

Arts  
on

5

Art Exchange

# SEEKING BEYOND THE SURFACE:

REFLECTING  
DISTORTING  
MIRRORING  
WIBBOLING  
DISTORTING  
REFLECTING

25 April 2012 — 26 May 2012

*Admission Free*

*Monday — Friday  
Saturday*

*11am — 5pm  
12pm — 4pm*

*Art Exchange  
Square 5  
University of Essex  
Wivenhoe Park  
Colchester, Essex  
CO4 3SQ*

*Curated by MA Gallery Studies and Critical Curating  
students at the University of Essex*



University of Essex

## CONTENTS

|   |         |
|---|---------|
| Exhibition Abstract   | 02 — 03 |
| <b>A step through the<br/>looking-glass.</b>                                      | 04 — 06 |
| Curatorial Statement by<br>Isadora Liquori  |         |
| Curator's Contact Details   | 07      |
| <b>On (Not) Seeing Mirrors,<br/>or, Is There a Mirror in<br/>this Exhibition?</b> | 08 — 11 |
| By Matthew Bowman   |         |
| <b>Artists:</b>   |         |
| Hans Breder   | 14 — 15 |
| Joan Jonas  | 16 — 17 |
| Oscar Muñoz   | 18 — 19 |
| Adad Hannah   | 20 — 21 |
| Elina Brotherus   | 22 — 23 |
| <b>Artist interview with:</b>   | 24 — 25 |
| Hans Breder   |         |
| Event Listings  | 26 — 27 |
| Acknowledgements  | 28 — 29 |

*“Look in a mirror and one thing’s true,  
what we see is not who we are.”*

*—Richard Bach*

## SEEKING BEYOND THE SURFACE

People have always been concerned with reflections: sometimes they fear what they see, other times they are captivated, excited, and even upset by them. In the past, mirroring surfaces were treated with suspicion, thus creating a wealth of myths and superstitions, while nowadays the attitude has changed and mirrors exercise an irresistible appeal to people.

No matter how familiar they are, the fascination created by reflective surfaces always endures as reflections ultimately do not merely represent what people think they see, but also a strange and apparently inaccessible world.

Seeking Beyond the Surface presents examples of the ways in which contemporary art approaches this new world of reflections, distortions and unusual forms of mirroring. The display features the work of five international artists which used different reflective surfaces to represent a reality that engages with different forms of perception and definition of the self far from the empirical ones.

Coming from a prolific sphere of art products, the artworks deal with different modern concerns, such as social and racial issues, feminist concerns and the contemporary preoccupation with self-enhancement and self-contempt of the body, the

exhibition trying to show how art hunts for different layers of a deeper truth beyond the surface of reality and external appearances.

These preoccupations regarding the definition and exploration of self-identity, social theories and psychological issues are explored with a specific focus on the human figure and its reflection. Each work will offer different ways to explore the subject matter, but all of them will present a dynamic representation of the human presence, made inconsistent and hard to grasp by the reflecting surface itself.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a range of events developing the main themes, such as curators’ talk and lunch-time tours, film screenings, family activities and academic talks hosted by professionals in the art world.

## A STEP THROUGH THE LOOKING-GLASS

BY ISADORA LIQUORI

Seeking Beyond the Surface explores how contemporary western art hunts for different layers of a deeper truth beyond the surface of reality and external appearances. Investigating the use of unusual forms of mirroring and reflecting, the pieces on display show a reality that is not the empirical one, but one formed by reflections that have the ability to jolt human beings out of both reality and fantasy.

Bringing together the work of five contemporary artists dated from the early 70s to the first decade of the 21st century, the art gallery metaphorically steps through the looking-glass in order to fall into a world made of distortions and bizarre reflections where it is not always possible to say if what we perceive is real or not. By entering the gallery the beholder is invited on a journey that takes him to meet the contemporary issues of identity and perception.

