

# San Francisco Chronicle

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## MoAD finds its 'I' and its footing



The 10th anniversary of the Museum of the African Diaspora was celebrated with a cheer and an I-will-survive "whew!" at a "Finding the I in Diaspora" gala Saturday night at the museum and the St. Regis Hotel. Ten's a round number, but the peppy mood of the event reflected another number: MoAD 2.0 is museum director **Linda Harrison's** ongoing re-energizing of the institution with provocative exhibits, a focus on youngsters and affiliation with the Smithsonian Institution.

The event honored longtime supporters — **Jewelle Taylor Gibbs** and **James Lowell Gibbs**, **Peggy Woodford Forbes** and **Harry Bremond** — but it was chaired by relative newcomers **Kofi Bonner** and **Gladys Moore**, both born in Africa. Supes **London Breed**, **Scott Wiener**, **Malia Cohen**, **Jane Kim** and **Eric Mar** were there, and on behalf of Mayor **Ed Lee**, city administrator **Nao-mi Kelly**.

The four philanthropic honorees are people of means who have nurtured MoAD from its infancy. "They know," said founding board member **Belva Davis**, "what it's like to not only help yourself but to help the world." Also honored were contemporary artist **Mickalene Thomas**, whose "Portraits and Other Likenesses" show is at MoAD now, and **CCH Pounder**, celebrated not only for acting achievements but also for founding the first modern art museum in Senegal, and then giving it to the government of Senegal.

The success of MoAD, an institution grown from African roots — the roots of all human beings — is of universal interest, noted Pounder. "Africa would like to see the results of where her seeds are scattered."

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At the Jewish Community Center in San Francisco last week, **Rick Swig**, who has a love for all things Cuban, presided over a one-night exhibition of the works of **Roberto Salas**, a New York-born photographer who has lived

portray Castro before the revolution: on a fundraising trip to N.Y., chatting with **Ernest Hemingway**, playing baseball at 2:30 in the morning in Havana.

Particularly because Cuban laws banned monumental statuary tributes to its leaders, "the Cuban revolution was the first to establish its icons through photography," said Salas. In the late 1950s and 1960s, he said, the best photographers in the world were in Cuba. Afterward, "photographers talked about the Cuban revolution, but if they wanted to illustrate it, they had to go to our work. And if I stop tomorrow, I know I'll have left something behind."

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» Jazz composer-bandleader **Darcy James Argue** brought his big band, Secret Society, to Bing Auditorium at Stanford recently to perform "Real Enemies," a work about conspiracy theories since World War I.

(Transparently: Son **Jacob Garchik** plays in Secret Society.) After the performance, Argue, director **Isaac Butler** and **Kathryn Olmsted**, who wrote the book on which the work was based, talked onstage. Operation Northwoods, they said, was a 1962 U.S. government plot — not acted upon, thanks to **JFK** — to

have American passengers board an airliner, empty the plane in secrecy, and then have the U.S. government shoot it down over the Caribbean. This purported "attack" by the Cubans would give the U.S. reason to counterattack. "Belief in conspiracies is one of the defining aspects of modern culture," said the program. Sometimes, they're even real.

» Former Chronicle editor **Dave Hyams** says some of the vintage "Doodles" strips running while **Garry Trudeau** is on leave weren't carried by The Chronicle 30 years ago when Trudeau created them. They are about **Frank Sinatra's** ties to the Mafia; Sinatra was threatening lawsuits, and the paper took the safe road. Now that he's gone, though, he can't be defamed.

### PUBLIC EAVESDROPPING

"You're wearing lawyer shoes. Are you a lawyer?"

Man to man, overheard at a wedding in Glen Ellen by Dan Giesin