

AVENUE

Supermoon Shines on Marfa

By Kristopher Fraser | November 16, 2016



Fairfax Dorn and David Byrne

Talking Heads alum David Byrne and Transparent creator Jill Soloway were honored on Monday night, when Ballroom Marfa hosted its New York Gala presented by Roberto Cavalli. Ballroom Marfa is a nonprofit cultural arts foundation based in Marfa, a town of 2,000 people in Far West Texas. It was founded in 2003 by Virginia Lebermann and Fairfax Dorn, as a non-profit organization and dynamic, contemporary cultural arts space where varied perspectives and issues are explored through visual arts, film, music, and performance. The gallery is housed in a converted dancehall that dates to 1927.

The honorees were presented with the inaugural Matthew Day Jackson-designed “Off the Grid” Award, recognizing creative figures with an independent spirit who blaze new paths and develop imaginative ways of experiencing the world.

Comedian Sandra Bernhard presented Soloway’s award. Soloway, a fierce feminist called for a matriarchal revolution, gave a reading of Zoe Leonard’s poem I Want a President, where she states that she wants a president who belongs to numerous marginalized communities including cancer survivors and queer women.

The hosts, Dorn and Lebermann, along with Co-Chairs Allison Sarofim, Andres Santo Domingo, Rashid Johnson, and Robert Norton and honorees were joined by Poppy Delevingne, Derek Blasberg, Lauren Santo Domingo, Grace Fuller, Coco Brandolini, Amy Astley, Arden Wohl, Yvonne Force and Leo Villareal, Jon Neidich and Alesandra Brawn, Aurélie Bidermann, Rainer Judd, Peter Doig, Edie Parker’s Brett Heyman, Whitney Director Adam Weinberg, Adam Lindemann and Amalia Dayan, Maria Giulia Maramotti, Claire Distenfeld, Becca Cason Thrash, Ariel Foxman, PC Valmorbida, stylist Kate Young, Carlos Mota, and Carlos Souza, among other leaders in the field of visual and performing arts.

The dress code for the evening was “Desert Bohemian” which some people took very literally. Apparently desert scarves are the latest rage. Some played it safe though and just went for Cavalli ensembles. Not that a tiered floral print Cavalli is safe, exactly.

Guests got to sip cocktails from independent small-batch producer Casa Dragones’s tequila bar. If you wanted to know how your energy was reading, there were aura readings by Radiant Human were available as well.



L to R: Arden Wohl and Jonah Freeman; Jill Solloway, Arne Glimcher



L to R: Douglas Friedman and Amy Astley; Allison Sarofim; Jamie Prentice and Annelise Winter

Works by Ed Ruscha, Donald Judd, John Baldessari, Billy Al Bengston, Paul McCarthy, Rosy Keyser, Kenny Scharf, and Sam Falls were on display as part of the evening's silent auction presented by Paddle8.

San Antonio's all-female mariachi band Las Alteñas serenaded guests as they took their seats under string lights reminiscent of a Far West Texas night sky. Tables were adorned with amethyst geode keepsakes along with bud vases of wildflowers and potted succulents. Dorn remarked, "We're all the way out there in Marfa, Texas, but we're also making a difference in the world." Guests were transported with a performance by country singer/songwriter Terry Allen.

Under the glow of the Supermoon, Dorn toasted the honorees as creatives who "help us understand what it means to be human." Ballroom Marfa honored Byrne not only for his extraordinary output as founding member, songwriter, lead singer and guitarist for the Talking Heads, but also for his innovative contributions to the visual arts. Ballroom Marfa also honored Soloway for her exceptional work in film, television, and transgender activism. Bernhard commented, "Now more than ever, we're going to be depending on artists to bring that sort of consciousness," introducing Soloway as someone who "constantly puts herself on the line." A show of hands at the end of the night revealed that about half of guests had been to Marfa, though all left wanting to go. Texas is certainly lovely this time of year, n'est ce pas?



L to R: Sandra Bernhard; Kristina O'Neill and Magnus Berger



L to R: Christina Lonsdale; Rocky Barnette and Graham Reynolds



L to R: Christina Lonsdale, Justin Orford and Natasha Randelli