

EPILOGUE: YOGAFLOGOGO
 Olivia Mole, Ranu Mukherjee, and
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Joan Jonas is on our mind.

An interdisciplinary research group of CCA faculty members will reflect on the work of Joan Jonas for the entire 2014-15 academic year. Public events will be held each month.

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In its entirety, *YOGAFLOGOGO* is live action and animated video, sculpture, drawing, and performance—summoned to negotiate the tensions between imagination and the material body.

The “plot”: two girls are in a house where the television only plays static. Polly Propylene and Polly Ethylene try to get the TV to work: they bang on it, and they enact elaborate rituals and wield powerful objects to activate it. All of this doesn’t make the TV work, but their failed attempts and palpable acts of boredom create a form of language. Later on, the Pollys play a game that makes reference to witch hunts, the period of transition from feudalism to capitalism, and the narratives of women and colonized people around the 16th century. The girls perform a spell combining new languages, and it makes the TV work. The TV contains an oracle—a fitness guru with a clairvoyant ass—but, initially, her messages are unreadable. Eventually, they are interpreted, and a new form of human is released. However, for Polly Ethylene and Polly Propylene, there’s a price to pay.

In *YOGAFLOGOGO*, television acts as a site of exchange between inside and outside. Olivia Mole considers philosopher Luce Irigaray’s re-description of Plato’s Cave as “specular hystera” with a “screen that subtracts, divides and defends, sends back phantasmatic offspring by projection—as remainders, over and above—onto the screen that reproduces and multiplies.” Yet *YOGAFLOGOGO* is not so much about TV itself as about mediation, experience, body, voice, and performance. TV is a mirroring/screening/framing, too.

Early in her career, Joan Jonas wrote: “Video is a device extending the boundaries of my interior dialogue to include the audience. The perception is of a double reality: me as image and as performer. I think of the work in terms of imagist poetry; disparate elements juxtaposed... alchemy.”

While Jonas’s approach is rooted in a structural relationship to tele-visual communication, *YOGAFLOGOGO* is about the medium as an externalization of societal anxiety and excess. Mole’s *YOGAFLOGOGO* television set, like the one in Steven Spielberg’s *Poltergeist* (1982), embodies conductibility—slime and static—mediating the transgression between this world and a world of representation, what film studies scholar Linda Badley calls “a black hole in the text of the symbolic order.”

Olivia Mole was born in London in 1975. For over a decade, she worked in the mainstream film and animation industry, designing sets for John Frankenheimer, Michael Radford, Wes Anderson, and Dreamworks Animation. She attended The Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art at Oxford University and received an MA in Production Design from the National Film and Television School in the UK. Having recently returned to art practice, Mole has shown her work guerrilla style in her own garage, and at Steven Wolf Fine Arts in San Francisco and Southern Exposure. She lives in San Francisco.

But this cave is already, and *ipso facto*, a speculum. An inner space of reflection. Polished, and polishing, fake offspring. Opening, enlarging, contriving the scene of representation, the world of representation.

...

A margin outside inscription which like a star both guides and at the same time strikes to the ground, frames and freezes all forms of replicas, all possible relation between the forms of replicas. Limning and limiting the show, the dialogue, the language outside time or place in its extrapolation of light. Or else stealthily opening it up into any abyss of blinding whiteness at every step, or letter, or look. *Matrix*. Or given the name of the matrix. Yet virgin of presence. Ravishing anything which has yet to be targeted and measured. Or which seems that way, at least. The projection screen is a mirage that conceals the part played by the mirrors that have always already produced and framed it “as such.” Thus accounts for the fact that they all remain motionless in the enclosure, fixed in the being—prisoners attitude they have been cast for, *frozen* by the effects of symmetry that they do not realize are directing this theater of remembrance. The prison that holds is the illusion that they evocation and repetition (of origin) are equivalent. They sit riveted by fascination of what they see opposite. By the semblance of what is apparently taking place behind and by its projection which, by pretending to be immediate presence, presentation, steals the economy of both before and after the fact. Foils the interaction of relationships between repetition and representation, or reproduction, and perverts its prescriptions and balances. The end, the unrepresentable Idea, guarantees that replicas and copies are engendered and conform, and the fiction of the being—present masks the ancestry of its reproduction—production, with repetition left over and to spare. Time, space—time are side-tracked by a symmetrical process ordering representation elsewhere, or correlatively, are seduced, captivated, caught, in the lustrous glow of the Idea, of the sun.

—Luce Irigaray, “Plato’s *Hystera*” in *Speculum of the Other Woman* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1985), 255–56.



Joan Jonas, still from *Waltz*, 2003