

# **Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic Press Highlights**

**Lead Publicist: Fatima Kafele  
Submitted by Public Information**



## Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic (Brooklyn Museum, Public Information Office)

	Broadcast	
Date	Media Outlet	Headline/ Title
2/27/15	Studio 360 NPR	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley's Modern-Day Royalty</a>
2/22/15	WNYC	<a href="#">Black Faces and Bodies in Classic Paintings for the First Time</a>
2/25/15	FOX 5	<a href="#">Brooklyn Museum Features Artist Whose Paintings are in 'Empire'</a>
4/13/15	The Leonard Lopate Show	<a href="#">Black Lives Reimagined in Kehinde Wiley's Art</a>
4/24/15	PBS	<a href="#">Charlie Rose "This Week"</a>
5/22/15	All thing Considered	<a href="#">The Exquisite Dissonance Of Kehinde Wiley</a>
	Magazine	
Date	Media Outlet	Headline/ Title
Jan. 2015	Architectural Digest	Exhibitions: Old School
Jan. 2015	Art Forum	Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic
Jan./Feb. 2015	Manhattan	Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic
1/13/15	Artnews	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley to Receive The U.S. Department of State Medal of Arts</a>
1/29/15	Time Out	The Best Upcoming Art Shows in 2015
Feb. 2015	New York Spaces	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic' Will Be on View at the Brooklyn Museum Through May 24, 2015</a>
Feb. 2015	Art News	Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic
Feb. 2015	Harper's Bazaar	Frame of Reference
Feb. 2015	Smithsonian	Heros and Men: a Painter Finds Inspiration in Stained Glass
Feb. 2015	W Magazine	Game of Thrones
Feb/March 2015	The Fader	<a href="#">Culture/News: Catch Kehinde Wiley's New Exhibit at The Brooklyn Museum This Weekend</a>
2/1/15	Artdependence Magazine	<a href="#">"I try to create a place of disorientation"—Interview with Keninde Wiley</a>
2/1/15	Departures	Culture Calendar: Kehinde Wiley at the Brooklyn Museum
2/1/15	Time Magazine	The Culture: Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic, A Hero's Welcome
2/5/15	Art in America	The Agenda: This Week in New York
2/6/15	Modem Mag	The Rise of Kehinde Wiley
2/9/15	New York Magazine	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley's Spring</a>
2/9/15	Details	<a href="#">Artist Kehinde Wiley Recasts History in His New Brooklyn Show</a>
2/18/15	Juxtapoz	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic @ Brooklyn Museum</a>
2/19/15	T Magazine	<a href="#">A Sprawling Retrospective for Kehinde Wiley's heroic Portraits</a>
2/19/15	Time Out	Going for Baroque: Kehinde Wiley's Brand of Hip-Hop PortraitureBlows up at the Brooklyn Museum
2/19/15	Vice Magazine	<a href="#">The Enduring Power and Beauty of Artist Kehinde Wiley's Representation of Black Men and Women</a>
2/20/15	Advocate	<a href="#">In the Galleries: Kehinde Wiley</a>
2/20/15	Routes Magazine	Exhibitions: Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic
2/21/15	Out Magazine	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic at the Brooklyn Museum</a>
2/23/15	Ebony	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley Paints Brooklyn Red</a>
2/26/15	Departures	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley's "A New Republic" at the Brooklyn Museum</a>
3/2/15	Brooklyn Magazine	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic Reigns at the Brooklyn Museum</a>
3/9/15	Time	<a href="#">The Royal Treatment: Kehinde Wiley's Street-Chic Update of the Old Masters</a>
3/23/15	New York Magazine	See Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic
4/9/15	The Source	<a href="#">"Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic" Review</a>
Winter/Spring	Studio	Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic

