



SAN FRANCISCO

AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL SOCIETY

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HISTORICAL &
CULTURAL SOCIETY

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Al Williams, President
William Hoskins, Executive
Director
Kyle Fobbs Admin. Asst.

Photos: Belinda Racklin, Eldoris
Cameron, Courtesy of MoAD
Courtesy of Gregory
Richardson, Ginger Smyly,
Antoinette Texson, others

FAREWELL, BELVA



*Unidentified photographer. This photo was used in the 1978
Society Exhibit, "Roots, Achievements and Projections"*

October 13, 1932 – September 24, 2025

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**GALLERY CORNER:
MONTFORD CARDWELL**



- William Hoskins,
Executive Director/
Curator

It is my experience that we very seldom get a response by wishing. It was only a short time ago that I was reminiscing on how great it would be to get additional information on a very special artist that I wanted to include in a new exhibit.

Believe or not, I received a phone call from the niece of the artist, Montford Cardwell, that I had just been thinking about. The niece, Dr. Dawn Caldwell, was as excited as I was to hear each other's voice. She, who lives in Atlanta, is working temporarily in an Indian Pediatric Health center in northern California and had heard that the Society featured art created by her uncle. We talked and after a very animated conversation, Dr. Cardwell was standing in the gallery with her two sons, a lawyer and an artist. With the assistance of Dr. Caldwell and family, we have been able to piece together much of Montford's life as musician, artist, educator and volunteer especially here in the Bay Area.

Much of the story of Montford Irving Cardwell, born March 6, 1933, in New York City, New York, son of Clara Naylor Cardwell and James Cardwell, will be revealed in the new Society exhibit, "Black Creativity."

"Black Creativity" exhibit opening and reception was held on Thursday, November 6, 2025 at the Society gallery, 762 Fulton St., 2nd fl., San Francisco. For info, call 415-292-6172 or email sfaahcs.org.



Bill Hoskins, Dawn Cardwell, her two sons, above: "Jesse Owens,"
Montford Cardwell, redwood slabs, (4" x 4" planks each
approximately 6' long, 3" wide,) donated by David Cardwell,
sfaahcs archives # 824



Guests and Henry Hoskins at November 6th reception and
opening of "Black Creativity"

**WILFRED USSERY –
97th YEAR CELEBRATION**

- *Eldoris Cameron*

*Family photo includes: l-r:
Claudia Ussery, daughter-in-law;
Wilfred; Wilfred, Jr., son; Maxine
Ussery, wife & COO of Post
Newspaper; and Marcus Ussery,
grandson*

Geoffrey's Inner Circle in Oakland was the site where family and friends joined in celebrating Wilfred Ussery's 97th Birthday on Sunday, October 12. In the 1960's Wilfred Ussery was a leading civil rights figure in the San Francisco Bay Area community, national chairman of the Congress for Racial Equality (CORE) and was a BART board member for 18 years. Though his activities have slowed, his mind is still sharp as a tack. He still strategizes on making the African American community-at-large better!



NO KINGS RALLY

- *Eldoris Cameron*

On October 18, 2025, across the nation, 17 million people protested peacefully against Trump's usurpation of power against the principles of democracy and given law. His dictate has shut down the government, furloughed thousands of government workers, and jeopardized affordable health care, civil rights, immigrant rights, the SNAP program and other vital government programs. This was the second national "No Kings Rally" held this year.

San Francisco held two large marches that concluded with a large "No Kings Rally" at Civic Center. Society members independently participated in the rally and found one another in the crowd: Linda Parker Pennington, Barbara Wilson, Mae Threadgill and Eldoris Cameron. The latter two ladies arrived early sporting their signs. There were likely other Society members and friends present in the crowd.

Freedom is NOT free, and no matter the age, the fight must go on! 'Good Trouble' was coined by the late Congressman John Lewis for nonviolent engagement for social change. Let's keep making good trouble.

See photo album for more.

FAREWELL, BELVA DAVIS

On November 10, 2025, at Grace Cathedral, Belva Davis, who passed away on September 24, 2025, was memorialized. We remember her well as an award-winning journalist who was the first African American woman to serve on a broadcast television news program in the Bay Area and the West. Her colleagues from the broadcast journalism and labor movement worlds gave her flowers, as did the Honorables Barbara Lee and Willie L. Brown, Jr. She was not only applauded as an astute journalist and labor activist, but as a friend to the Arts, having served as Trustee of the Fine Arts Museums and the MoAD. We remember her fondly as a role model and friend to the Society and the community.

Well done Sister Davis, well done.

(Note: The photo of Davis, circa 1960s – 1970s, on page 1 was used in a 1978 Society exhibit. Let's acknowledge the unidentified photographer who captured Belva's vitality and intelligence.)

