompasses a wide range of media including video, performance, installation, sound, text, and sculpture. Trained in art history and sculpture, Jonas was a central figure in the performance art movement of the late 1960s, and her experiments and productions in the late 1960s and early 1970s continue to be crucial to the development of many contemporary art genres, from performance and video to conceptual art and theater. Since 1968, her practice has explored ways of seeing, the rhythms of rituals, and the authority of objects and gestures.

Jonas is a New York native and she continues to live and work in New York City. She received a B.A. in Art History from Mount Holyoke College, studied sculpture at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and in 1965 received an M.F.A. in Sculpture from Columbia University, New York. Jonas, a prolific and influential educator, has taught at many art institutions in Europe and the United States. Having joined the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

(MIT) in 1998, she is currently Professor Emerita in the MIT Program in Art, Culture, and Technology within the School of Architecture and Planning.

The recipient of numerous honors and awards, Jonas is the only artist to have been invited to participate at documenta in Kassel, Germany, six times since 1972. Her most recent solo exhibitions include those at Malmö Konsthall, Sweden (2015/2016); Hangar Bicocca, Milan, Italy (2014/2015); Centre for Contemporary Art, Kitakyushu Project Gallery, Japan (2014); Kulturhuset Stadsteatern, Stockholm, Sweden (2013); Proyecto Paralelo, Mexico (2013); Contemporary Arts Museum, Houston, USA (2013); Bergen Kunsthall, Norway (2011); and the Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA (2010). She also has had major retrospectives at the Queens Museum of Art, New York, USA (2004); Galerie der Stadt Stuttgart, Germany (2001) and the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1994).

Paul C. Ha, Commissioner and Co-curator of the U.S. Pavilion for the 56th Venice Biennale.

Ha is the Director of the MIT List Visual Arts Center, and has more than 25 years of professional experience in art and museum administration, fundraising, curating, and teaching. Since joining the LVAC in 2011, Ha has founded the exhibition program List Projects, which commissions emerging artists to create site-specific installations at the museum. As the inaugural Director of the CAM/Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis from 2002 to 2011, he developed new programming that expanded the museum's audiences both locally and internationally, raised more than \$40 million for the institution, established a \$5 million endowment—the museum's first—and positioned CAM as a leader in the contemporary art field. Ha has curated and worked with over 100 artists in solo and group exhibitions, and many artists received their first major museum exhibitions under his leadership at the List Center and the Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, as well as during his time as Director at White Columns gallery in New York, and Deputy Director of Programs and External Affairs at Yale University Art Gallery.

Ute Meta Bauer, Co-curator of the U.S. Pavilion for the 56th Venice Biennale.

Since 2013, Bauer has served as Founding Director of the NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore and as a Professor at NTU's School of Art, Design, and Media. Prior to this, she was Dean of Fine Art at the Royal College of Art, London; Associate Professor at MIT, Cambridge; and Founding Director of MIT's Program in Art, Culture, and Technology (ACT). She also served as Founding Director of the Office for Contemporary Art (OCA), Oslo; was Artistic Director of the *3rd Berlin Biennale for Contemporary Art*; and was a co-curator of *Documenta11*, Kassel, Germany. Recent curatorial projects at the NTU CCA Singapore include *Paradise Lost*, *Theatrical Fields*, *Yang Fudong: Incidental Scripts*, *Simryn Gill: Hugging the Shore* and *Tomás Saraceno: Arachnid Orchestra. Jam Sessions*.

About Venice Biennale and the U.S. Pavilion

The Venice Biennale dates to 1895, when the first International Art Exhibition was organized, and is one of the most important international biennials and cultural institutions in the world. In 2015, the 56th Venice Biennale attracted more than 500,000 visitors.

The United States Pavilion at the Venice Biennale, a building in the neoclassical style, opened on May 4, 1930. Since 1986, the U.S. Pavilion has been owned by the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation and managed by the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice, which works closely with the Department of State and exhibition curators to install and maintain all official U.S. exhibitions presented in the pavilion.

They Come to Us without a Word II

Video documentation of the performance at the

Teatro Piccolo Arsenale, Venice

July 20, 21, and 22, 2015

Alongside the exhibition at the NTU CCA Singapore, there will be a screening of a documentation of the performance *They Come to Us without a Word II*.