	<b>Newspaper</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Media Outlet</b>	<b>Headline/ Title</b>
9/7/14	New York Times	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic</a>
9/7/14	New York Times	<a href="#">The New Season: Art: Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic</a>
10/4/14	The Washington post	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley Explains his 'An Economy of Grace' Paintings Focusing on Black Women</a>
2/1/15	New York Times	<a href="#">A New Royalty</a>
2/18/15	The Brooklyn Paper	<a href="#">Brooklyn Museum Celebrates Artist Kehinde Wiley</a>
2/19/15	The Wall Street Journal	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley's Global Vision on View</a>
2/20/15	New York Times	<a href="#">Scores to Settle, Possibilities to Explore</a>
2/20/15	The Brooklyn Reader	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley at the Brooklyn Museum: Life Reimagined...In Living Color</a>
2/20/15	The Wall Street Journal	<a href="#">Beyond the Hoodie: An Artistic Discourse</a>
3/2/15	AllJazeera	<a href="#">At the Brooklyn Museum, Art Helps Show Why Black Lives Matter</a>
3/6/15	Financial Times	<a href="#">Portraits by Kehinde Wiley on Show at the Brooklyn Museum</a>
3/12/15	Brooklyn Reader	<a href="#">A Few Steps to Massive BK Culture</a>
5/7/15	New York Amsterdam News	<a href="#">Black Art and the White Gaze at the Brooklyn Museum</a>
Winter 2014	Crains 5 Boros	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic</a>
	<b>Online</b>	
<b>Date</b>	<b>Media Outlet</b>	<b>Headline/ Title</b>
10/17/14	Artphaire	<a href="#">Art News Roundup-October 17, 2014</a>
10/8/14	Art Net	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley's New Takes on Old Masters Get Brooklyn Museum Survey</a>
10/10/14	Complex	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley's First Museum Survey Exhibition Will Be Presented by The Brooklyn Museum of Art</a>
12/4/14	Pret-a-Reporter	<a href="#">Meet the Artist Who Moves Neil Patrick Harris and David Burtka</a>
1/2/15	Culture Type	<a href="#">New Year, New Art: What to Look Forward to in 2015</a>
1/28/15	Happening	<a href="#">Brooklyn Museum awaits Kehinde Wiley</a>
2/2/15	Artspace	<a href="#">10 Artists to Watch This February</a>
2/6/15	Black Art Project	<a href="#">Select African American Art Exhibitions: Highlights for 2015: Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic</a>
2/11/15	NYC Arts Scene	<a href="#">Editor's Pick: Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic</a>
2/19/15	Brooklyn Based	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley Takes Us to Church with New Exhibition at Brooklyn Museum</a>
2/19/15	Gothamist	<a href="#">Catch Kehinde Wiley's Stunning Show At The Brooklyn Museum</a>
2/20/15	ArrestedMotion	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley—"A New Republic" @Brooklyn Museum</a>
2/20/15	Artslant	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley's Empire of Vulnerability</a>
2/20/15	Artspace	<a href="#">Art and Eric Garner, Kehinde Wiley at the Brooklyn Museum, &amp; More</a>
2/20/15	Sugarlift	<a href="#">Your Weekend Art at the Brooklyn Museum: Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic</a>
2/20/15	The Guardian	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic-in pictures</a>
2/20/15	Flavorpill	<a href="#">5 Things You Didn't Know About Kehinde Wiley</a>
2/21/15	The Snobette	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley at the Brooklyn Museum</a>
2/24/15	ColorLines	<a href="#">The Art of Masculinity</a>
2/25/15	Hi-Fructose	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley's "A New Republic" at the Brooklyn Museum</a>
2/25/15	Milk Made	<a href="#">Exclusive: Classics Meet Hip-Hop in Kehinde Wiley</a>
2/26/15	Buzzfeed	<a href="#">Beautiful Works of Art Reimagine Art History and Race</a>
2/26/15	Studio International	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic</a>
3/10/15	Artinfo	<a href="#">Tame of Thrones: Kehinde Wiley Plays it Safe at the Brooklyn Museum</a>
3/16/15	Afropunk	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley's "A New Republic" exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum</a>
3/17/15	NBC News	<a href="#">Meet the Muses Behind Kehinde Wiley's Portraits</a>
4/3/15	Quartz	<a href="#">The painter who remixes classical European art with black urban youth</a>
4/13/15	Flavor Pill	<a href="#">GO SEE: Kehinde Wiley &amp; DJ Spooky at BKLYN Museum</a>
4/23/15	Hyperallergic	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley's "Politics of Perception"</a>
5/20/15	Brooklyn Based	<a href="#">Last Chance To See Kehinde Wiley's Conversation-Starting Show</a>
	Culture Trip	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic at the Brooklyn Museum</a>
	Art Daily	<a href="#">Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic, Brooklyn Museum opens an overview of the prolific artist's career</a>