The starting point of the research is routed in Freud and Lacan's psychoanalytical theories and expanded on the study of the everlasting presence of mirrors and reflections in different culture's folklores, literatures and arts. Psychoanalysis plays a central role in the development of this study as much as society has been affected by Freud's postulation of human psyche being divided into 3 parts, - Id, Ego and Superego- each of them representing different parts of our psychic apparatus -the Id being the unconscious and instinctual part of the psyche, driven by the pleasure principle, the Superego representing the set of moralizing components of human mind, and the Ego embodying the rational part that balances the other two parts.[i] Of great influence have also been Jacques Lacan and his Mirror Stage theory and subsequent

definition of imaginary order. According to Lacan's researches the ego is formed after the identification of the infant with his/her specular image. The formation of the ego therefore coincides with a narcissistic alienation of the self, recognized in a fraudulent external image: an alienated and alienating identity.[ii]

Freud and Lacan's theories ultimately introduce issues concerning the perception and definition of the self, which is the vast territory addressed by Seeking Beyond the Surface. This is a prolific sphere of art products which includes several different contexts and lead to the encounter of a vast range of modern concerns, all tangentially related to the struggle in defining the self through its own physical representation.

Two of the works on display raise the subject of time and memory. Adad Hannah's All is Vanity (2009), a modern adaptation of the nineteenth century's drawing by Charles Allan Gilbert, recreates the illusion of a mirrored figure by casting a set of two twins. The skull represents death and the concept that eventually everything fades away. The uncertainty regarding animation and inanimation within a time-based context reinforces this sense of ephemerality and questions viewer's existence in time and space. Issues related to the existence in time and space and the impossibility of everlasting memories are further discussed in Oscar Muñoz's Line of Destiny (Linea del Destino; 2006). In this work, the artist is like a contemporary Narcissus, his image reflected in a pool of water held in his hands. However, as time passes water disperses and the image of Muñoz's face disappears, representing people's struggle in grasping their own self and fixing its presence into time and space.

This feeling of indissoluble ephemerality is not new to our narcissistic society. On the contrary, as melancholy changed from a medical condition into a state of mind, the impossibility of fixing our image appears to be a necessity to us. As Jennifer Allen, chief-editor of Frieze D/E, pointed out in her article about contemporary narcissism 'Who, Me?' (Nov-Dec 2011) [iii], this shift is clear when considering how the vanishing point in visual arts has historically always been understood as a point in the horizon but it is now located on the subject itself. The art media are now used in a different, introspective way,

in order to undertake a quest for self-definition inside our own body. For Instance, In Joan Jonas' Disturbances (1974), the video becomes a tool for introspection and self-examination of artist's own identity. The results are however not satisfying as Jonas' attempt to find her female self in her so-felt fragmented identity (thus bringing up important feminist concerns) ends in a blurry and trembling image of her reflection in a pond. The difficult correspondence between the self and its image is investigated not only through the impossibility of grasping a fix and stable physical representation of it but also by unusual ways of representing the body itself. Thus in the two sets of photographs that the exhibition presents: the first one is composed by two pieces by Hans Breder, Body Sculpture (1972) and La Ventosa 1/8 (1972), which are peculiar in this sense as the artist makes his models' bodies become an unidentifiable and headless mass of limbs through the use of mirrors. The other two photographs on display, In the Mirror 1 (2007) and Model Study Nr.6 (2004) both by Elina Brotherus, are unusual self-portraits where the artist portrays her own naked body -thus suggesting some sort of self-enhancement of it - but on the other hand cuts it out through the use of wrong-displaced mirrors and breaks the continuity of the image by using scratched and damaged reflective surfaces. Two different and antithetic feelings are therefore represented, a swing between self-enhancement and self-contempt, fascination and denial, which ultimately reflects the everlasting interest exercised by mirrors and reflection overtime. As suggested by Mark Pendergrast, our reflection is a permanent companion to our lives and a crucial part in the development and understanding of our self-consciousness.[iv] However, the encounter with the reflected image of ourselves is doomed to have a central yet ambivalent role as the struggle for self-awareness, rather than providing answers, unflinching leads to questioning our own nature and existence. The exhibition tries to address this issue, using artistic practice as a platform for questioning, and at the same time trying to reconcile, our inner and outer worlds. Our gaze is not directed outwards anymore. It looks inwards, inviting the rest of the world to take part to our private quest of subjectiveness, as the external and internal dimensions are not completely discernible anymore.[v]

#### End Notes

- i Sigmund Freud; Beyond the Pleasure Principle (1920)
- ii Lacan's lecture at the Societè Française de Psychanalyse (S.F.P) Le Symbolique, l'Imaginaire et le Réel (1953)
- iii Jennifer Allen; 'Who? Me' in Frieze Magazine; issue 143 (nov-dec 2011)
- iv Mark Prendergrast; Mirror, Mirror; Basic Books (2004); p.2-4
- v Jennifer Allen; 'Who? Me' in Frieze Magazine; issue 143 (nov-dec 2011)

