

# NEWS

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## CENTERPIECE OF NEW COLLECTION EXHIBITION IS PIERRE HUYGHE'S ROOM-SIZE FILM INSTALLATION *A JOURNEY THAT WASN'T*

***JOURNEYS TO NOWHERE*, OPENING AUGUST 14, PROVIDES EPIC VISIONS OF EXPEDITION AND ADVENTURE**



Pierre Huyghe, *A Journey That Wasn't*, 2006  
 Super 16 mm film transferred to HD video (color, sound)  
 21:41 min.  
 A project of the Public Art Fund, New York  
 Purchased jointly by Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, T. B. Walker Acquisition Fund, 2006, and Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, with funds from the Painting and Sculpture Committee  
 Photo: Danny Bright, courtesy Marian Goodman Gallery, New York  
 © 2006 Pierre Huyghe. All rights reserved.

Minneapolis, July 18, 2008—*Journeys to Nowhere: Selections from the Collection*, on view at the Walker Art Center August 14–December 7, 2008, has as its centerpiece Pierre Huyghe's room-size film installation *A Journey That Wasn't* (2006), which premiered at the 2006 Whitney Biennial and was acquired jointly by the Walker and the Whitney Museum of American Art. The piece shares space in the exhibition with works by other artists chosen for broad thematic connections to expedition and adventure.

Huyghe's practice explores the convergence of reality and fiction, memory and history, and various modes of cultural reproduction through the use of a diverse range of media that includes film, video, sound, animation, sculpture, and architecture. His work finds a spectacular manifestation in *A Journey That Wasn't*, which merges a real Antarctic travelogue with its staged epilogue. "For me, this piece is about discovery and its aftermath," says exhibition co-curator Doryun Chong. "I'm also interested in the idea of measuring the landscape and topography suggested by it."

In order to create *A Journey That Wasn't*, Huyghe recruited a group of artists in early 2005 to join him in search of an elusive albino penguin said to inhabit an unnamed island on the Antarctic ice shelf. That fall, Huyghe staged and filmed a re-creation of the journey on an ice rink in New York's Central Park—complete with black sculptures resembling icebergs, penguins, and a 40-piece orchestra performing a composition interpreting the Antarctic landscape. He combined this footage with imagery from the real expedition to create a singular film installation that blurs the lines between fact, fiction, and representation. The resulting work is more than a purely cerebral or aesthetic exercise, however. *A Journey That Wasn't* also suggests a range of complex and contemporary social topics—in

particular, humanity's simultaneous destruction of nature and yearning for utopia.



Joseph Cornell, *Andromeda (Sand Fountain)*, 1953–1956  
wood, glass, wine glass, paper collage, sand, paint  
14 x 7-3/4 x 3-3/4 in. overall  
Collection Walker Art Center  
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Russell Cowles (Elizabeth Bates Cowles Foundation) and Judy and Kenneth Dayton, 1971

These contradictory tendencies, as well as the question of representation that Huyghe has consistently explored, have in various other ways been addressed in contemporary art. Works on view by Joseph Cornell and Christopher Williams expand these themes in different directions. Cornell's intimately scaled boxes containing scavenged images and objects are microcosms of or windows onto places never visited but intensely imagined. While conjuring utterly private dreams, they give expression to universal human yearnings for the unknown and mysterious. Williams' black-and-white photographs of glass flower models—used for teaching at the Botanical Museum at Harvard University—are from his 1989 series *Angola to Vietnam*, which depicts flowers from countries where politically motivated “disappearances” have taken place, as reported by the Commission on International Humanitarian Issues in 1985. In each of the photographs in the series the coincidence of present-day terrorism and the appropriation of exotic plants from far off places evoke a web of associations about the legacy of colonialism and the classification of life, among others. Recently acquired works by artists Douglas Huebler and Ranjani Shettar will also be featured. “These artists’ actual and figurative wanderlust is infectious—their works come together in the exhibition to provide both epic visions and poetic representations of voyages to real places and treks to more internal geographies,” says co-curator Elizabeth Carpenter.

## Gallery Admission

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Christopher Williams, *Guatemala (from Angola to Vietnam\*)* 1989, *Blaschka Model 227, Genus no. 1660, Family Orchidaceae, Lycaste Skinneri (Batem.) Lindl.*, 1986  
gelatin silver print  
20-5/16 x 16-3/4 x 1-1/2 in. framed  
Collection Walker Art Center  
Justin Smith Purchase Fund, 2007

\$10 adults; \$8 seniors (65+); \$6 students/teens (with ID)

Free to Walker members and children ages 12 and under.

Free with a paid ticket to a same-day Walker event.

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**The Walker Art Center is located at 1750 Hennepin Avenue—where Hennepin meets Lyndale—one block off Highways I-94 and I-394, in Minneapolis.**

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