

CRISTIN TIERNEY

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Janet Biggs *(Un)common Denominators*

Online Exhibition

Single-Channel Survey

July 19 – August 29, 2021

Cristin Tierney Gallery is pleased to present *(Un)common Denominators*, an online survey of **Janet Biggs'** single-channel videos. This exhibition takes a close look at the artist's work from the last two decades, building up to her debut presentation of new video and photography at The Armory Show in September. The viewing room opens today, July 19th, and continues through August 29th at crisintierney.com.

(Un)common Denominators examines Biggs' videos across three main themes in the artist's work: the Anthropocene, the intersection between art and science, and the

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influence of extreme landscapes and human limits. New art will be presented every two weeks, organized around these three subjects.

The works in the first viewing room explore the Anthropocene. Climate change, ecology, and its connection to issues such as human health and income inequality, are all addressed in Biggs' videos. *A Step on the Sun*, just over nine minutes long, follows a sulfur miner through the suffocating environment of the Ijen volcano in East Java, Indonesia, site of the world's largest sulfuric acid lake and where vents burn with blue flames. We watch as the miner collects hardened sulfur crystals and packs them into a basket. Amid clouds of toxic gas, he carries heavy loads up a steep, rocky path from the crater floor to the rim, then to a distant weigh-station. *A Step on the Sun* is a provocative mix of natural beauty and human exploitation—a perfect description of life in the Anthropocene. The other two videos in this section—*Fade to White*, set in the high Arctic, and *Point of No Return*, in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region of China's "Desert of Death"—similarly showcase environments that have been deeply impacted by human activity and global warming.

Viewing Room Schedule

- The Anthropocene, July 19 – August 1
 - *A Step on the Sun*, 2012
 - *Fade to White*, 2010
 - *Point of No Return*, 2013
- Between Art and Science, August 2-15
 - *Seeing Constellations in the Darkness Between Stars*, 2018
 - *Can't Find My Way Home*, 2014
- Extreme Landscapes and Situations, August 16-29
 - *Chamblee*, 2003
 - *Airs Above the Ground*, 2007
 - *Duet*, 2010
 - *Vanishing Point*, 2009

(Un)common Denominators provides a close look at Biggs' recent history of video work in anticipation of her solo presentation at The Armory Show from September 10-12, 2021. The artist's new video and photography will be on view in booth #F17 in the Focus section. A digital catalog for *(Un)common Denominators* is forthcoming.

Janet Biggs' (b. 1959, Harrisburg, PA) work focuses on extreme landscapes and situations, drawing connections between physical terrains and psychological, societal, or political

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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 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.

Her works are in the collections of the SCAD Museum of Art, Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain (FRAC), Zabudowicz 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.

Founded in 2010, Cristin Tierney Gallery is a contemporary art gallery located on The Bowery with a deep commitment to the presentation, development and support of a roster of both established and emerging artists. Its program emphasizes artists engaged with critical theory and art history, with an emphasis on conceptual, video, and performance art. Education and audience engagement is central to our mission. Cristin Tierney Gallery is a member of the ADAA (Art Dealers Association of America).

Image

Video still from Janet Biggs, *Can't Find My Way Home*, 2015. single-channel HD video with sound. 9:45 minutes. Courtesy the artist and Cristin Tierney Gallery, New York.

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