The performance was created for the 56th Venice Biennale and presented at the Teatro Piccolo Arsenale over three days, in conjunction with Joan Jonas's U.S. Pavilion installation in the Giardini. The performance involved newly composed music by Jonas's long-time collaborator, the American jazz pianist and composer Jason Moran, who played the live accompaniment for the Venice performances joined by folk singer Kate Fenner. For the first time, Jonas performed live together with the children with whom she worked, and who were featured in the videos shown in the U.S. Pavilion.

They Come to Us without a Word II investigates movement, space, and time in relation to sound and the projected image. The performance at Teatro Piccolo Arsenale was the world premiere of the piece, and this is the first presentation of the video documentation since it was performed live at the Venice Biennale.

Joan Jonas: *They Come to Us without a Word*

Publication

The MIT List Visual Arts Center, Gregory R. Miller & Co., and Hatje Cantz Verlag published an extensive catalogue for *They Come to Us without a Word* in June 2015. Edited by Jane Farver and designed by Miko McGinty in close collaboration with Joan Jonas, the publication features an extensive series of images selected by Jonas, including production stills from the videos projected in the U.S. Pavilion installation, drawings, and related photographs, as well as images of the installation itself. The book includes Jonas's poetic notes on her process and major new essays by Ann Reynolds and Marina Warner, as well as an interview with Jonas conducted by Ingrid Schaffner.

In addition, Gregory R. Miller & Co. published *In the Shadow a Shadow: The Work of Joan Jonas* in 2015, the first comprehensive monograph of Jonas's work, edited by Joan Simon.

Education and Public Programs

NTU CCA Singapore provides an array of opportunities for different audiences to engage with the exhibition. The public program is conceived as an extension of the exhibition, developing themes that will resonate in different fields. Comprising of *Behind the Scenes*, *Conversations*, *Exhibition (de)Tours*, *Screenings* and *Workshops*, the public program brings together different approaches to, and points of view on, the artist's work. ***Behind the Scenes*** provides a rare insight into the technical complexities of exhibition-making, and presents the chance to learn how to put together a show from invited professionals. Our ***Exhibition (de)Tours***, structured as a series of presentations, are conceived as opportunities to engage with practitioners from different fields and with different perspectives on the artist's work. ***Screenings*** and ***Conversations*** provide new points of entry for members of the public to engage with the exhibited work, revealing thematic correspondences with artists in different media. ***Workshops*** are a special form of inquiry and research through art. Consisting of conversation, activities, and presentations, the workshop aims to discuss different aspects of projects closely related to the exhibition.

All programs take place at NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore, Block 43 Malan Road, Gillman Barracks.

Free admission to all programs.

For updates on the public program, check the NTU CCA Singapore website ntu.ccasingapore.org and Facebook page [facebook.com/ntu.ccasingapore](https://www.facebook.com/ntu.ccasingapore)

Friday, 15 January 2016, 7.30–9.00 p.m.

***In Conversation* with artist Joan Jonas together with Ute Meta Bauer, Founding Director, NTU CCA Singapore and Anna Daneri, Curator-in-Residence, NTU CCA Singapore, curator and co-Founder of Peephole, Milan, Italy**

Performance and video pioneer Joan Jonas will discuss the process of creating the exhibition *They Come to Us without a Word* with co-curator Ute Meta Bauer and production manager Anna Daneri.

Tuesday, 19 January 2016, 1.00–3.00 p.m.

***Behind the Scenes* with Jan Kroeze, lighting designer, New York, United States**

A world-renowned lighting designer and director of photography, Jan Kroeze works across the lighting spectrum in fashion, music, performance art, theater, and television. Focusing on Joan Jonas's site-specific installation, he will talk about the way light influences our experience and perception as well as our emotional relationship to what we see. Kroeze will elaborate on the lights he created exclusively for *They Come to Us without a Word*.

Saturday, 23 January 2016, 11.00 a.m.–1.00 p.m.

***Behind the Scenes*, curatorial tour with Anna Daneri**

Anna Daneri has worked with Joan Jonas on several occasions in the past, and was the production manager for the presentation of *They Come to Us without a Word* at the U.S. Pavilion during the 56th Venice Biennale. Her tour will provide a deeper understanding of Jonas's way of working and share insights into how the artist developed the different elements of her exhibition.

Saturday, 30 January 2016, 10.00 a.m.–12.00 p.m.