MORE ON SARGENT
CLAUDE JOHNSON

More about Sargent Johnson: Sheryl Kaskowitz [interviews](#) Society friends, Noemesha Williams, National Park Service Ranger at the San Francisco Maritime Museum and Dr. Jacqueline Francis, Dean of the California College of Arts, San Francisco. [View](#) the film, *A Balcony on the World*, by Perry associates and recently aired on KQED, about the San Francisco Maritime Museum's tumultuous history. Thanks to our contributors, Sheryl Kaskowitz and Bill Thomas for these links.

AFRICAN AMERICAN
LEGACY BOOK CLUB

The African American Legacy Book Club is a joint program of the African American Center, San Francisco Public Library, and the Society. Join! Even if you haven't read the book, the discussion is enlightening. The next selection is [The Wedding](#) by Dorothy Ross - a story of five generations of an African-American family and the wedding on Martha's Vineyard that could tear them apart. We are meeting on Tuesday, November 18, 6 pm, via ZOOM. [REGISTER](#) Mark your calendar for the following Book Club, Tuesday, January 13, 2026. Go to sfaahcs.org or look for an email from info@sfaahcs.org for more information.

- Shawna Sherman

MoAD CELEBRATES 20 YEARS

On December 3, 2005, San Francisco acquired a major new exhibition space and educational institution when the Museum of the African Diaspora (MoAD) opened its doors at 685 Mission Street in the Yerba Buena Arts District. The museum occupies the first three floors of the St. Regis, a 42-story building that otherwise consists of luxury condominiums and a five-star hotel. MoAD recently reopened in October 2025 in time for its 20th anniversary, after a seven-month renovation.

In the beginning, MoAD's goal was to educate visitors on the history, culture, and art of the African Diaspora. Then in 2014, after expanding its gallery spaces, the museum evolved into a contemporary art museum, exclusively displaying works by artists of the African Diaspora. The ground floor has a gift shop and a dark, winding passageway lined with Afrocentric works of art. It connects directly to the hotel bar and restaurant, thus encouraging hotel guests to pay a visit. The second floor has two large sections, one of them devoted to changing exhibits by modern artists. Its current show, "Unbound: Art, Blackness & the Universe" features painting, sculpture and video by an international group of artists. It opened on October 1, and will close on August 16, 2026.

- Max Millard

The other section houses an exhibit titled "Continuum: MoAD Over Time," which traces the museum's history from its founding to the present and into the future. Covering an entire wall is a 16-minute documentary film about the museum, which plays on a continuous loop. It showcases the contributions of local icons including Willie L. Brown, Jr., and the late Belva Davis, who were both instrumental in bringing the museum to life. "Continuum" will close on March 1, 2026.



Museum of the African Diaspora. Courtesy of MoAD



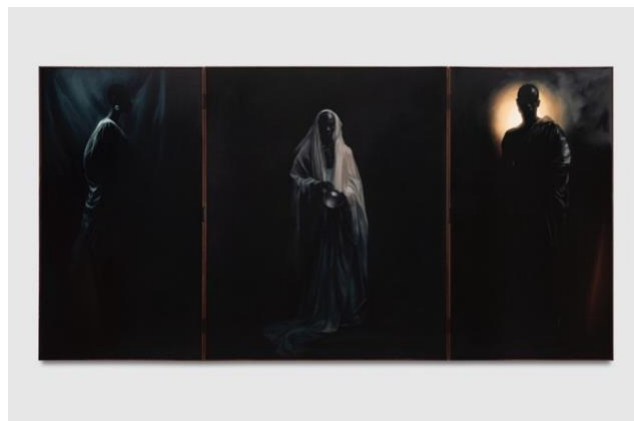
Museum of the African Diaspora at night. Courtesy of MoAD

In the film, Brown says: "It's always very difficult to find money for a museum," and notes that it needs to be "a real community organization." Davis, the pioneer black TV broadcaster who died in September 2025, recalls in the film that many people told her it wasn't possible. Said the current executive director, Monetta White, "It is because of Belva's tenacity that MoAD exists today. She was a force. An icon. ... Her belief in our mission, and in the artists and stories of the African Diaspora, helped shape who we are." The leading donor to the museum was Dr. Ernest A. Bates, the late Bay Area black neurosurgeon, entrepreneur and philanthropist. Today MoAD has an annual budget of \$7 million.

The third floor is lined with paintings, prints and silkscreens that are part of the "Unbound" exhibit. The heart of the display is a set of nine life-size oil-on-linen portraits of figures representing different Afro-Latin religions. The paintings were commissioned for the museum and created in the span of four months by Afro-Brazilian artist Gustavo Nazareno. The museum could fill its walls with paintings by established black artists. Instead, it focuses on emerging international artists, who produced their works in the last few years.

