

CRISTIN TIERNEY

July 8, 2021

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Janet Biggs The Armory Show

Booth #F11, Focus Section
Javits Center, New York

September 10-12, 2021
Preview Day: September 9, 2021

Cristin Tierney Gallery is pleased to participate in the inaugural edition of The Armory Show at the Javits Center. The gallery will present video and photography from artist Janet Biggs in Focus booth #F11, a section curated by CAM St. Louis Chief Curator Wassan Al-Khudhairi. The Armory Show opens Friday, September 10th, and continues through Sunday, September 12th.

In 2018, Janet Biggs completed a residency at the Mars Desert Research Station (MDRS) in Utah. Although MDRS does not have an artist-in-residency program, Biggs successfully lobbied to join a crew of scientists, researchers and future astronauts, living in a simulated Martian environment for

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several weeks. The data she and her crew collected while there will be used on future missions to Mars.

The video and photography to be exhibited at The Armory Show resulted from Biggs' residency in Utah. The photographs were taken at MDRS during EVAs (Extravehicular Activities), during which Biggs and her fellow residents completed assigned objectives. The artist's single-channel video explores the potential of robotics in both the celestial and earthly realms.

Titled *Seeing Constellations in the Darkness Between Stars*, Biggs' video combines footage from the Mars Society's University Rover Challenge with that of drummer Jason Barnes at Georgia Tech's Center for Music Technology. In the Challenge, potential Mars rovers compete to carry out various tasks. In Biggs' video their progress is set to a soundtrack by Barnes, who lost an arm in an accident and now wears a prosthetic with two drumsticks: one he controls, and one controlled by AI. At the apex of the video, the complicated link between man and machine becomes most evident as Barnes' drumming crescendos and stops while one of the robots tumbles down a hill. This suggests both the possibility and the limitation of robotics, while shining a spotlight on the creativity of human researchers.

This series of works, loosely titled *Like Walking on Mars*, previously debuted at the Museo de la Ciencia y el Cosmos and the Museo de la Naturaleza y el Hombre, both in Tenerife. This will be the first presentation of Janet Biggs' work at The Armory Show.

In conjunction with the Fair presentation, Cristin Tierney Gallery is excited to present an online survey of Biggs' work, entitled *(Un)common Denominators*. The survey will explore three main themes in Biggs' single-channel videos over the past two decades: the Anthropocene, the intersection between art and science, and the influence of extreme landscapes and situations on human limits. *(Un)common Denominators* launches on the gallery website on July 19th and continues through August 29th.

Janet Biggs' (b. 1959, Harrisburg, PA) work focuses on extreme landscapes and situations, drawing connections between physical terrains and psychological, societal, or political dynamics. She has had solo exhibitions and film screenings at the SCAD Museum of Art, University of Waterloo Art Gallery, Blaffer Museum of Art, Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Tampa Museum of Art, Skulpturenmuseum Glaskasten Marl, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Mint Museum of Art, Everson Museum of Art, Gibbes Museum of Art, and the Rhode Island School of Design Museum, among others. She is the recipient of numerous grants, including the 2018 Guggenheim Fellowship, the Electronic Media and Film Program at the New York State Council on the Arts Award, the Arctic Circle Fellowship/Residency, Art Matters, Inc., the Wexner Center Media Arts Program Residency, the Anonymous Was a Woman Award, and the NEA Fellowship Award.

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Her works are in the collections of the SCAD Museum of Art, Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain (FRAC), Zabłudowicz Collection, Skulpturenmuseum Glaskasten Marl (Ruhr Kunst Museen), Tampa Museum of Art, High Museum, Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Mint Museum of Art, Gibbes Museum of Art, and the New Britain Museum of Art. Biggs is a member of The Explorer's Club and New Museum's cultural incubator, NEW INC with the support of Science Sandbox. Last year, she sent a project up to the International Space Station as part of MIT Media Lab's Space Exploration Initiative. Her studio is in New York.

Image: Janet Biggs, *Seeing Constellations in the Darkness Between Stars*, 2018. single-channel HD video with sound, 16:9 format. 6:47 minutes. Courtesy the artist and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York.

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