# SEEKING BEYOND THE SURFACE.

MA GALLERY

STUDIES AND

CRITICAL

CURATING

Chih-Chi Wang — [cwangv@essex.ac.uk](mailto:cwangv@essex.ac.uk)

Pei-Hsin Chiang — [pchian@essex.ac.uk](mailto:pchian@essex.ac.uk)

Isadora Liquori — [iliquo@essex.ac.uk](mailto:iliquo@essex.ac.uk)

Min-Huei Tsai — [kingpenguin77@gmail.com](mailto:kingpenguin77@gmail.com)

## ON (NOT) SEEING MIRRORS, OR, IS THERE A MIRROR IN THIS EXHIBITION?

BY MATTHEW BOWMAN

What is it about mirrors that compel our attention? Perhaps it's some barely latent narcissism or sense of our fragmentariness, enticing ourselves to search in its reflective surface for our true external image. That would indeed be one kind of answer, famously sketched out by psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan—and one that dovetails with the wider philosophical trajectory that takes examination of our cognitive attributes as, at bottom, a work of self-reflection. Or maybe their fascination is more rooted in their uncanniness, their capability of engendering the double, the *doppelgänger* that haunts our steps. In this short essay, however, I wish to sidestep those explorations somewhat (their presence will be nonetheless tangible) and instead tackle the mirror as visual displacement. To that extent, it's worth remembering that the displaced image in the mirror—but how can we speak of something being 'in' the mirror?—is simultaneously the displacement of the mirror. The mirror auto-displaces. Robert Smithson is close to recognizing this when, in his own great mirror displacement, he opposes the mirror to the reflection: “The mirror itself is not subject to duration, because it is an ongoing abstraction that is always available and timeless. The reflections, on the other hand, are fleeting instances that evade measure.”<sup>[i]</sup> Indeed, has anyone ever actually seen a mirror?

In art and this exhibition, the presence of mirrors often attests to and conjoins two intellectual developments from pre-Christian Greece that have had wide consequences beyond the art field. On the one hand, there is the specular constitution of subjectivity figured by the myth of Narcissus, and, on the other, there is Plato's famous presentation of art as a type of mimesis correlated with the act of mirroring. In Book Ten of his *Republic*, Plato—displacing his voice through that of

Socrates—suggests that all the artist really needs to do in order to make his art is hold a mirror so that it reflects “the sun, the things in the heavens, the earth, yourself, the other animals, manufactured items, plants, everything else mentioned just now.”<sup>[ii]</sup> The artists and works in this exhibition merge together these two moments of Greek thought, underscoring the ephemerality and dependency of the mirror upon that which it reflects. Plato's mirror changes, its images refusing fixity, as it runs the gamut from the cosmological to the personal, whereas Narcissus seems distantly aware that the image (himself) in the still pool will be lost if he only turns away—but not turning results in self-annihilation.

Yet if the mirror is abstract and the reflection ephemeral, some of the works in this exhibition allow that ephemerality to become the condition of the mirror. Oscar Muñoz's *Linea del Destino*, for example, presents the artist's hand cupping water. As per the Narcissus myth, his visage is reflected in the water—but this water is seeping through the fingers, the reflection disappearing. Likewise, in Joan Jonas' *Disturbances* (1974) the pond changes from reflective surface, a mirror rendered from H<sub>2</sub>O, into a field of vibrations that ruins the imagery displayed. In other respects, the mirror is a device for constructing enantiomorphism, meaning that there is no possible reconciliation between this world and its reflection. That we take the mirror as a producer of realism is, as Louis Althusser argues, ideological confusion.<sup>[iii]</sup> Both Hans Breder and Elina Brotherus reject the “natural” portrayal of the human body and present in their works the body as fragmented part-objects, the mirror as de-humanizing monstrosity. It's not incidental, however, that photography and film are predominant in this exhibition; the first accounts of photography interlinked the medium with mirrors insofar as they apparently share a commitment to indexicality and hence realism—the mirror cannot not reflect its environment.<sup>[iv]</sup> Using this shared qualities between different mediums, the artists in this exhibition invert these qualities to produce realizations that run counter to our quotidian expectations of what the world looks like and how realism fits within it.

