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Mabel Dodge Luhan in Taos

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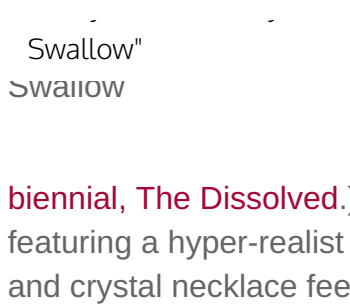
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Part of [May 2010](#) by [Katy Crocker](#)

Austin Contemporary on the Rise

There are several progressions occurring in the Austin art scene. Not the least of which the [Blanton Museum of Arts](#) interest in contemporary art. Curator Annette DiMeo Carlozzi joins 32 international artists, who explore the topic of desire within their art. "Desire" consists of a variety of media, including an excellent representation of contemporary video art: *Tower* by Chris Doyle; *Electric Sheep* by Amy Globus; *Love Film* by Isabell Heimerdinger; and *Long Road to Mazatlán* by Isaac Julien. Exploring the experience of wanting, reiterating moments of denial of a lusted object,

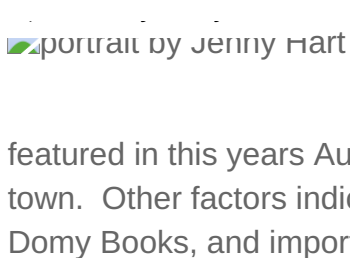
and revealing unabashed ecstasy in dreaming of the ardor, sexual desires are excavated here. Asking the viewer to recall her own latent yearnings, “Desire” is an enjoyable way to spend an afternoon. **Below: Marilyn Minters Crystal Swallow**

Swallow"
swallow

The Austin-Santa Fe connection is noted. Jeanne and Michael Klein of Santa Fe donated *Crystal Swallow* to The Blanton. The Kleins are dedicated to bringing important contemporary art to the museum, in turn. (They are honorees at this summers edition of **SITE Santa Fe biennial, The Dissolved.**) The subject of *Crystal Swallow* literally chokes on her own desires, featuring a hyper-realist woman: her mouth pursed across the canvas, her red lips wet with fervor, and crystal necklace feeding her delusion.

Also dealing in the sexually desirous is the exhibition “Texas Crude” at outsider art venue **Co-Lab**. Co-Lab attracts young, schooled and unschooled artists of Austin, who are interested in exhibiting their work on their terms. Participating artists hang exhibitions, which are quickly recurring every week. Co-Lab is, as the art is, rough with exposed beams revealing insulation material. But, theres beer and smiles. “Texas Crude” features: boobs, butts, and boners rendered in the form of drawings and paintings.

The eastside, where both Co-Lab and Domy Books are located, is representative of the eclectic mix of cultures residing in Austin, with far more grit and local colour. Domy Books is not only a bookstore, but also a gallery space. The store curates a remarkable collection of international/national contemporary art, and design books with new titles “Street Art New York” by Rojo and Harrington; and **Eileen Myless** “The Importance of Being Iceland.” Upcoming exhibition, opening May 1, features drawings from **Jenny Hart**. Harts drawings are a collection of portraits from her high school yearbook, kids she grew up with in Iowa.

portrait by Jenny Hart

“Texas Crude” curator Matthew Winters said he had a total of eighty artists participating in the show, and the opening night turnout was reflective of its popularity. The exhibition was featured in this years Austin Art Alliances “Art Week Tour,” which listed art events occurring around town. Other factors indicative of Austins burgeoning art scene are the success of venues like Domy Books, and important contemporary art programming at The Blanton.

With the anticipated growth projected for Austin, mentioned in Forbes Best Places for Business and Careers, and its ability to support creatives and big businesses, the city has the infrastructure to receive internationally/nationally recognized artists, and art venues. Predictably, contemporary art will become an ever-increasing part of Austins identity.

Bodytronix just played at **Austins Fusebox Festival** off gigs at SXSW and the DUMBO Interactive festival in Brooklyn.

Bodytronix live PA at Switched On during SXSW



(top photo: Interior of *Domy Books* in Austin, TX. credit: *Carling Hale*)

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