

Isaac Julien: "The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco Raise a Record-Breaking Sum for Exhibitions and Education"

By Jennifer Massoni Pardini

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Kenneth B. Morris, Jr. and Sir Isaac Julien
Drew Altizer for Drew Altizer Photography

For the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco Annual Gala on April 10, Director and CEO **Thomas P. Campbell** took to the podium under eucalyptus trees visible through the tented roof over the de Young's courtyard. With sincere appreciation, Campbell announced that the elegant evening had raised \$1.7 million, the largest sum ever for a single FAMSF event and all to benefit exhibitions and educational programming for the de Young, Legion of Honor and their Bay Area audiences.

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Kenneth B. Morris, Jr. and a guest admire Isaac Julien's "Diasportic Dream-Space Parcour (Once Again ... Statues Never Die)," 2024.

What a singular event it was, from Ideas Events & Rentals' towering candlelit decor for a seated McCalls Catering & Events dinner for 400 guests — including Chair Emerita **Diane B. Wilsey**, Gala Chairs **Lynn Poole** and **Edward Poole**, as well as artistic and civic luminaries **Christopher Bedford**, **Tamara Rojo**, **Monetta White**, **David Howse**, **Jack Calhoun**, **Denise Hale**, **Woody De Othello**, **Jessica Silverman**, **Stanlee R. Gatti**, **Pamela Kramlich**, **Willie Brown**, **Rebecca Prowda** and Lieutenant Governor **Eleni Kounalakis** — to a 1,100+ strong throng of Late-Night revelers among the galleries.

The occasion also marked the premiere of *Isaac Julien: I Dream a World*, the major and magnificent multichannel video exhibition that will be on view through July 13 and was described by Campbell as "extraordinary in scale, in its power and in the empathy that it engenders." As one of the night's honorees, **Sir Isaac Julien**, the installation artist, filmmaker and Distinguished Professor at University of California, Santa Cruz was introduced by **Kenneth B. Morris, Jr.**, a direct descendent of **Frederick Douglass** and **Anna Murray-Douglass**, subjects of Julien's 2019 "Lessons of the Hour" that is included in *I Dream a World*.

Honors also went to **Dagmar Dolby**, advocate for the arts as well as for health and science, who became a trustee in 1994 and continues to support FAMSF's future. "Art lovers and museum protectors have a duty to defend what is important to us and to the culture at large," said Dolby. "I promise to continue doing this."

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