# Press Clip Selection



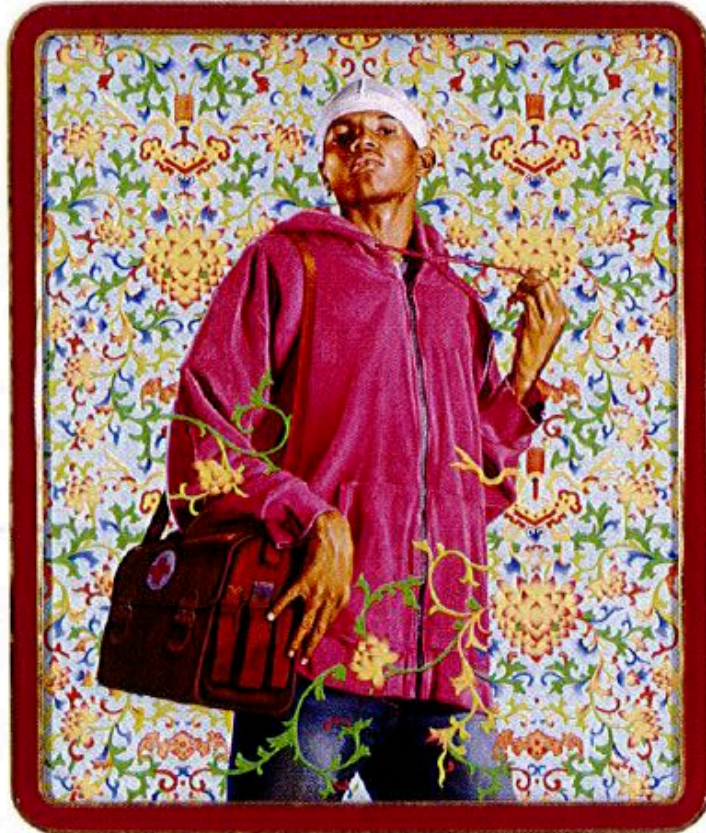
# Magazines



# ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST

THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE OF DESIGN

## DISCOVERIES



Kehinde Wiley's *Support the Rural Population and Serve 500 Million Peasants* (2007), at the Brooklyn Museum.

## EXHIBITIONS

### Old School

Opening February 20 at the Brooklyn Museum, "Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic" surveys the works of the New York-based artist, who often references Old Masters in his paintings of present-day men and women of color. The retrospective highlights Wiley's new series of stained-glass windows, as well as his recent altarpieces based on the Flemish painter Hans Memling's religious vignettes. "In playing with conventions of portraiture," says show curator Eugenie Tsai, "Wiley seems to be proposing a new world order." *Through May 24; brooklynmuseum.org* —MICHAEL SLENSKE

# ARTFORUM

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## **“KEHINDE WILEY: A NEW REPUBLIC”**

BROOKLYN MUSEUM • February 13–  
May 24 • Curated by Eugenie Tsai

In last year's PBS documentary *Kehinde Wiley: An Economy of Grace*, one of the artist's associates offhandedly introduces him to a stranger in New York as “the black Andy Warhol.” Not only has Wiley's work become singularly recognizable (since emerging in the early 2000s), but the artist also shares with the King of Pop an utter reliance on the charismatic, glimmering stars of the street. In his first museum survey, at the site of his first institutional solo show in 2004, Wiley will present approximately sixty works, including recent pieces in bronze and stained glass. But the focal point will be his paintings, extravagant mash-ups of Nike billboards and rococo pomp. Early on, these featured languidly posing African American men scouted from street-canvassing sessions; they now include international subjects as well as—in a significant breakthrough—women. A catalogue with texts by Jeffrey Deitch, Franklin Sirmans, Deborah Willis, and more should add context to Wiley's uniquely consistent yet variegated practice. *Travels to the Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Sept. 20, 2015–Jan. 10, 2016; and other venues.*  
—Nick Stillman

# Art

For more of the best winter and spring art shows go to [timeout.com/newyork/art](http://timeout.com/newyork/art)

Edited by  
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Kehinde Wiley, *Femme piquée par un serpent*

## The best upcoming art shows in 2015

From Björk to Lena Dunham's mom, these are this year's must-see museum exhibitions. By **Howard Halle**

### "Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic"

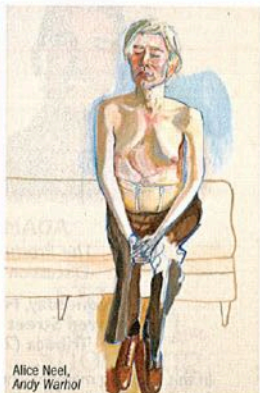
Wiley made his name by painting portraits of African-Americans Old Masters-style. While his intent is to undermine the biases of white, Eurocentric culture, this career survey demonstrates that the real pleasures of his work lie in his technical skills and richly patterned backgrounds. *Brooklyn Museum, Feb 20-May 24.*



Laurie Simmons, *How We See* (Detail)

### "Laurie Simmons: How We See"

Aside from raising the star of a certain TV show, Simmons is known for her photos of dolls, ventriloquist dummies and the like. In this show, Simmons puts l'oeil into trompe l'oeil with images of fashion models rendered uncanny by the addition of eyes painted on their shut eyelids. *The Jewish Museum, Mar 13-Aug 9.*



Alice Neel, *Andy Warhol*

### Inaugural Exhibition

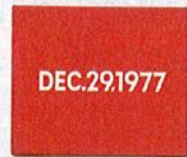
It's finally here—the Whitney's new MePa home! Boasting 63,000 square feet of exhibition space, it's certainly big. The Whitney takes advantage of all that room, dusting off its Hoppers, O'Keeffes and De Koonings for most the extensive showing ever of its permanent collection. *Whitney Museum of American Art, May 1-Sept 27.*



