This is a pair of images from a fascinating short movie released by the OSIRIS-Rex Team, showing their first rehearsal for the mission’s sample collection event. The movie shows the SamCam instrument’s field of view as the spacecraft approaches and moves away from asteroid Bennu’s surface. The rehearsal brought the spacecraft through the first two maneuvers of the sampling event to a point ~65 m above the surface, before backing the spacecraft away.

The two images here were recorded over a ten-minute span between the execution of the rehearsal’s “Checkpoint” burn, ~120 m above the surface, and the completion of the back-away burn. The spacecraft’s sampling arm, called the “Touch-And-Go Sample Acquisition Mechanism (TAGSAM) is visible in the central part of each image. The largest boulder in the sequence of images is ~13 m across. The sample collection event is scheduled for August 2020.