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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

ART

## Janet Biggs

The term “overview effect” was coined to describe an astronaut's epiphany in orbit: the smallness of Earth, when seen from space, catalyzes a new understanding of humanity's fate. It's also the title that Biggs, a video artist, chose for this show of two pieces that she made during a residency at the Mars Desert Research Station, in Utah. The facility serves as an astonishing set, haunted by the spectre of an uninhabitable Earth and by the fantasy of a Mars exodus. The three-channel work “Weighing Life Without a Scale,” from 2018, which screened through the end of June, juxtaposed footage from the Utah station with that of current forced migrations, including Yemenis fleeing war and Ethiopians driven from their homes by drought. Starting on July 8, the single-channel piece “Seeing Constellations in the Darkness Between Stars” explores the nuanced relationships humans have to the artificially intelligent prosthetics and rover robotics they design and operate.

— *Johanna Fateman*