Seeking Beyond the Surface expressly proposes “surface” as a dimension of the mirror, but how surfaces figure in mirroring is somewhat confusing. To speak of “things reflected in the

mirror” proposes that reflection is something that happens beyond or beneath the surface—the peculiarity here being we generally perceive the world as an array of surfaces and we have no access to the world except as those surfaces. Cut open an apple to see what’s beneath the surface and we are confronted by another surface; cut it again—ditto. Perhaps, then, in a sense, our historical interest in mirroring resides in the way that mirrors remind us that “depth”—say, physical depth or intellectual depth—is a precondition of surface and that depth is only experienceable as surface. This might also be read in terms of embodied subjectivity, so that any “exteriority” rests upon an “interiority” that are communicated, mediated, or occulted by that exteriority; such is the case with Adad Hannah’s *All is Vanity*. In this regard, the mirror as displacement is essentially a continual disruption of surface which reveals the surface as surface. Look behind the mirror’s surface, and you see the wall the mirror hangs upon, thereby leading to questions apropos how this hanging supports the mirror surface and the domestic or institutional positioning of the wall itself. The disruption of the surface is when the mirror comes closest to becoming a visible object through the fragmentation of the reflection. Broadly speaking, it’s arguably that when the surface is disrupted that the mirror becomes all the more conceptually efficacious insofar as it enjoins us to reflect upon the mirror, what it shows, how it shows, and how such showing is dependent upon its location and context. In the politico-philosophical terms suggested by Jacques Rancière, this renders explicit the “distribution of the sensible” and generates the possibility of redistributing it.

As an ending, Hegel’s implicit rewriting of the Narcissus myth for the purposes of aesthetics is perhaps suitable. Instead of a beautiful youth staring into a pool and mistaking the reflection for someone else staring back, Hegel suggests that art is better thought of as a child who “throws stones into the river and now marvels at the circles drawn in the water as an effect in which he gains an intuition of something that is his own doing. This need runs through the most diversiform phenomena up to the mode of self-production in external things which is present in the work of art.”[v] Opposing the widespread conception of art as mimetic labour, this disruptive activity of throwing stones evinces the thrower’s agency and thus mirroring is turned from passive reflection to a kind of act that we could, to a certain

extent, control—a way of making a difference to the world and thus making a difference in the world. Conceptually grasped in this way, the mirror is the object not seen as such but knowable through its displacing effects. One known, the invisible mirror can be utilized so that it transforms from uncanny passive duplicator of the world into the deliberate production of visibility. After all, even in Plato’s account, someone has to make the mirror and then point it in various directions.

#### End Notes

- i Robert Smithson, “Incidents of Mirror-Travel in the Yucatan” (1969) in Jack Flam (ed.), *Robert Smithson: The Collected Writings* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1996) p. 22
- ii Plato, *The Republic in Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper and D. S. Hutchinson (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Group, 1997): 596c – 596e.
- iii Althusser’s contention that “ideology has no history” is potentially convergent with the non-durational abstraction of the mirror as described by Smithson.
- iv Jules Janin wrote in 1839: “imagine that the mirror has retained the imprint of every object it reflects, then you will have a more complete idea of the Daguerreotype.” Cited from Heinz Buddenmeier, *Panorama, Diorama, Photographic* (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1970): 207
- v G. W. F. Hegel, *Aesthetics: Lectures on Fine Art*, volume 1, trans. T. M. Knox (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 31.



ARTISTS

HANS BREDER  
JOAN JONAS  
OSCAR MUÑOZ  
ADAD HANNAH  
ELINA BROTHERUS



## HANS BREDER

Hans Breder's idea of using reflective forms in his sculptures developed in the mid-1960s and has as its climax the series of Body-Sculptures produced in the early 1970s. In the two works on display, one of them part of 'La Ventosa' series, for which the popular artist Ana Mendieta served as a model, models lie nude holding large mirrors which hide the upper part of their bodies and reflect the lower one. What is distinguishable in the photographs is therefore not the real form of the bodies but an extremely ravelled mass of limbs, which leaves the figures symbolically beheaded.

