

SIGHTLINES



FUGUE STATE

Tinariwen, a band from northern Mali, create a type of music I'd never heard before. Papo Colo and [the late] Jeanette Ingberman, who co-founded Exit Art in New York, first played them for me many years ago. In 2011, the group was on tour, and reached out to us at Ballroom Marfa. The musicians had somehow heard about us; perhaps the idea of playing in an American desert appealed to them. We booked them for a concert, and it turned out to be a trance-inducing experience.

Tinariwen performing at Ballroom Marfa, Nov. 3, 2011.



FAIRFAX DORN

Ballroom Marfa's cofounder shares five recent insights with Chris Chang.

What exactly is Ballroom Marfa? "We had an idea," explains executive director Fairfax Dorn, "to create a place in the desert that would honor Donald Judd's legacy—but as a counterpoint we wanted to collaborate with living artists working in reaction to the landscape." Since its launch in 2003, Dorn and cofounder Virginia Lebermann have made Ballroom Marfa into a diversified cultural arts platform housed in a converted 1927 dancehall. In addition to exhibitions, it offers performing arts events, a lecture series (the Marfa Dialogues, which traveled to New York last fall), and a community education and outreach program. The nonprofit art space's horizon continues to expand: design and development have begun for the Drive-In, a futuristic outdoor stage-and-screen facility that can accommodate 2,000 people and their cars.

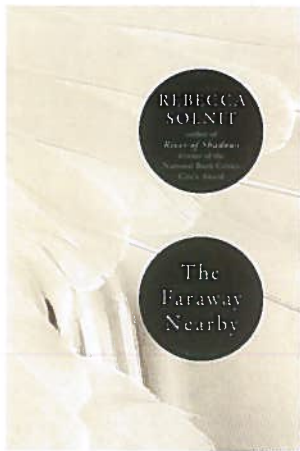
REMNANTS

I spend a lot of time thinking about fossils—physical, in the sense of petrified bones, as well as emotional remains. Ancient volcanoes and meteor craters are also, in a way, fossil-like: they are part of our landscape and part of the way we came to be here. When you walk through James Turrell's Roden Crater, it's like walking through the retina of a giant eye. It's humbling—and transformative—because you sense your mortality and realize how small we humans are.

TEMPS PERDU

I love to drive, especially when it allows me to make up for lost time. I don't watch auto racing, but I've always fantasized about trying it. The artist Matthew Day Jackson, a dear friend, is a real-life competitive drag racer who relates the sport to modern sculpture. He's promised to take me, but first I need to get certified.

Video still of Matthew Day Jackson's race car at Raceway Park, Englishtown, N.J., July 12, 2013.



INTIMACY

I've been reading Rebecca Solnit's *The Faraway Nearby* (2013). I'd say it's about the nature of personal life—where we come from and why we do the things we do. Solnit brings the reader to a very private place by writing about her relationship with her mother, who died of Alzheimer's. It's autobiographical while also drawing on history: she jumps from Greek mythology to environmental issues to an episode of cannibalism in the Arctic. Reading the book, I feel as if I'm taking a walk with her—and getting lost.