As part of its community outreach, the museum hosts school groups for guided tours. On the day of my visit, there were two large classes of sixth graders from Westlake Middle School in Oakland, who stood attentively listening while a docent described the significance of the artworks. Among the museum's other offerings are live interviews with celebrated black artists, a teen summer program, a bimonthly African Book Club, an African Diaspora Film Club, and 24-seat theater for screenings. MoAD is closed Mondays, open on Thursdays from noon to 8 pm., and on all other days from 11 am. to 5 pm. Admission is \$15 for adults, \$7 for seniors, students and educators, and free for youth under 12. It's also free for everyone on the second Saturday each month. Website: www.moadsf.org

*The Secret Matrices of Creation by
Gustavo Nazareno*



FROM THE ARCHIVES (*sfaahcs* # 3672 - 9, 1967)

A 1967 anonymous essay demonstrates the Society's role as advocate in relation to history and art. See how the past echoes the present.

The San Francisco Negro Historical and Culture Society through its existence has worked to correct distortions about Negro life and history, and to replace myths with accurate and truthful accounts of Black people's contribution to world culture in history. For 12 years our Society has worked daily to promote a free and honest dissemination of information about the contributions of Black people to world history through the press, television, radio, the arts and through the public schools and colleges.

Public schools are a proper forum for teaching the culture and history of Black people along with the history and culture of all people in our nation. Public schools belong to all people, ... and ... serve the interest of all people while serving the whole community. Thus, no one group has the right to insist that the public school serve its narrow interest at the expense of other values and the whole society.

The San Francisco Negro Historical Society fully sympathize with and supports the black students at George Washington High School and their struggle to develop a meaningful presentation of Black people's role in American history. However, our Society does not agree with those who would remove the Victor Arnautoff mural from the George Washington High School because it shows Black people as slaves.

There are valid reasons why the Arnautoff must not be removed or altered in any way. First, the mural presents an honest and truthful account of the condition of Black people in colonial America. great majority of black colonial Americans were slaves... The Arnautoff mural reminds us of the historical fact that black slaves - African workers

- built capitalism in America and Europe. It reminds us that high, prominent men in American life have built their fortunes, glory and reputation on the destruction of the African family and exploitation of Africans in the New World. This mural reminds us of the fact that African workers have never been compensated for 250 years of hard, forced labor invested in building the nation and that every European immigrant to this nation is deeply indebted to African slaves for building our country. Moreover, this mural spotlights the age-old racist contradiction between the principles and practices of our nation.

Those who seek to remove the mural because it depicts Africans as slaves have missed the point. Moreover, they have adopted the great man theory of history which eliminates workers and ordinary people from playing any meaningful role in history. Secondly any alteration of the Arnautoff mural is an abridgment of freedom of speech, opens the door to censorship and book burning in public schools. ... It is manifestly a denial of freedom of expression to remove the Arnautoff mural from Washington High School simply because it does not interpret history as a one small group of students interpret black history. Such an action would provide a precedent and support for those forces in California who would today ban all black history from public education... Thirdly... Once it is destroyed it can never be replaced. Art, leaders and social movements must be evaluated, first in the context of the period they existed not by standards of a later generation. ... If this were not the case every generation using its own values, would destroy all of our history, traditions and treasures.

We reaffirm our support for black students who wish to incorporate a better understanding a black history in their lives. The public schools must increase its efforts to meet the legitimate demands made by the Washington High School black students....

**NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF BLACK STORYTELLERS**

The National Association of Black Storytellers holds its 43rd Annual National Black Storytelling Festival & Conference. The theme is “Journeys Well Traveled.” November 19-23, 2025, Embassy Suites at Centennial Olympic Park, Atlanta, Georgia. On-Site Registration Fee: Member= \$400; Non-Member= \$500; NABS, P.O. Box 67722, (410) 947-1117

WE ARE ONE

Gregory Richardson, chairman of **We Are One**, along with Kevin Epps, Executive Editor of the *S.F. Bayview* Newspaper, and friends met in Chinatown on Saturday, September 13, 2025 to show solidarity and to build a working relationship between the African American and Chinese American communities. The Day began with a “Meet and Greet Reception” for **We Are One** that was hosted by Jimmy Quan, owner of Chinatown Restaurant, close to the Hilton Hotel at Portsmouth Square. The group then walked the short path to the Hilton Hotel to the 2025 Bay Area Noodle Festival where **We Are One** and guests were treated to samples of Asian cuisine, entertained and met candidates running for state offices. That was a most enjoyable and relaxing day for all!

The Society has been a longtime friend of the *S.F. Bayview* Newspaper ; its first owner, Muhammad (Charles) al-Kareem, served on the Society’s 1978 Black History Week Committee and was active in developing photographs for the 1978 Black History Week exhibit at 680 McAllister Street, the Society’s former headquarters.

