

WILLIAM HOLMAN GALLERY



William Holman Gallery artist Liene Bosque featured in The Chicago Reader

In "Of Walking," artists amble their lives away

A new show at the Museum of Contemporary Photography features the pedestrian musings of artists from Vito Acconci to Sohei Nishino.

By [Andrea Gronvall](#)

"Of Walking"

Reception Thu 10/17, 5-7 PM

Through 12/20

Museum of Contemporary Photography

Columbia College

600 S. Michigan

mocp.org

free

In its early days, photography was often confined to the studio, where subjects posed stock-still for as long as it took an image to be fixed on a glass plate. When film cameras became portable and, later, handheld, the medium easily moved outdoors, keeping pace with dramatic urban growth. But documenting that change wasn't always the focus; some shooters used the form for contemplation as they wandered on foot, their work the visible transmission of their musings. The photographer became the flaneur, that traditional walker alert to all the city's paradoxes.

"Of Walking," curated by associate director Karen Irvine, explores the connections between pedestrians and profundity. Several large works by the Japanese artist Sohei Nishino dominate the main-floor gallery. Part of an ongoing project, they're collages of hundreds of black-and-white 35mm location shots that Nishino took in

his rambles through a chosen city. In each, a central artery—the Thames in *Diorama Map London* (2010), a railway line in *Diorama Map Tokyo* (2004)—leads the viewer on a circuitous route across urban sprawl, following Nishino's footsteps and sensory memory.

Although metropolises are key to many of this exhibit's entries, others take the viewer farther afield. In her project "Thrice Upon a Time," the Australian photographer Odette England shows the devastating impact the 1989 loss of their farm had on her family. In 2005 she returned to document her old home; in 2010 she invited her parents along, asking them to strap the large negatives of her 2005 photos under their feet as they walked the property. Scratched, punctured, and shredded, the negatives produced images that are literal records of tears in the family fabric.

Two American artworks that are lighter in spirit are found at the top of the gallery stairs. Inspired by early stop-motion photographs by Eadweard Muybridge, Jim Campbell's *Motion and Rest 2* (2002) is a custom electronics installation that uses 768 LEDs to silhouette a man as he huffs and puffs along difficult terrain. Nearby, [Vito Acconci](#)'s *12 Steps* (1977) strings together a dozen photos the artist snapped of a bemused theater audience as he walked across a stage.

Selected street photographs from MoCP's permanent collection, including images by [Dorothea Lange](#), [Garry Winogrand](#), and [Dawoud Bey](#), share space with an interactive installation by two conceptual artists, Liene Bosquê and Nicole Seisler. Using porcelain blocks to make impressions of architectural elements they spot while roaming a city, the duo here riff on a Japanese garden, arranging their molded blocks to leave three-dimensional reliefs in a sandbox. On opening night, the artists will guide neighborhood tours on which visitors can mold their own impressions; some will later be added to the exhibit.