***Workshop for teachers* with Kelly Reedy, artist and educator, Singapore**

This workshop was developed in collaboration with Kelly Reedy, a former lecturer at the National Institute of Education, who specializes in teaching how museums and galleries can be used to enhance student learning through visual arts. It was created to engage educators in contemporary art and artistic practices, highlighting the educational aspects of each section of this exhibition in order to better prepare for visits with their classes.

To sign up for this workshop, please email NTUCCAeducation@ntu.edu.sg

Wednesday, 10 February 2016, 7.30–9.00 p.m.

***Exhibition (de)Tour* with Filipa Ramos, Curator-in-Residence, NTU CCA Singapore, curator, London, United Kingdom**

Joan Jonas's work is inhabited by a multitude of human and non-human creatures, which traverse her drawings, videos, and performances in a plurality of gestures and configurations. Assembled in idiosyncratic, non-narrative manners, these animal selves propose new temporal conventions and ways of being in the world. Ramos's *Exhibition (de)Tour* will be a journey across the creatures Joan Jonas summons and collaborates with through her work.

Friday, 12 February 2016, 7.30–10.00 p.m.

***Screening of Night Fishing* by Park Chan-kyong, artist and filmmaker & Park Chan-wook, filmmaker, Seoul, South Korea**

South Korea, 2011, 33 min, Korean with English subtitles
and

***Manshin: Ten Thousand Spirits* by Park Chan-kyong**

South Korea, 2013, 104 min, Korean with English subtitles

In *Night Fishing* a man casually sets up for a fishing trip at the water's edge. Evening comes and a tug on his line presents him with the body of a woman. While he tries to disentangle himself from the fishing lines, she comes alive. The scene changes and the woman is now a shaman priestess in a funeral ritual for a man who drowned in a river. He speaks through her to his relatives, asking for forgiveness.

Manshin: Ten Thousand Spirits is a documentary telling the story of a woman who—shunned for being possessed by spirits as a girl and oppressed for following superstitions as an adult—grew up to be Korea's greatest shaman, and is now honored as a national treasure.

Saturday, 13 February 2016, 1.00–4.00 p.m.

Workshop and Screening of selected films by Park Chan-kyong

Selected works are chosen and discussed which engage with topics of the spiritual aspects of nature.

Wednesday, 17 February 2016, 7.30–10.00 p.m.

Exhibition (de)Tour with Yasser Mattar, behavioral scientist and paranormalist, Singapore

Take a journey through Singapore's paranormal activity with an interactive seminar illustrating the scientific logic and methodology that paranormal investigators use in their research. The night concludes with a spooky tour followed by a live investigation at Labrador Park, where paranormal phenomena have been reported.

Friday, 26 February 2016, 7.30–9.00 p.m.

Screening of *More than Honey* by Markus Imhoof, artist and filmmaker, Zurich, Switzerland

Switzerland, Germany, Austria, 2012, 95 min, German, Swiss German, English, Mandarin

In Markus Imhoof's documentary, beekeepers, scientists, and others discuss the world's declining bee population and what it may mean for modern society. Fifty years ago, Einstein had already insisted on the symbiotic relationship binding these pollen gatherers to mankind: "If bees were to disappear from the globe," he predicted, "mankind would only have four years left to live."

Wednesday, 2 March 2016, 7.30–9.00 p.m.

Exhibition (de)Tour with John Ascher, Assistant Professor, Department of Biological Science, National University of Singapore

Ascher will explore the mysterious world of bees, from cloak-and-dagger cuckoos, night raptors, and origami masons, to flesh-eating vultures. This talk will introduce a spectacular range of unfamiliar morphologies and behaviours as well as bee pollinators and explain how discoveries from research expeditions reveal their secrets. Specimens of many of these incredible bees will be available for viewing.

Friday, 18 March 2016, 7.30–10.00 p.m.

Screening of works selected by Mark Nash, curator, writer, Visiting Associate Professor at NTU CCA Singapore and the School of Art, Design and Media, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

***Lives of Performers*, Yvonne Rainer, USA, 1972, 90 min, English**

***Wind*, Joan Jonas, USA, 1968, 5:37 min, Silent**

***Duet*, Joan Jonas, USA, 1968, 4:25 min, English**

Lives of Performers, the first feature film by the choreographer and co-founder of the Judson Dance Theater Yvonne Rainer explores the overlapping and at times, disjunctive languages of cinema and performance. Developed from a dance performance choreographed by Rainer, it plays with generic conventions of melodrama to explore the dilemmas of women struggling to define themselves in relation to masculine scripts.