- Eldoris Cameron

Let’s get behind our organizations. Let’s show our support for our home-grown newspapers!



***We Are One** group photo at the Chinese Cultural Center*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Visit us at www.sfaahcs.org or Call 415-292-6172

- ✓ Exhibit: "Black Creativity," showing now at the Society gallery, 762 Fulton St., 2nd fl., San Francisco
- ✓ Exhibit: "Continuum: MoAD Over Time," now - MoAD, March 26, 2025 and "Unbound: Art, Blackness & the Universe," October 1, 2025 - August 16, 2026, MoAD, 685 Mission Street
- ✓ Exhibit: "Routed West: Twentieth Century African American Quilts in California," BAMFA, June 8 – November 30, 2025, features work by San Francisco artist, William Rhodes
- ✓ Society Book Club: The Wedding by Dorothy West, Tuesday, November 18, 6 pm, via ZOOM, see below to register
- ✓ Society Book Club: Selection, TBA, Tuesday, January 13, 6 pm, via ZOOM. More coming. [REGISTER](#)
- ✓ Black History Month 2026 Kick-off, Friday, February 6, 2026

THE SOCIETY NEEDS YOU!

Volunteers are essential to the Society; serve on the Board, join a committee, volunteer at the gallery or in relocation activities.

info@sfaahcs.org or call 415-292-6172

BREAKING NEWS:

The Society can now receive donations electronically. Please consider giving a year end gift and or sponsorship for the annual 2026 Black History Month programs and beyond.

[DONATE](#)

More news as Society goes "high tech!"

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL

(Your annual membership term is January 1 through December 31.)

LIFE members, your donation is appreciated

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY/STATE/ZIP _____

PHONE _____ CELL _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

Please sign me up as a:

_____ Student	\$15	_____ Organizations	\$250
_____ Senior	\$25	_____ Small Business	\$350
_____ Adult	\$50	_____ Large Business	\$700
_____ Family	\$100	_____ Donor	

**If you do not plan to be an active member, please make a donation

Donation: \$ _____

Total: \$ _____

Membership fees and contributions are tax deductible

Make Your Check Payable/Mail To:

San Francisco African American Historical & Cultural Society

762 Fulton Street, 2nd Floor
San Francisco, CA 94102
415.292.6172

I am interested in serving on the ✓committee(s):

_____ Development	_____ Library/archives
_____ Membership	_____ Programs
_____ Black History Month	_____ Communications
_____ Volunteer/Reception	_____ Other



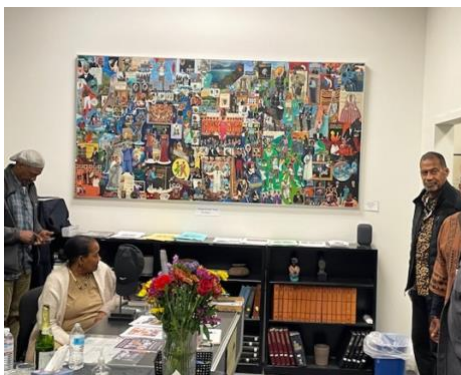
No Kings Rally, 10.18.25: l.: Eldoris Cameron, Barbara Wilson, Linda Parker Pennington



Mae Threadgill and Eldoris Cameron



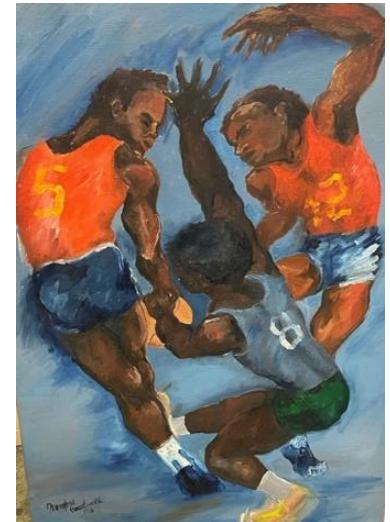
Second floor, MoAD, photo by Josef Jacques, courtesy of MoAD



"20th Century" by Carlos Martinez, and Society guests



Mae Threadgill, Guest, Eldoris Cameron, Bryan Caston



r.: Montford Cardwell, subject, 3 "ballers," oil 3'x 2', donated by David Cardwell, sfaahcs archives # 844



Al Williams and Louis Garrett



Society Guests



Society Guest



Angela Davis speaks at No Kings Rally



Carl and Jayne Williams, E. Cameron



Drummer / Flautist



Jayne Williams, Maxine Ussery, H. Hoskins, Wil Ussery and guest



Al Williams, and guests



Carl Williams, J. Williams and guests



Ginger Smyly and Dawn Cardwell, MD



We Are One group photo



Advertisement, Wesley Johnson's Flamingo Club, 1941, from sfaahcs archive # 693, pg. 10-2