Breder's artistic practice has always been focused on Intermedia, which is for the artist a way of showing the world, placing himself between different places and cultures. Every artwork produced in any medium is related to an ineffable experience of Breder's life; thus the lifelong interest in the issues of consciousness and perception beyond appearances. Hans Breder was born in Herford, Germany, in 1935 and studied at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste in Hamburg before moving to New York in 1964 when awarded of the fellowship Studienstiftung des Deutschen Volkes. In 1968 he founded the MFA Intermedia and Video Art Program at the University of Iowa and co-founded the Center for the New Performing Arts. He retired from teaching in 2000 and was awarded an honorary doctorate from the University of Dortmund in 2007. Among the places his works are collected are the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C., the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, the Museum Ostwall, Dortmund, and the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington D.C..



*La Ventosa 1/8*  
1972  
Silver print  
14 x 14 inches



*Body Sculpture*  
1972  
Photograph  
Black and White  
7.7 x 7.7 inches

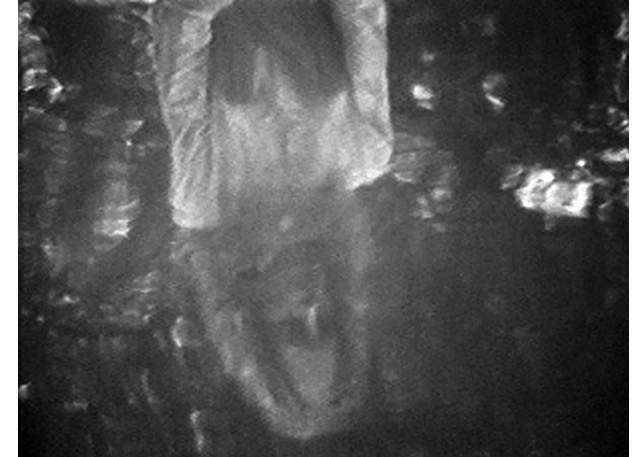
*Photographs courtesy of Hans Breder*

## JOAN JONAS

Joan Jonas' works utilize gesture and ritual, often performed with masks, costumes and veils, to purposefully seek out the indefinable and integrated female self, blurring the boundaries between myth and reality. In her performance 'Disturbances' she uses poetic metaphors of mirror and fragmentation by recording her reflection on the surface of a pond of water. She restricts the viewer's gaze by only allowing the view of reflected images and inversions upon the water surface.

The video starts with the artist leaning down and gazing at her reflection, like a modern Narcissus kneeling over the reflected pool. Her video depicts the idea that what we perceive of others and ourselves is always distorted, causing limits within our ability to distinguish the true identity of our selves.

Joan Jonas was born in New York in 1936, where she currently works and resides. She studied sculpture at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and in 1965 earned an MFA in Sculpture from Columbia University, New York. Joan Jonas is a pioneer and one of the most influential female artists in the performance art movement that began in the mid 1960s. She has also been awarded fellowships and grants for choreography, video and visual arts from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Guggenheim Foundation.



*Disturbances*  
1974  
8mm Film  
Sound; Black and White  
00:15h

*Photograph courtesy of Video Data Bank*

## OSCAR MUÑOZ

Muñoz's art explores the relationship between images, time and memory. His works cannot be labeled as 'traditional'; on the contrary, they can be considered a crossover between a wide variety of media (photography, drawing, printing, video and 3d installation) and deny any precise connotation. He aims to challenge the traditional concept of consistency through the use self-destructive materials or elements, thus giving a strong poetic power to his works.

The piece on display, as many other works by Muñoz, shows an unstable image that swings between presence and absence as the water drips from the artist's own hands and disperses the reflection of his face. The beholder is asked to witness the allegoric disappearance of someone by watching the reflection slowly fading away and eventually disappearing. This work highlights the vulnerability of life through the impossibility of fixing the image of the person reflected in the water. As most of Muñoz's practice, it questions the meaning of self-identity and refers to the ephemeral condition of human beings.

Oscar Muñoz was born in 1951 in Popayán, Colombia, and lives and works in Cali, Colombia. He is considered one of the most significant Colombian contemporary artists and over the past 30 years has developed a remarkable body of work that has been exhibited internationally in several prestigious shows such as the Venice Biennale (2007), the Prague Biennale (2005) and Cuenca Bienal (2004). Amongst the numerous solo exhibitions, his works have been on display at the Institute of International Visual Arts (London, UK) and the Prefix Institute of Contemporary Art (Toronto, Canada).