Wind is a 1968 performance film. Cutting between snowy fields and a raw seashore, Jonas focuses on a group of performers moving through a windswept landscape. The 16mm film—silent, black and white, jerky, and sped-up—evokes early cinema, while its content locates it in the spare minimalism of the late 1960s.

Duet is a classic early video performance. In this seminal exploration of the phenomenology of video as a mirror and as "reality," Jonas, face-to-face with her own recorded image, performs a duet with herself.

Saturday, 19 March 2016, 1.00–4.00 p.m.

Workshop and Screening of selected films by Mark Nash

Mark Nash will discuss selected works chosen from a period of intense experimentation with the new medium of video art. In their early works Richard Foreman, Terry Fox, and Martha Rosler explore quasi-didactic scenarios similar to those Jonas has employed in works including *They Come to Us without a Word*. They all share a minimalist aesthetic dictated by the limitations of the technology, in camera edits or rough mixes being the only ways to transition within the standard 30 minute recording tape.

Wednesday, 30 March 2016, 7.30–9.00 p.m.

Exhibition (de)Tour with Professor Kenneth Dean, Head of Chinese Studies Department, National University of Singapore

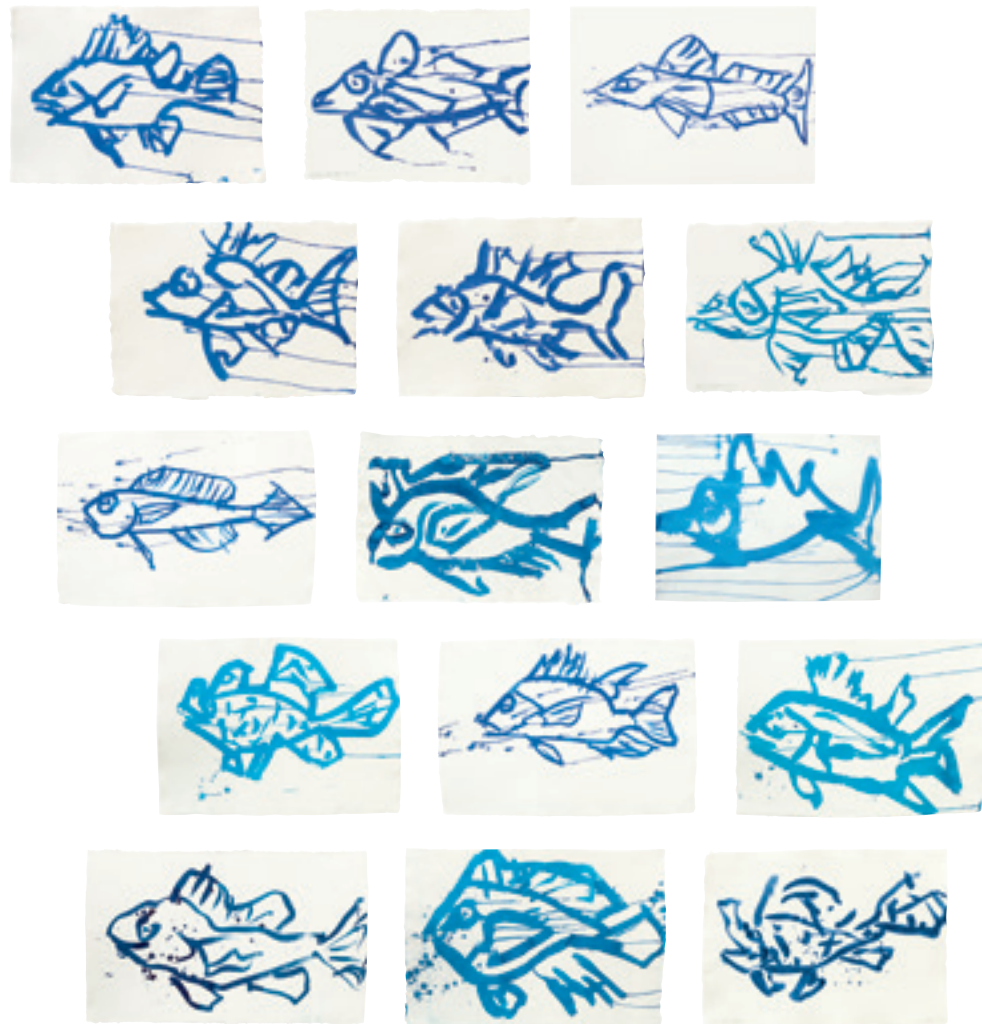
Kenneth Dean will confront questions like “What happens in the afterlife?” “Do ghosts get bored and lonely?” and “Can we plan what happens to our spirits when we die?” In the course of the *Exhibition (de)Tour*, Dean will elaborate on how Chinese religion deals with ghosts through rituals and traditions.

