

# Stephen Friedman Gallery

## Kehinde Wiley

**Kehinde Wiley's vibrant and highly naturalistic paintings of contemporary African-American and African-Diasporic men and women subvert the hierarchies and conventions of classical portraiture.**

Kehinde Wiley was born in 1977 in Los Angeles, USA. He lives and works in New York, USA; Dakar, Senegal and Lagos, Nigeria.

Wiley engages the visual rhetoric of the powerful, majestic and sublime in his representation of contemporary African-American and African-Diasporic men and women, who adopt heroic poses directly referencing European and American portraiture.

A solo exhibition by the artist 'Fragments from the treasure house of darkness' opened at Stephen Friedman Gallery, London, England in October 2024. Marking a new direction in his practice, the artist created two multi-part paintings for this exhibition alongside a series of 60 paintings inspired by historic miniature portraits that first appeared in European royal courts in the sixteenth century. Wiley also had a solo presentation 'An Archaeology of Silence' on view at la Fondazione Giorgio Cini on the occasion of the 59th Venice Biennale, which then travelled to the de Young Museum, San Francisco and The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston. An exhibition of new work by Wiley opened at The National Gallery, London in December 2021; the artist's first collaboration with a major UK gallery. This follows his solo exhibitions at The Box, Plymouth in September 2020 and at William Morris Gallery, London in February 2020. Wiley had his first major survey exhibition in France in July 2020 at Centre d'art La Malmaison, Cannes.

Wiley was commissioned by Public Art Fund to create a large-scale site-specific artwork for the new Moynihan Train Hall at Penn Station, New York, which was unveiled in December 2020. The artist's monumental public sculpture, 'Rumors of War', was temporarily situated at Times Square, New York in September 2019 before being permanently installed at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia in December 2019. In 2018 Smithsonian Institution unveiled Kehinde Wiley's official portrait of Barack Obama for the Presidential Portrait Commission at National Portrait Gallery, Washington, DC. This painting toured the USA alongside Amy Sherald's portrait of Michelle Obama in 'The Obama Portraits Tour' between June 2021 until May 2022.

From 2015-2017 Wiley had a major ongoing touring exhibition titled 'Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic' which visited Brooklyn Museum, New York; Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas; Seattle Art Museum, Washington; Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Virginia; Phoenix Art Museum, Arizona; Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio; and Oklahoma City Museum of Art, Oklahoma. Exhibitions of Wiley's vast and celebrated body of work 'The World Stage', have taken place in numerous galleries between 2007 and 2014. For this project, Wiley temporarily relocated to different countries and opened satellite studio to familiarise himself with the area's culture and history before creating portraits of the local people.

Wiley received his MFA from Yale University in 2001. Shortly after, he became an Artist-in-Residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem, New York. In 2015 he was awarded the US State Department Medal of Arts. In 2018 he received the W.E.B. Du Bois Medal at Harvard University, Massachusetts. In June 2019 he was honoured by The Gordon Parks Foundation, New York and in 2021 he was awarded Artist of the Year at Apollo Awards, London. Wiley is the Founder and President of Black Rock Senegal, a non-profit artist in residence program located in Dakar, Senegal.

Notable solo exhibitions include: 'A maze of power', Musée du Quai Branly, Paris, France (2023); 'The Prelude', Sunley Room, National Gallery, London, England (2021); 'Ship of Fools', Levinsky Gallery, The Box, Plymouth, England (2020); 'Painter of the Epic', Centre d'art La Malmaison, Cannes, France (2020); 'The Yellow Wallpaper', William Morris Gallery, London, England (2020); 'Jacques-Louis David Meets Kehinde Wiley', Musée national du château de Malmaison, Rueil-Malmaison, France (2019), travelling to Brooklyn Museum, New York (2020); 'Equestrian Portrait of Prince Tommaso of Savoy-Carignan', Santa Barbara Museum of Art, California (2019); 'Kehinde Wiley: Saint Louis', Saint Louis Art Museum, Saint Louis, Missouri (2018); 'Lit', Bozar Centre For Fine Arts, Brussels, Belgium (2018); 'Lamentation', Petit Palais, Paris, France (2016), 'Arts For All, Museum of Contemporary Art North Miami, Florida (2014); 'Memling', Taft Museum, Ohio (2014) and Phoenix Art Museum, Arizona (2013); 'The World Stage: Israel', Boise Art Museum, Boise (2013), travelling from The Contemporary Jewish Museum, San Francisco (2013) and The Jewish Museum, New York, (2012); 'Selected Works', SCAD

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Museum of Art, Savannah, Georgia, USA (2011); 'The World Stage: Africa, Lagos-Dakar', The Studio Museum, Harlem, New York (2008); 'Focus: Kehinde Wiley', Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas (2008); 'Kehinde Wiley', Portland Art Museum, Oregon (2007); 'The World Stage: China', John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Milwaukee (2007) and 'Columbus', Columbus Museum of Art, Ohio (2006).

Wiley's work features in the permanent collections of numerous prominent institutions including The Jewish Museum, New York; Brooklyn Museum, Brooklyn, New York; Studio Museum, Harlem, New York; Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, California; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Fort Worth, Texas; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, California; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Massachusetts; Oklahoma City Museum of Art, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; Saint Louis Art Museum, Saint Louis, Missouri; Seattle Museum of Art, Seattle, Washington; Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, California; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, Minnesota and Zabłudowicz Collection, London, England.