

GLADSTONE

Issac Chong Wai, "Joan Jonas," in "The Artists' Artists," *Artforum*, December 2025

ARTFORUM

THE ARTISTS' ARTISTS

December 2025

To take stock of the past year, *Artforum* asked an international group of artists to select the single exhibition or event that most memorably caught their attention in 2025.

ISAAC CHONG WAI



Joan Jonas, *Mirror Piece I & II*, 1969. Performance view, Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin, September 14, 2025.
Photo: Ivan Erofeev.

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Joan Jonas (Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin, September 10–14, 2025)

This year, I was able to revisit Joan Jonas's *Mirror Piece I & II*, 1969, through an invitation to participate in the fourth edition of the PERFORM! festival, organized by Klaus Biesenbach, Lisa Botti, and Gregor Quack. For more than fifty years, Jonas's art has engaged, disrupted, and reconfigured the relationships between the body and its surroundings. Using simple mirrors, the artist reflected both actors and audience in this work, turning movement and gaze into readymade materials. In fact, Jonas has the preternatural ability to turn any physical or intangible thing within reach—be it bystanders, the weather, social norms, cultural contexts, preconceived ideas, or gendered expectations—into a readymade. In response to *Mirror Piece I & II*, I presented *The horizon we can never touch*, 2014, for which nearly one hundred participants stood behind the glass facade of the Mies van der Rohe–designed Nationalgalerie, facing the audience while adjusting their heights to create an unbroken horizon line with their heads by observing themselves in the reflections in the glass.