*Line of Destiny*  
2006  
Video  
*Silent; Black and White*  
00:01:59h



*Courtesy of Davos Latinamerica Collection, Zürich, © the artist*

## ADAD HANNAH

Adad Hannah is a Canadian artist well known for his video works and photographs. His modern adaption of Charles Allan Gilbert's 1892 drawing 'All is Vanity' is an example of the way Hannah often takes apart and reconstitutes historical images. The original optical illusion drawn by Gilbert depicts a young woman gazing at her reflection in a mirror on her vanity table even though the drawing can also be read as a large human skull.

Adad Hannah casts a set of two twin sisters to perform the woman sitting at her vanity, thus giving the appearance of a mirror without one being present. He asks the twins to remain as still as possible for the duration of the shooting, but as time passes the viewer becomes acutely aware of the breathing and blinking of the two models. The use of a non-existent mirror and the very real twins are relevant as they bring forward issues concerning existence and self-definition in space and time by breaking the static nature of Gilbert's original piece. Furthermore, the concept of time and ephemerality is reinforced if considering the original drawing that inspired the artist. It is in fact a memento mori, where the skull represents death and the concept that eventually everything decays.

Adad Hannah was born in New York in 1971. He lived in both Israel and England before his family immigrated to Canada in the early 1980s. He currently lives and works between Montreal and Vancouver. He received an undergraduate degree from the Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design in Vancouver and a Master degree from Concordia University in Montreal. He has frequently exhibited and produced work in galleries around the world.



*All is Vanity*  
2009  
Video  
Silent, Colour  
00:11:46h

*Image courtesy of Adad Hannah*

## ELINA BROTHERUS

Nudes are a frequent matter of Elina Brotherus' study. Her investigation is however far from any sexual or pornographic recalls and her photographs are never instant snapshots. Her self-portraits are impregnated by personal and emotional experiences as the connection between life and art is vital in the creation of her works. However, the content of Brotherus' early works is delivered in a formal language that allows the beholder to see them as blank surfaces where he/she can project himself/herself and his/her own feelings and desires: using herself as a model she dissociates her personality from her physical image, making her figure representing the omnicomprehensive essence of the human body to her public. In the selected photographs the artist portrays her own body but at the same time cuts herself out of the photograph through the use of mirrors. The 'Model Study' series is particularly interesting under this point of view as it represents her longing for slowness and solitude compared to the fast and busy lifestyle of a big city.

Elina Brotherus is a Finnish artist born in Helsinki in 1972 and lives and works between Helsinki and France. She received a master degree in photography from the University of Art and Design (now Aalto University) in Helsinki in 2000. Since 1997 she has frequently exhibited her works both in international solo and group exhibitions, the latest ones in Helsinki and Turku (Finland), Brest (France), Florence (Italy), London (UK), and Paris (France). In 2004 she was awarded the Carnegie Art Award's Young Artist's Scholarship and was shortlisted for the Citigroup Private Bank Photography Prize. In 2005 she received the French Prix Niépce of Gens d'Image, and in 2007 she won a nomination for the prestigious Finnish Ars Fennica prize.

*In the Mirror 1*  
2007  
Photograph  
Ed. 6  
40x52 cm



*Model Study Nr. 6*  
2004  
Photograph  
105x85 cm



*Courtesy of The Wapping Project Bankside, London*

## ARTIST INTERVIEW: HANS BREDER

The issue of perception and consciousness occupies an important part of your work. Why is this always a fascination of yours?

**HB:** From the very beginning, as an artist, I have been inexorably drawn to Eastern philosophy. I understand the harmony of thought, feeling, and consciousness and I am always aware of this transcendent state.

The use of mirrors and reflection is prominent in your work from the 1970s. What influenced you to work with this subject matter?

**HB:** In 1964, I was reading Borges and beginning to understand space in a way I had never understood it before—through Borges, not through art.

How did your relationship with artist Ana Mendieta influence your work of that period?

**HB:** I had been exploring real versus virtual reality in performative, environmentally situated work for many years before Ana Mendieta was accepted into the Intermedia Program at The University of Iowa. It was only in the context of my program that she began to produce the work for which she is best known.

In your photographs we can perceive some sort of romantic features while, at the same time, you distort the bodies of your models and make their faces no longer visible. What was the idea behind combining these two opposing mechanism together?