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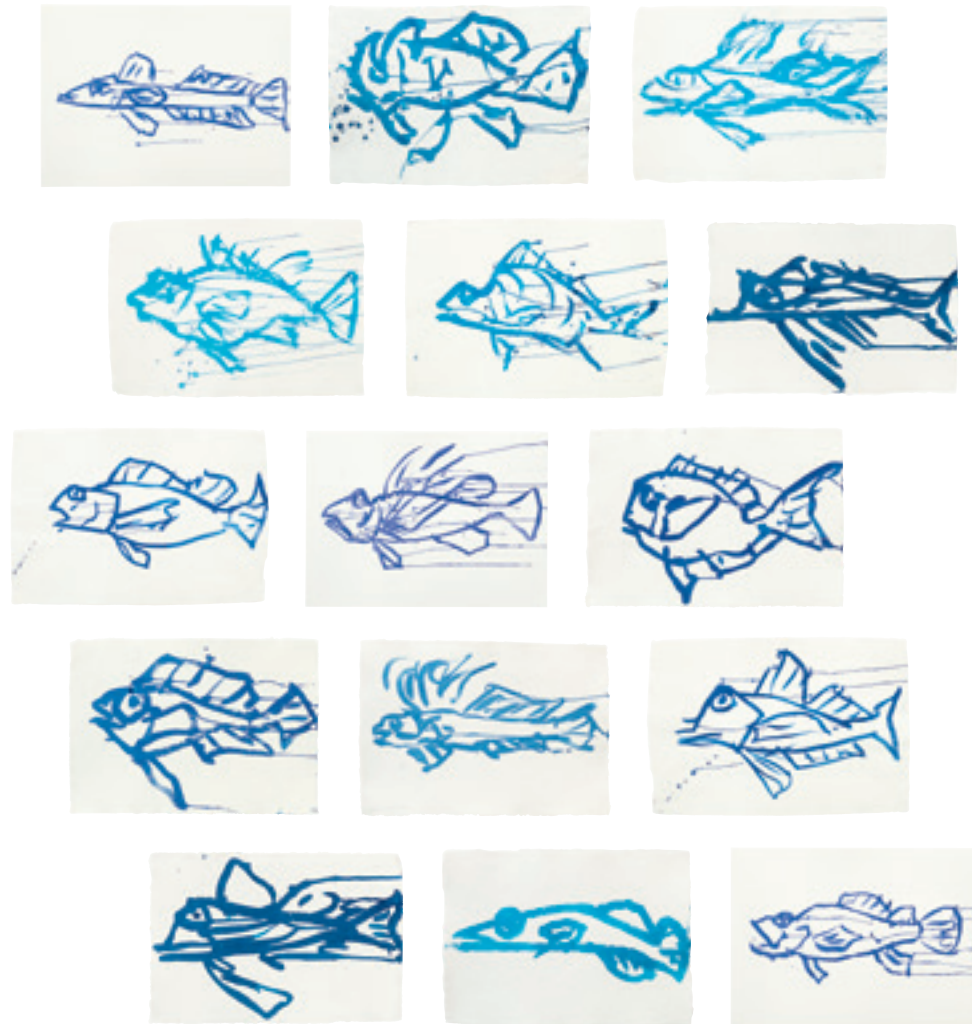


Joan Jonas, *They Come to Us without a Word*, 2015. Production Still. Courtesy of the artist.

GATEFOLD INTERIOR LEFT



VELLUM PAGES
INSERTED INSIDE
DOUBLE GATEFOLD



GATEFOLD INTERIOR RIGHT



Joan Jonas, *They Come to Us without a Word*, 2013–2015. Fish drawings (pigmented-inkjet exhibition copies). Courtesy of the artist.

Joan Jonas, *They Come to Us without a Word*, 2015. Production still. Courtesy of the artist.



Joan Jonas, *They Come to Us without a Word*, 2015. Production still. Courtesy of the artist.

