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Museum of the African Diaspora's 2024 Afropolitan Ball Celebrates Power of Black Art and Cultural Diversity in the Bay Area and Beyond, as Part of the Inaugural Nexus: SF/Bay Area Black Art Week

More Than 600 Patrons and Notable Attendees Came Together for the Museum



Image caption: San Francisco Mayor London Breed, MoAD's Executive Director & CEO Monetta White, MoAD Board Chair Eric McDonnell. Photo by Chloe Jackman Photography.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – The Museum of the African Diaspora (MoAD) celebrated the 2024 Afropolitan Ball at the San Francisco Design Center Galleria on the evening of October 5, 2024. Over 600 patrons, artists, scholars, and cultural figures came together to celebrate the museum's trailblazing accomplishments and future, marking the first-ever **Nexus: SF/Bay Area Black Art Week** that began on October 1. The VIP Reception beginning at 6PM featured unique culinary offerings from Melons Catering & Event Planning, raising critical funds for the

MoAD

museum's renowned exhibitions, programs and education initiatives. The evening featured music from **Key Choice Ensemble**, while **DJ LadyRyan** provided a lively set for the party portion beginning at 9PM.

"We hope that Nexus: SF/Bay Area Black Art Week inspires our entire region leading into MoAD's 20th anniversary next year," said Monetta White, Executive Director and CEO. "MoAD is more than a museum, it's a beacon, a platform, and a gathering place for dialogue, inspiration and change. Our shared commitment to building a future with the visions of the African Diaspora is seen, heard, and felt around the world."

During the VIP Reception, initial remarks were provided by Board Chair **Eric McDonnell**, who spoke about the museum's unique initiatives across education, cuisine, and writing. Afropolitan Ball 2024 Co-chairs **Shannon Nash** and **Minjon LeNoir Hall** introduced **Key Jo Lee**, MoAD's Chief of Curatorial Affairs and Public Programs, who discussed the museum's sustained commitment to enriching Black artists and intellectual life. Earlier this week, Lee unveiled the opening of three new exhibitions at the museum: *Liberatory Living: Protective Interiors and Radical Black Joy*, *Unveiling Histories: A Fabricated Archive* by Jessica Monette, and *What We Carry to Set Ourselves Free* by Helina Metaferia.

Following remarks from artist **Lava Thomas** on the significance of MoAD's Emerging Artist Program, renowned voice actor **Joy Ofodu** joined with McDonnell to lead an energized round of fundraising bids for MoAD. This section of the program culminated with remarks by MoAD's Executive Director and CEO **Monetta White** who commented on the spirit of community at the Ball and throughout the entire inaugural Nexus week, which will lay the foundation for the museum's 20th anniversary next year in 2025.

San Francisco Mayor **London Breed** thanked guests for coming together to celebrate MoAD's past, present, and future. "I want to thank each and every one of you for continuing—for almost 20 years—to support MoAD and the extraordinary work they do to make sure that the African diaspora is uplifted, protected and supported in San Francisco," said Breed.

The 2024 Afropolitan Ball featured a variety of notable attendees and guests from art, entertainment, fashion, and philanthropy. In attendance was San Francisco Mayor **London Breed**; notable figures **Eric McDonnell**, MoAD's Board Chair; Afropolitan Ball Co-chairs **Shannon Nash** and **Minjon LeNoir Hall**; **Ethan Beard and Wayee Chu**, **Danny and Mia Conway**, **Peggy Woolford Forbes**, **Dee Kerrison**, **George McCalman**, **Sherri McMullen**, **Joy Ofodu**, and **V. Joy Simmons**; artists, museum and gallery figures including **Carlo Abruzzese**, **Natasha Becker**, **Thomas P. Campbell**, **Alison Gass**, **Mary Graham**, **David C. Howse**, **Jocelyn Jackson**, **Karen Jenkins-Johnson**, **Jonathan Carver Moore**, **Jessica Monette**, **Rashaad Newsome**, **Ramekon O'Arwisters** and **Lava Thomas**.

ABOUT MoAD

MoAD (Museum of the African Diaspora) is a contemporary art museum whose mission is to celebrate Black cultures, ignite challenging conversations, and inspire learning through the

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global lens of the African Diaspora. MoAD is one of only a few museums in the United States dedicated to the celebration and interpretation of art, artists, and cultures from the African Diaspora. The museum presents exhibitions highlighting contemporary art and artists of African descent and engages its audience through education and public programs that interpret and enhance the understanding of Black art. Founded in 2005, the museum continues to be a unique cultural arts staple in the San Francisco Bay Area community. For more information about MoAD, visit the museum's website at moadsf.org.

General Information

For general information, the public may visit MoAD's website at moadsf.org or call 415.358.7200. MoAD is located at 685 Mission Street (at Third), San Francisco, CA.