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## THE CONTEMPORARY AUSTIN ANNOUNCES 8 ARTISTS SELECTED FOR THE 2020 CRIT GROUP

**DECEMBER 20, 2019 – AUSTIN, TEXAS** –The Contemporary Austin is pleased to announce the newest class of its Crit Group, an annual program that aims to build a network of critical support for working artists dedicated to growing their artistic practices. The 2020 class includes artists working in a wide range of two-and three-dimensional media, including painting, drawing, sculpture, ceramic, textiles, installation, performance, video, digital art, and public art. More information about the program can be found at [thecontemporaryaustin.org/critgroup](http://thecontemporaryaustin.org/critgroup).

### Selected artists for the 2020 Crit Group are:

- Annie Arnold: [anniearnold.com](http://anniearnold.com)
- Rakhee Jain Desai: [rakheejaindesai.com](http://rakheejaindesai.com)
- Lydia Garcia: [lydiagarcia.com](http://lydiagarcia.com)
- Sean Ripple: [seanripple.net](http://seanripple.net)
- Alexandra Robinson [alexandrarobinsonart.com](http://alexandrarobinsonart.com)
- Saul Jerome E. San Juan: [sauljerome.com](http://sauljerome.com)
- Michael Stephen: [michaelestephen.com](http://michaelestephen.com)
- Cheyenne Weaver: [cheyenneweaver.com](http://cheyenneweaver.com)

These eight Austin artists were selected by Crit Group co-leaders Sterling Allen, Annette DiMeo Carlozzi, and Andrea Mellard from more than eighty applicants who submitted portfolios and written statements about their work. Bringing together artists with diverse practices, educational backgrounds, and art experiences, Crit Group 2020 will meet monthly beginning in January and continuing through summer. Sessions include traditional group art critique to provide peer feedback for a new body of work and current work in progress. Each artist will participate in two group critiques, receive one-on-one studio visits with Crit Group co-leaders and a gallerist for further professional feedback, and attend monthly sessions discussing the work that artists do when they are not making art. Topics addressed include writing an effective artist's bio and statement, applying for grants and residencies, arts marketing, sustaining a holistic creative life, relevant topics in the larger art world, and more. Informal art-related gatherings organized by the artists also help build a supportive community of peers.

The 2020 Crit Group will culminate in a group exhibition at Austin's [grayDUCK Gallery](http://grayDUCK Gallery), opening on August 8 and on view through September 6, 2020.

"I am incredibly proud of the way Austin's artistic community has embraced The Contemporary Austin's Crit Group program," Andrea Mellard, Director of Public Programs and Community Engagement said. "It is an honor to witness the artists take risks, push their work forward, and support one another through this process. I congratulate the 2020 Crit Group class and look forward to getting to know them and their work in the coming months."

In its six year history, The Contemporary Austin's Crit Group has now served fifty local artists. A full list of alumni, with links to images of their work, is featured on the museum's [website](http://thecontemporaryaustin.org/critgroup) at [thecontemporaryaustin.org/critgroup](http://thecontemporaryaustin.org/critgroup).

### **CRIT GROUP 2020 CO-LEADERS**

**Sterling Allen** holds an MFA in Sculpture from the Milton Avery Graduate School of Arts at Bard College. He is a co-founder and co-director of Okay Mountain, an artist collective and former gallery based in Austin. As a solo artist and in collaboration with Okay Mountain, he has exhibited, organized, and completed projects at venues throughout the United States and received several residencies, including the Artpace International Artist-in-Residence Program in San Antonio. He is currently an Assistant Professor in Studio Art at Texas State University, where he teaches professional practice, 3D Foundations, and Sculpture.

**Annette DiMeo Carlozzi**, a champion of local artist communities who stays abreast of international developments, has a keen eye for emerging talent and a steadfast commitment to looking beyond labels. Building an expansive practice as an institution-based curator of modern and contemporary art, Carlozzi has nurtured artists across disciplines in Minneapolis, Colorado, Chicago, Los Angeles, New Orleans, Atlanta, New York, and especially Austin and statewide. She has been a consultant/advisor/board member/panelist for over 50 national and regional organizations including Creative Capital, the Nimoy Foundation, and UT's Division of Diversity and Community Engagement. Named to the Austin Arts Hall of Fame in 2013, Carlozzi is now an independent curator with an upcoming show at Artpace's Hudson Showroom in 2020.

**Andrea Mellard** is Director of Public Programs and Community Engagement for The Contemporary Austin and founder of Crit Group. She curates programming that takes advantage of the museum's two distinct sites—one urban and the other natural—and provides platforms for audiences to come together, investigate art, and create new experiences. In addition to film series and artist talks, Mellard has curated recent exhibitions and performances with Janine Antoni, Sanford Biggers, Nick Cave, Lucky Dragons, Ragnar Kjartansson, and Mark Mothersbaugh. She has worked with a multitude of emerging Texas artists for the *New Art in Austin, Texas Prize* and *New Works* exhibition programs (both at the formerly named Austin Museum of Art and AMOA-Arthouse). She has over eighteen years of museum experience, and an MA in American Studies from The University of Texas at Austin inflects her interdisciplinary approach to contemporary culture.

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