Public Program Contributors

John Ascher is an assistant professor at the Department of Biological Sciences of the National University of Singapore whose research focuses on the taxonomy, distribution, ecology, and conservation of bees and wasps. He is also a Research Associate of the Lee Kong Chian Museum of Biodiversity Research and of the American Museum of Natural History. He received his Ph.D. in Entomology from Cornell University in 2004. In 2005, he initiated digitization of label data for bee specimens using web-based software, a project later expanded to include more than ten collections.

Anna Daneri is co-founder and adjunct curator of Peep-Hole, collaborator with Fondazione Meru (for which she initiated the Meru Art*Science Award), and editor of *Peep-Hole Sheet*. In 2015 she was the production manager for *They Come to Us without a Word* by Joan Jonas for the U.S. Pavilion at the 56th Venice Biennale. She has worked on international exhibitions including *Food* (Geneva, 2012), *The Mediterranean Approach* (Venice/Marseille/Sao Paulo, 2011), *The Inadequate* (project by Dora Garcia for the 54th Venice Biennale), *Collateral* (Milan/Sao Paulo, 2008), *Joan Jonas - My Theater* (Trento, 2007). She collaborated with *Art for the World* (1996-2013) and with Fondazione Antonio Ratti (1995-2010), and was professor of Contemporary Art Phenomenology at the Accademia Carrara di Belle Arti in Bergamo (2003-2007).

Professor Kenneth Dean is the head of Chinese Studies department at the National University of Singapore. His research interests include Chinese religions, temples, and Daoist studies. He received his B.A. in Chinese Studies from Brown University and Ph.D. in Asian Studies from Stanford University and has taught at McGill University, where he was Director of the Centre for East Asian Research. Dean has been published widely and is the author of numerous books on Daoism and Chinese religions. He has produced a documentary, *Bored in Heaven* (2010), about ritual celebrations around Chinese New Year in Southeast China.

Jan Kroeze is a lighting designer and director of photography. He conceived and created custom lighting for *They Come to Us without a Word* and *They Come to Us without a Word II* during the 56th Venice Biennale. Kroeze has worked previously with Joan Jonas for *Volcano Saga* (1989), and designed the lighting for Philippe Parreno's *Anywhere, Anywhere Out of the World*, Palais de Tokyo (2013) and Merce Cunningham's *Locale* (1978), as well as numerous theater productions on and off Broadway. Artists with whom Kroeze has collaborated include Laurie Anderson, Philip Glass, Red Grooms, Marc Jacobs, Joan Jonas, Christian Lacroix, Karl Lagerfeld, Nam June Paik, Judy Pfaff, Kanye West, and Robert Wilson.

Dr. Yasser Mattar is a paranormalist and behavioral scientist and as such he has recently authored *Workplace Warfare: How to Survive Incompetent Colleagues, Horrible Bosses & Organizational Theatrics*, a book on commonplace, but nonetheless nasty, office politics. As one of the Singapore Paranormal Investigators, he has enquired into many paranormal phenomena, including Thai black magic, parallel dimensions, and abandoned buildings. He conducted numerous talks and tours for organizations including Kaplan, National University of Singapore, and School of the Arts Singapore.

Dr. Mark Nash is an independent curator and writer, and, until recently, Professor and Head of Department, Curating Contemporary Art at the Royal College of Art, London. Currently he is at NTU CCA Singapore and the School of Art, Design and Media, Nanyang Technological University as Visiting Associate Professor. Nash was Director of Fine Art Research at Central Saint Martins and has been a senior lecturer in Film History and Theory at the University of East London, and visiting lecturer at the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program and the M.A. in Film Curating at Birkbeck, University of London.

Park Chan-kyong is an artist and filmmaker based in Seoul, South Korea. His subjects have extended from the Cold War to traditional Korean religious culture, from "media-oriented memory" to "regional utopian imaginations." He has produced media based works such as *Manshin: Ten Thousand Spirits*

(2013), *Anyang Paradise City* (2011), *Night Fishing* (2011, co-directed with Park Chan-wook), *Radiance* (2010), *Sindoan* (2008), *Flying* (2005), *Power Passage* (2004), and *Sets* (2000). He has won various prizes including Hermès Korea Misulsang (2004), Golden Bear Prize for short films at the Berlin International Film Festival (2011) and Best Korean Film of the Jeonju International Film Festival (2011).