**HB:** There are no 'romantic features' in my work. My body/ sculptures have no gender value. I have always moved toward the concept of abstract reality.

Intermedia is for you a way of showing the world around us, placing yourself between different cultures, places, worlds: everything you do in any medium is related to an ineffable experience of your life. How does this affect the viewer? According to you, is there a 'right' way to experience your works?

**HB:** The central question that motivates me in constructing these intermedia works is the observer/observed aspect. I work in a performative mode which allows me to explore chance and the unconscious. My work acts as catalysts in activating the sensitivity of the observer.

What do you consider as 'magic-spots' in nature? How do they affect your work?

**HB:** What appears to be landscape is really the body in relation to an interplay with light. The dematerialization of the image, the radically microcosmic experience of it, is both abstract and real: it is reality abstracted.

## EVENT LISTINGS

**03 May 2012 at 13.00 – 13.30**

**Art Exchange, University of Essex**

**Admission Free**

**Curators Lunchtime Tour and Q&A Time**

The curators will take the participants on a tour of the gallery explaining and elaborating the reasons of their curatorial choice. The tour will be followed by Q&A time.

**07 May 2012 – 10 May 2012 at 17.00 – 20.00**

**LTB 2 and 6.300, University of Essex**

**Admission Free**

**Film Screenings**

A series of five films will be screened as a joint event by Seeking Beyond the Surface and The 15th Annual Graduate Conference in Philosophy.

The films will develop and elaborate the main topics of the exhibition and conference and each one will be introduced by lecturers of the School of Philosophy and Art History of the university of Essex.

**12 May 2012 at 9.30**

**Senate Room and 1N1.4.1, University of Essex**

**12 May 2012 at 18.30 – 20.00**

**Art Exchange, University of Essex**

**The 15th Annual International Graduate Conference in Philosophy, University of Essex – Perception and drink reception**

University of Essex' School of Philosophy will host a series of talk on the topic of Perception.

The conference will be followed by a drinks reception in the Art Exchange gallery.

**17 May 2012 at 18.30 – 19.30**

**Art Exchange, University of Essex**

**Admission Free**

**Fluid Reflections: Oscar Muñoz**

Dr. Rebecca Breen, lecturer at the Centre for Curatorial Studies at the University of Essex, will engage with the themes of disintegration and frustration in Muñoz's practice and artist's own elaboration of (self-)portraiture.

**Week starting on the 21 May 2012 (date and time tbc)**

**Art Exchange, University of Essex**

**Admission Free**

**Family activities and workshops**

A series of children workshops and other family activities will be held as part of the education program of the exhibitions.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**The curators would like to thank all those who have helped to make this exhibition possible.**

**Great appreciation to the following individuals at the University of Essex for their support and advice:**

Matthew Poole, Co-Director, Centre for Curatorial Studies, University of Essex

Michaela Giebelhausen, Co-Director, Centre for Curatorial Studies, University of Essex

Rebecca Breen, Lecturer, Lecture, Centre for Curatorial Studies, University of Essex

Jessica Kenny, Art Exchange Gallery Director

James Barnard, Installation Technician

Fred Robinson, Walrus Art Moves

David Batho and Karmen Cheung, Department of Philosophy, University of Essex

All Department of Philosophy and Art History staff and students

**Many thanks for the help and assistance from our lenders:**

Maya Pfeifer, Daros Latinamerica, Zürich

Eva Langret, The Wapping Project Bankside, London

**All our participating artists:**

Hans Breder

Elina Brotherus

Adad Hannah

Joan Jonas

Oscar Muñoz

**A special thanks to the following individuals for their support and dedication:**

Matthew Bowman, Arts on 5/School of Philosophy and Art History

Libby Armstrong, Deputy School Administrator, Art History Department, University of Essex

**Graphic design team, from Colchester Institute:**

Emily Phillips — Student

Adam Benton — Student

Laura Jackson-Willis — Tutor

**Sponsorship and in-kind support from:**

Lush

Colchester and Ipswich Museums

Print Essex

**Seeking Beyond the Surface is curated by Chih-Chi Wang, Pei-Hsin Chiang, Isadora Liquori, and Min-Huei Tsai from the MA Gallery Studies and Critical Curating, Centre for Curatorial Studies (CCS), School of Philosophy and Art History, University of Essex**