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Janet Biggs

Path of Totality

September 9 – October 24, 2026
Opening Reception: Wednesday, September 9, 6:00 to 8:00 pm

49 Walker Street
New York, NY 10013

Cristin Tierney Gallery is pleased to present ***Path of Totality***, a solo exhibition of new and recent video installations by **Janet Biggs**. This is the artist's third solo show with the gallery. The exhibition opens Wednesday, September 9th and will be on view through Saturday, October 24th. The artist will be present at the opening reception on September 9th from 6:00 to 8:00 pm.

For decades, Biggs has traveled to extreme environments, using the journey as a framework to explore how physical landscapes mirror the psychological and emotional terrain of human life. *Path of Totality* extends this inquiry by bringing together two video installations set in vastly different environments:

Eclipse (Antarctica, December 4, 2021), 2022–24, and *Eclipse (Amazon, September 7, 1858)*, 2025. Through the juxtaposition of contemporary footage with historical writings, navigational accounts, and inherited memory, Biggs collapses geographical and temporal distance. The solar eclipse becomes both an astronomical event and a metaphor for human psychology: a moment when light is blocked, orientation is disrupted, and familiar conditions are temporarily transformed.

In *Eclipse (Antarctica, December 4, 2021,* 2022–24, Biggs travels to the Chilean coast of Antarctica to witness a rare total solar eclipse. Dense fog obscures the event, subverting the purpose of the voyage and shifting the work away from spectacle toward unpredictability. In place of direct observation, she interweaves footage from the expedition with navigational histories, psychological studies of extreme isolation, and poetic texts, including Yakut accounts from Eastern Siberia and the writings of nineteenth-century astronomer Lt. James Melville Gilliss. What emerges is less a record of an eclipse than an inquiry into what it means to locate oneself when visibility fails.

Biggs expands her engagement with Gilliss in *Eclipse (Amazon, September 7, 1858)*, 2025, tracing his 1858 expedition through the rainforest of the Amazon. Echoing the disorientation that shapes *Eclipse (Antarctica, December 4, 2021)*, the work brings the uncertainties of the rainforest into dialogue with the artist's mother's experience of sundowner's syndrome, connecting the cosmic reversal of an eclipse to more intimate forms of disorientation. Personal narrative, environmental precarity, and colonial records converge in a meditation on how memory is shaped by what can and cannot be seen.

Across both installations, Biggs treats the eclipse not simply as a celestial phenomenon, but as a condition of altered perception—a threshold between science and mythology, observation and imagination, the personal and the planetary. As darkness interrupts the expected order of things and the body loses its bearings, the works ask not only what disappears, but also what becomes newly perceptible in moments of obscurity. Moving through remote landscapes while remaining deeply intimate, *Path of Totality* suggests that the search for orientation is also a search for relation: to the histories that shape us, and to the instabilities that we increasingly share with the natural world.

Janet Biggs's (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, film screenings, and performances at the SCAD Museum of Art, Bechtler Museum of Modern Art, Virginia Tech's Institute for Creativity, Arts, and Technology, Jeu de Paume, Taubman 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 many others.

Biggs is the recipient of numerous grants, including the 2018 Guggenheim Fellowship, Moore College of Art & Design 2022 Visionary Woman Award, Electronic Media and Film Program at the New York State Council on the Arts Award, Media Arts Assistant Fund Grant, Arctic Circle Fellowship/Residency, Art Matters, Inc., Wexner Center Media Arts Program Residency, the Anonymous Was a Woman Award, and the NEA Fellowship Award. Her works are in the collections of the SCAD Museum of Art, Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain (FRAC), 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 lives and works in New York.

Founded in 2010, Cristin Tierney Gallery is a contemporary art gallery with a deep commitment to the presentation, development, and support of a roster of both established and emerging artists. Our program emphasizes artists engaged with critical theory and art history, with an emphasis on

conceptual, video, and performance art. Education and audience engagement are central to our mission. Cristin Tierney Gallery is a member of the ADAA (Art Dealers Association of America).

Image

Still from Janet Biggs, *Eclipse (Amazon, September 7, 1858)*, 2025. Three-channel HD video with spatial sound. 10:16 minutes.

Inquiries

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