Filipa Ramos is Editor in Chief of *art-agenda* and a lecturer in the Experimental Film M.A. program of Kingston University, and in the M.Res. Art: Moving Image of Central Saint Martins, both in London. Ramos is co-curator of *Vdrome*, a program of screenings of films by visual artists and filmmakers. In the past she was Associate Editor of *Manifesta Journal*, curator of the Research Section of dOCUMENTA (13), and coordinator of *The Most Beautiful Kunsthalle in the World* project at the Fondazione Antonio Ratti. She is the co-author of the book *Lost and Found – Crisis of Memory* (2009) and is working on a reader of writings on animals to be published in fall 2016.

Kelly Reedy has worked in Singapore for over 18 years as an artist and educator. Her mixed media paintings, prints and installations reflect her keen interest in the ancient techniques still used in Asian traditional arts as well as the rich symbolism embedded in its mythologies. She has exhibited her artwork internationally in Paris, Chicago, and Berlin, as well as locally at the Jendela Visual Arts Space, Esplanade, the Singapore Tyler Print Institute, and Alliance Française. Engaged in museum education for more than a decade, she has developed educational resources for the National Gallery Singapore and trained teachers at the National Institute of Education, specializing in visual arts education in museums and galleries.



Joan Jonas, *They Come to Us without a Word*, 2015. Production still. Courtesy of the artist.

Joan Jonas
They Come to Us without a Word
22 January–3 April 2016
NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore

The exhibition is a collaboration with the MIT List Visual Arts Center, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, United States and was commissioned and first produced for the United States Pavilion, 56th Venice Biennale.

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CURATOR Ute Meta Bauer
PRODUCTION MANAGER Anna Daneri
PROJECT MANAGER Julie Hyun
EXHIBITION CONSULTANT Josie Browne
LIGHTING DESIGNER Jan Kroeze
VIDEO/SOUND INSTALLING Eidotech: Mathias Taupitz
TECHNICAL INSTALLATION Art Factory LLP
EXHIBITION CONSTRUCTION Kingsmen Exhibits
ART HANDLING Helutrans
ASSISTANTS PROPS AND OBJECT CONSTRUCTION Tay Yinying,
Joanna Lim, Ethrisha Liaw,
PUBLIC PROGRAM Magdalena Magiera
EXHIBITION COLLATERALS The Press Room
EXHIBITION BROCHURE Miko McGinty
PROOFREADING Ben Eastham

Lenders Singapore

Joan Jonas
Gavin Brown's Enterprise
Electronic Arts Intermix
Films Boutique
FINECUT
Moho Film
Zeitgeist Films

United States Pavilion - 56th Venice Biennale, Italy
9 May–22 November 2015

Commissioner and Co-Curator: Paul C. Ha, Director of the MIT List Visual Arts Center
Co-Curator Ute Meta Bauer, Founding Director of the NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore

Production Team Venice

PRODUCTION MANAGER Anna Daneri
PRODUCTION ASSISTANT Elena Mazzi
INSTALLING TEAM Attitudine Forma: Roberto Dipasquale, Director; Francesco Boerio,
Mattia Dipasquale, Roberto Cannata, Elisa Strinna
SOUND CONSULTANT Mattia Biadene
LIGHTING DESIGNER Jan Kroeze
VIDEO/SOUND INSTALLING Eidotech: Bela Letto, Mathias Taupitz
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U.S. PAVILION PROJECT MANAGER AT THE PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION
Chiara Barbieri
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PHOTOGRAPHY Moira Ricci
MIRRORS Ongaro & Fuga, Murano, Venice; Salvati, Murano, Venice;
Alexander Rosenberg
KITES Center for Contemporary Art, CCA Kitakyushu, Japan
CURTAIN The Fabric Workshop and Museum, Philadelphia
EXHIBITION COPIES OF DRAWINGS Ediprima: Michele Lombardelli
TREES Legambiente; Parco della Certosa, Isola della Certosa, Venice

and at MIT List Visual Arts Center

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David Sherman
Meredith Walker

Video Production Team

VIDEO BACKDROPS Joan Jonas

WESTBETH STUDIO CAMERA Greenhouse Media: Aaron Igler

VIDEO ASSISTANTS, PREPRODUCTION, NEW YORK David Dempewolf,
David Sherman

PRODUCTION ASSISTANTS Jin Jung, SketchUp files, plans, and costumes;
Meredith Walker, props and object construction; Amos Turner, archivist

