

recognize himself, discovers that woman has substituted her own image in a text which speaks of and from her body (Feral, pp. 58-59).

Wieland has found a rather simpler substitution which achieves similar metaphorical ends: the mirror which she manipulates towards the discovery of her own body is broken. Although the mirror has been transformed into a dangerous, jagged shard, nevertheless she wields it in transgressive, joyful play.

The Transparent Veil

The last shot returns to the mysterious, nonsensical title of the film, *Water Sark*. For Wieland, "sark" was simply a word which she loved at the time, a nonsense word which she vaguely associated with an ancient word for boat, and which she playfully substituted for almost anything (Interview, 20/5/86). Water, the source of creativity and a metaphor for the unconscious, was for her then the central content of the film: hence the title water thing, water play, water sport, water sark. Now however, the Old Teutonic meaning of "sark" as a garment, a chemise or surplice worn next to the skin, has greater resonance. The title *Water Sark* recalls the light-reflecting and light-refracting transparent plastic veil which is used to cover the face, suggesting the relation of the unconscious and the body, the interface between feminine identity and image.

The denouement of the film, the final sequence, plays variations upon the elements that have accrued throughout the film. Replacing the prism and lens with a magnifying glass, Wieland progresses through a similar process of discovery of the body, fooling around first with objects – such as the boat – shot through the glass, and then finally coming to an ecstatic play with her own image, twirling the glass in front of the camera so that it distorts and then reveals her reflection. Most of this final sequence, whether manipulating the mirror, the magnifying glass, the transparent plastic material, or the toys, is connected centrally to Wieland's body, now released from contemplation into ecstatic play. Comic, lighthearted, the joyful result of her discovery of the body is summed up in the last shot of the film, a medium close-up of Wieland's fingers dabbling in water: an image of sensual pleasure at a peak of relaxed fulfillment.

¹ Lauren Rabinovitz, "The Development of Feminist Strategies in the Experimental Films of Joyce Wieland," *Film Reader*, no. 5 (1982), 133.

² Kass Banning, "Textual Excess in Joyce Wieland's *Hand-Tinting*," *Cine-Action*, No. 5 (May 1986), 14.

³ Hélène Cixous, "La Jeune Née: An Excerpt," *Diacritics*, vol. 7, no. 2 (Summer 1977), 68.

⁴ Josette Feral, "Towards a Theory of Displacement," *Sub-Stance*, no. 32 (1981), 60; and "Antigone or the Irony of the Tribe," *Diacritics*, vol. 8, no. 3 (Sept. 1978).

⁵ Brian Duren, "Cixous' Exorbitant Texts," *Sub-Stance*, vol. 32 (1981), 48.

⁶ Carolyn Burke, "Irigaray Through the Looking Glass," *Feminist Studies*, vol. 7, no. 2 (Summer 1981), 289.

⁷ Verena Conley, "Missexual Mystery," *Diacritics*, vol. 7, no. 2 (Summer 1977), 73.

⁸ Katerina Thomadaki, *Film Portraits of Women by Women* (Catalogue, The Funnel, 1986), p. 12.

⁹ Dot Tuer, "Mirages of Difference, Dreams of the Body," *Film Portraits of Women by Women* (Catalogue, The Funnel, 1986), pp. 17-18.



PENTHOUSE PHOTO-ESSAY (December 1984)

Put out your hand to touch
the taut breasts
of the treed women

strung up in rope cocoons—
a Japanese Art form, they say,
not pornography

kiss the cold drops from their
lips
these women in bondage
waiting

white teeth
closed over biting words
in silken mouths.

Pat Wheatley
Kingston, Ontario

THE FRAME

For Linda Pyke

Prisoner she writes.
writes a book of and
is herself contained.

Her poems barred
by the black outline

she is known by.
Photographers
shoot from waist up.

The way she describes
herself, blonde curls,
blue eyes, nose peeling
from the sun: true

But the centre she talks
of stops.

She is Irish oracular
laughter, tv's talking
head come to feast.

Sometimes she lets
her cheek flush, her
Elizabethan hand
flutter for another
cigarette.

"I have tunnel vision,"
she says. "That's how
I get where I want."

I dreamed last night
she was up and walking
along the lake
beside me
at heart level.

Penny Kemp
Toronto, Ontario