

# Photos from LACMA's glam gala: From Lil Nas X to Jeff Bezos, a starry crowd

DEBORAH VANKINSTAFF NOV. 7, 2021



The Los Angeles County Museum of Art's 10th Art + Film gala got off to an unusually spirited start Saturday night: Nearly 700 guests, including Jared Leto, Lil Nas X, Miley Cyrus, Jake Gyllenhaal, Awkwafina, Diane Keaton and Billie Eilish, arrived on an emerald green-carpeted outdoor plaza with a DJ playing a high-energy mix of Motown, reggae and 1980s pop — and dancing that continued throughout the cocktail hour.

It was a celebration of the evening's honorees, artists Amy

Sherald and Kehinde Wiley and filmmaker Steven Spielberg, as well as the museum's premiere of two major exhibitions, "The Obama Portraits Tour" and "Black American Portraits." It also was a reunion for an art community emerging from a prolonged pandemic. And it was a celebration of change afoot in the museum world, as 95-year-old artist Betye Saar put it.

"It's about time the museums started showing more art by Black artists," Saar said of the portraits exhibition, which was on view for guests and included her work. "This show is important, because it points that out."

Several dozen of the artists in the exhibition, which features about 150 works, mostly from the museum's permanent collection, were in attendance, including Mark Bradford, Hank Willis Thomas, Calida Rawles, Tourmaline, Shinique Smith, Glenn Kaino and Tavares Strachan.

During dinner, 66-year-old Richard Wyatt Jr., whose work is also on view in the exhibition, echoed Saar's sentiment.

"It was a struggle in the '70s being a Black artist, and it's a lot more inclusive now in the museums," he said. "We have a ways to go, but we'll get there."

Museum Director Michael Govan said the evening, which was hosted by Leonardo DiCaprio and LACMA trustee Eva Chow and which raised \$5 million for the museum, was a coming out of sorts.

“It’s about the art,” he said just before a post-dinner performance by singer Celeste. “But it’s also about bringing everyone together — all of this, coming back to life.”