EDITOR AND PROJECT ADVISOR Sekeena Gavagan

EDITORS, VIDEO ELEMENTS David Sherman, Joan Jonas

PRODUCTION STILLS David Sherman

PERFORMERS

Westbeth Studio, New York, 2015: Zora Casebere, Noah Delorme, Lila Gavagan,
Jonas Moran, Malcolm Moran, Willa Schwabsky

Cape Breton, 1990 to present: Sadie Bills, Ragani Haas, Katie Kehoe, Eva Jean
Mustard, Margaret Mustard, Moira Peters, Joan Jonas

Dog hoop, 1998: Eric Moskowitz and Zina Shadows, 2007: Artists in residence at
the Fondazione Antonio Ratti, Como, Italy

SOUNDTRACK David Sherman, Joan Jonas

MUSICAL FRAGMENTS Jason Moran

SONGS Ánde Somby

MUSIC FOR GRASS Mattia Biadene

READINGS Joan Jonas, Adam Pendleton, Charles Ruas

SOUND MIX Waterland Studio, Venice: Cristiano Verardo

They Come to Us without a Word II

VIDEO DOCUMENTATION Joan Jonas, 2015

PERFORMERS

Teatro Piccolo Arsenale, 2015:

Joan Jonas with Noah Delorme, Lila Gavagan, Jin Jung, Elena Mazzi,
Jonas Moran, Malcolm Moran, Ozu

Jason Moran, Piano and accordion

Kate Fenner, Singer

VOICES Joan Jonas, Jan Kroeze

Acknowledgments

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The NTU CCA Singapore would like to express our gratitude to the U.S. Embassy Singapore:

The Honorable Kirk W. Wagar, U.S. Ambassador to Singapore;
Nicholas J.C. Snyder, Counselor for Public Affairs; Melinda Page, Cultural Affairs Coordinator and Rachael Lille Moore, Media Coordinator from the U.S. Embassy Singapore.

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NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore

Located in Gillman Barracks, the NTU CCA Singapore is a national research center of Nanyang Technological University and is supported by a grant from the Economic Development Board, Singapore. The Centre is unique in its threefold constellation of exhibitions, residencies, and academic research and education. The NTU CCA Singapore positions itself as a space for critical discourse and encourages new ways of thinking about *Spaces of the Curatorial* in Southeast Asia and beyond. As a research center, it aims to provide visiting researchers and curators a comprehensive study on the contemporary art ecosystem in Singapore and the region. The Centre's dynamic public program serves to engage with various audiences through lectures, workshops, open studios, film screenings and *Exhibition (de)Tours*.

Since the Centre's inauguration in October 2013, the NTU CCA Singapore has presented several high-profile, first-to-launch exhibitions of leading artists, making it one of the first spaces in the region to present international exhibitions of such a scale. The Centre's residencies program is dedicated to facilitate the production of knowledge and research, engaging and connecting artists, curators and researchers from Singapore, Southeast Asia and beyond, and across various disciplines. The Centre's seven studios support the artistic process in the most direct way—by giving the time and locale to be fully engaged, and the access to an interesting and immersive context to further the space for developing ideas.

Giving to NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore

Your generous contributions support NTU CCA Singapore's internationally-acclaimed, research driven exhibitions, residencies and extensive educational programs that benefit the community and the region. As a non-profit institution, your support is crucial in the continuation of our unique programming that enables NTU CCA Singapore to contribute to the local art scene and the development of regional and international art infrastructures.

Your contribution to the NTU CCA Singapore will enjoy a 250% tax deduction in 2016. In addition, the Cultural Matching Fund, an initiative by the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth (MCCY) Singapore will enable us to seek dollar-for-dollar matching of your cash donations.

For more information on how to donate to NTU CCA Singapore, visit www.ntu.ccasingapore.org/support.



NTU Centre for Contemporary Art Singapore

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For updates on exhibitions and programs

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Exhibition hours:

Tue–Sun 12–7 PM

Fri 12–9 PM

Mon Closed

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These free docent-led tours by Friends
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its galleries and include a visit to
NTU CCA Singapore.

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ntuccaexhibitions@ntu.edu.sg

In memory of Jane Farver (1947–2015)

Located at

GILLMAN BARRACKS

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Previous spread: Joan Jonas, installation view of *They Come to Us without a Word*, U.S. Pavilion,
56th Venice Biennale, 2015. Photo by Moira Ricci.



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