

SFMOMA AND MoAD ANNOUNCE JOINT CURATORIAL POSITION AS PART OF ONGOING PARTNERSHIP FOCUSED ON ART OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

New Role Will Advance Scholarship and Public Engagement with African Diasporic Art and Culture and Generate New Pipeline for Curatorial Talent

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (February 28, 2023)—The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art (SFMOMA) and the Museum of the African Diaspora (MoAD) announced today the creation of a joint curatorial position as part of a broader partnership that will support scholarship and public engagement with African Diasporic art and culture. SFMOMA and MoAD first collaborated in 2015 on the exhibition *Portraits and Other Likenesses* and have since sought opportunities to deepen their connection and share expertise and resources. The establishment of this position, titled Assistant Curator of the Art of the African Diaspora, solidifies the institutions' partnership in support of a shared ambition to elevate artistic and curatorial talents, especially in the Bay Area, and will result in the creation of a robust range of co-created exhibitions, artist projects and public programs.

In addition to expanding each museum's work to present and study art of the African Diaspora, the role is envisioned as a platform to cultivate new curatorial talent and advance the pipeline of BIPOC curators within the museum field. The full-time position has a rotating three-year term, consistently ensuring new and distinct voices, perspectives and approaches are brought to the development of subject programming and to the work of both Bay Area institutions more broadly. The creation and structure of the position acknowledges the need for more sustainable and distinct entry- to mid-level positions in the field that support young and emerging voices and that provide the experience necessary to grow into leadership roles. The job description will be posted next month, March 2023, with the goal of announcing the inaugural curator in late summer 2023.

The partnership bolsters both museums' ability to tell a more expansive art history, supports audience engagement and cultivates connections within the Yerba Buena cultural district where both institutions are located. The new Assistant Curator of the Art of the African Diaspora will work with leadership and teams across both institutions and play a critical role in developing collaborative exhibitions, public programs, artist-led projects for both institutions. Their work will be grounded in research, with a particular focus on bringing to the fore new and underrepresented artistic voices and presentation approaches. Additionally, the curator will help further diversify SFMOMA's collection (MoAD is not a collecting institution). New acquisitions, as well as existing collection works, will enrich MoAD exhibitions, while MoAD's close ties to the community will help SFMOMA reach new audiences. In this way, the partnership also establishes a dynamic model for cross-institutional collaboration that leverages different institutional strengths to support shared goals.

"MoAD is excited to partner with SFMOMA to expand the visibility and opportunities for art and artists of the African Diaspora. We are eager to share our unique ability to create deep and sustained

community relationships to expand the audiences at both institutions,” said Monetta White, executive director and CEO of MoAD. “Through our Emerging Artists Program, guest curators and residencies, MoAD has amplified Black creative talent since our inception in 2005 and we are grateful to be able to scale these efforts alongside the team at SFMOMA. We look forward to increasing opportunities for Black museum professionals within major art institutions and bringing innovative voices and perspectives to the Yerba Buena cultural district unseen before. We hope this partnership inspires others across the country to be a part of cultivating and supporting more BIPOC leaders in the art world.”

The creation of the joint curatorial positions follows several other significant appointments at MoAD. In October 2022, the institution announced art historian, curator and rising star Key Jo Lee as chief of curatorial affairs and public programs, a newly created leadership position supported by a grant from the Mellon Foundation. In January, MoAD also announced Jocelyn Jackson as its new chef-in-residence and Dr. Artel Great, an acclaimed San Francisco filmmaker, author and scholar, as cultural-critic-in-residence, a newly established position and the first of its kind at a contemporary art museum. MoAD’s growing team elevates the Museum’s presence as a global leader in presenting and celebrating art from a uniquely African Diasporic perspective.

“With the establishment of this partnership, we are advancing work on several institutional priorities. This includes deepening SFMOMA’s relationships with organizations in our community to support mutual audience-building through the development of compelling and highly relevant exhibitions and programs. At the same time, this new role and partnership is part of our commitment to enhance SFMOMA’s holdings of art of the African Diaspora and its presentation within our galleries. This is a key collecting area for SFMOMA and we look forward to welcoming the expertise of our new curator in this essential work,” said Christopher Bedford, SFMOMA’s Helen and Charles Schwab Director. “I am grateful for Monetta White’s partnership and am excited to work with her and the MoAD team toward our shared vision.”

This collaboration builds on prior exhibitions and projects at SFMOMA focused on art and artists from the African Diaspora, including monographic presentations of works by Glenn Ligon, Kara Walker, Wangechi Mutu and Toyin Ojih Odutola; commissions by Julie Mehretu, Kerry James Marshall, Emory Douglas and Sadie Barnette; and generous gifts such as those from the Joyner/Giuffrida Collection, which includes objects by Elizabeth Catlett, Beauford Delaney, Norman Lewis and Richard Mayhew. The partnership signals an important step in SFMOMA’s commitment to diversifying its collection which was reaffirmed with the museum’s 2018 Strategic Plan; the 2019 deaccession and sale of Mark Rothko’s *Untitled* (1960) and its comprehensive DEI Strategic Plan, launched in March 2022. Following the appointment of Christopher Bedford, SFMOMA identified African Diasporic art and culture as an essential pillar of its strategic work to transform its collection and public programs as well as deepen its connections with the community.

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

151 Third Street
San Francisco, CA 94103

The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art is one of the largest museums of modern and contemporary art in the United States and a thriving cultural center for the Bay Area. Our remarkable collection of painting, sculpture, photography, architecture, design and media arts is housed in a LEED Gold-certified building designed by the global architects Snøhetta and Mario Botta. In addition to our seven gallery floors, SFMOMA now offers more than 62,000 square feet of free art-filled public space open to all.

Visit sfmoma.org or call 415.357.4000 for more information.

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About MoAD

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

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