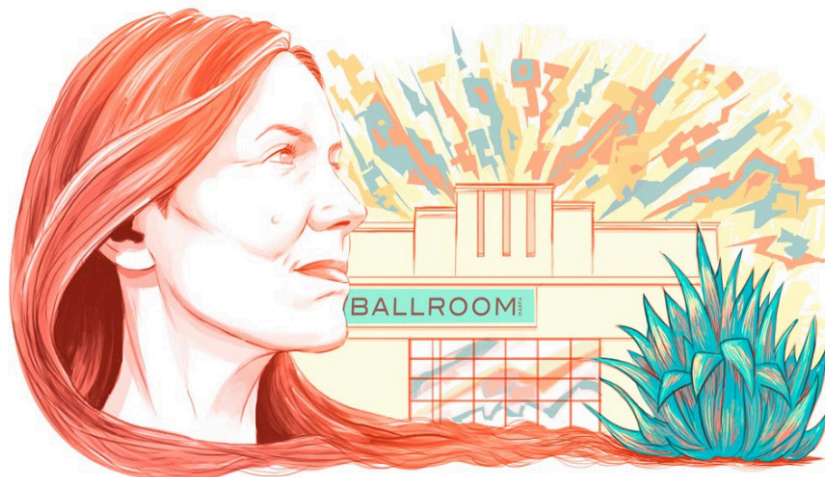


PEOPLE: FAIRFAX DORN

Arts innovator honored by Artpace San Antonio

By Allison Copenbarger Vance – April, 2016



Fairfax Dorn's relationship to art in Texas runs deep. She was born in San Antonio, attended the University of Texas at Austin, co-founded Ballroom Marfa and served as a guest curator and interim program director for the Linda Pace Foundation. This month, Artpace San Antonio will honor Dorn at its annual fundraising gala.

Adopted Hometown

Dorn grew up in Corpus Christi and Denver, but some of her favorite childhood memories take place in San Antonio: playing in the backyard of her grandmother's home on Bushnell Avenue, seeing animals at the zoo and eating tacos at La Fonda. "Everything about it has always felt like, and still feels like, home to me, even though I never actually lived there full-time," she says. In 2012-13, while working at Ballroom Marfa, Dorn briefly served as interim program director at the Linda Pace Foundation after Steven Evans resigned, and she began to appreciate the Alamo City in a new way. "What Linda Pace has given San Antonio is so informative and valuable and inspiring," she says. Dorn oversaw the start of the installation of "Adam" by Arturo Herrera, on display at the northwest corner of Main Avenue and Commerce Street until the end of this year.

Ballroom Marfa

Dorn is best known for cofounding Ballroom Marfa, though she says it began mostly by accident. She had been living in New York City, feeling constrained by the high costs. She moved to Terlingua in 2001 to focus on her art and, over time,

found herself gravitating to Marfa. She and her friend Virginia Lebermann had often daydreamed about creating an art space, envisioning a big-city gallery. Then in 2003, a 4,500-square-foot dance hall was put up for sale in Marfa. They were sold. And though it was more than 400 miles away, Dorn says Artpace's mission to bring international artists to Texas served as an inspiration.

Next Phase

Almost two years ago, Dorn transitioned from executive director of Ballroom Marfa to artistic director, and returned to New York City. She married art executive Marc Glimcher and still travels to Marfa regularly. And though she has been enjoying more family time, she said she misses home. "I think about Texas all the time. I miss all the aspects of it: the birds, the grass, the relaxed nature, even the experience of art is just different there."

Fact File

Age: 41

Education: BA in Art History, Studio Art at the University of Texas

Resume: Cofounder of Ballroom Marfa and the Marfa Dialogues

Name Game: Fairfax is traditionally a boy's name meaning fair haired, but Dorn's mother loved it as a girl's name.

Artpace The Happening: April 9; artpace.org