Björk, *Homogenic*

### Björk

MoMA celebrates the career of the Icelandic alt diva and swan-dress aficionado with a retrospective encompassing the many mediums she's worked in: music, art, costume design and video. The survey includes an immersive sound-and-film "experience" created especially for the occasion. *Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), Mar 7-June 7.*



On Kawara, *DEC. 29, 1977, "Thursday," New York*

### "On Kawara—Sjlonce"

Whether at home or on the road, this conceptual artist has painted a single painting each and every day since 1966, featuring the date on a colored background (along with a storage box lined with the day's front page). The Gugg brings together this project and others. *Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Feb 6-May 3.*



# ARTnews

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EDITORS' PICKS

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## "KEHINDE WILEY: A NEW REPUBLIC"

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, NEW YORK

FEBRUARY 20 - MAY 24

This show is a survey of Kehinde Wiley's career, which has mined the style of Old Master painting to portray young African American men and women in contemporary attire, posed to look like various heroic figures from throughout art history. Wiley finds his subjects through "street casting," pulling strangers off the street into his studio to sit for portraits. The critic Holland Cotter has said that Wiley "creates history as much as he tells it."



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Kehinde Wiley, *Femme piquée par un serpent*, 2008, oil on canvas.

# Harper's BAZAAR

Harper's Bazaar—Feb. 2015

## MUST-DO



Kehinde Wiley's *Colonel Platoff on His Charger, 2007-8*

**FRAME OF REFERENCE** Paintings and bronze busts by Kehinde Wiley, renowned for his Old Masters approach to contemporary, urban black subjects, are on view at the Brooklyn Museum starting February 20.



Helen Mirren

### BROADWAY ROYALTY

In *The Audience*, Helen Mirren rules as Elizabeth II, which imagines the queen's private meetings with the U.K.'s prime ministers over her 60-year reign.

### STORY TIME

Novelist Rachel Kushner takes on short fiction with her debut collection of stories, *The Strange Case of Rachel K.*



Robert Pattinson

### STAR POWER

Julianne Moore, Mia Wasikowska, and Robert Pattinson light up the screen (literally) in *Maps to the Stars*, David Cronenberg's thriller set in Hollywood.

**LISTEN UP** Soko, the Parisian chanteuse whose songs have won fans like Spike Jonze and Stella McCartney, releases her sophomore album. Romy Oltuski



# Smithsonian

Back in America, Livingston had persuaded New York State to give him an exclusive grant to operate steamships on the Hudson River, an audacious move given he had no ship. But when he brought Fulton home, the returning expatriate harnessed the best shipwrighting, millwrighting and coppersmithing talents along New York's East River docks to fulfill his specifications. The result: a vessel 146 feet long and 12 feet wide, with a shallow draft and a heavy, fire-spewing boiler that powered a pair of flanking paddle wheels. Anyone who knew ships thought it was a catastrophe in the making, but in August of 1807, Fulton announced that his North River Boat was ready to travel 150 miles up the Hudson to Albany.

The crowd gathered at Christopher Street dock expected an explosion. Instead, just minutes into the water, the boat came to a complete stop. "I heard a number of sarcastic remarks," Fulton later wrote. "This is the way in which ignorant men compliment what they call philosophers and projectors." Fulton rolled up his sleeves and—missing out on the opportunity to invent the word "glitch"—soon rectified "a slight maladjustment of some of the work," and off the needle-like vessel went, clanking and hissing, every bit a monster.



Twenty-four hours and 110 miles later, it stopped at Livingston's estate, from which the boat takes its popular name, the *Clermont*. The next day it ventured on to Albany, having finished in about a day and a half a trip that took the better part of a week by sloop. "We saw the inhabitants collect; they waved their handkerchiefs and hurried for Fulton," wrote one passenger, the French botanist François André Michaux.

At that moment, the Age of Sail was doomed. America became a smaller continent, and the oceans shrank. In the years to come, steamships cruised the Mississippi, carried forty-niners to California, opened the Orient and helped Cornelius Vanderbilt, Mark Twain and Mickey Mouse become national icons in their own right.

Fulton didn't invent the steamship, but in the *Clermont*, he built a sturdy boat with a durable engine, one strong enough to become a commercial success. By changing the boat's design, hiding the boiler and engine, adding awnings and cabins, Fulton made steamship travel acceptable to the swells. In a similar way, he upscaled himself, and married Livingston's second cousin Harriet.

During the War of 1812, while canvas-sailed frigates battled in Lake Erie, Fulton was developing a steam-driven warship for the defense of New York Harbor. He never saw it realized; he caught a chill and died on February 24, 1815. When completed, the ship was presented to the United States Navy. The USS *Fulton* was the first steam-powered vessel in the American fleet.

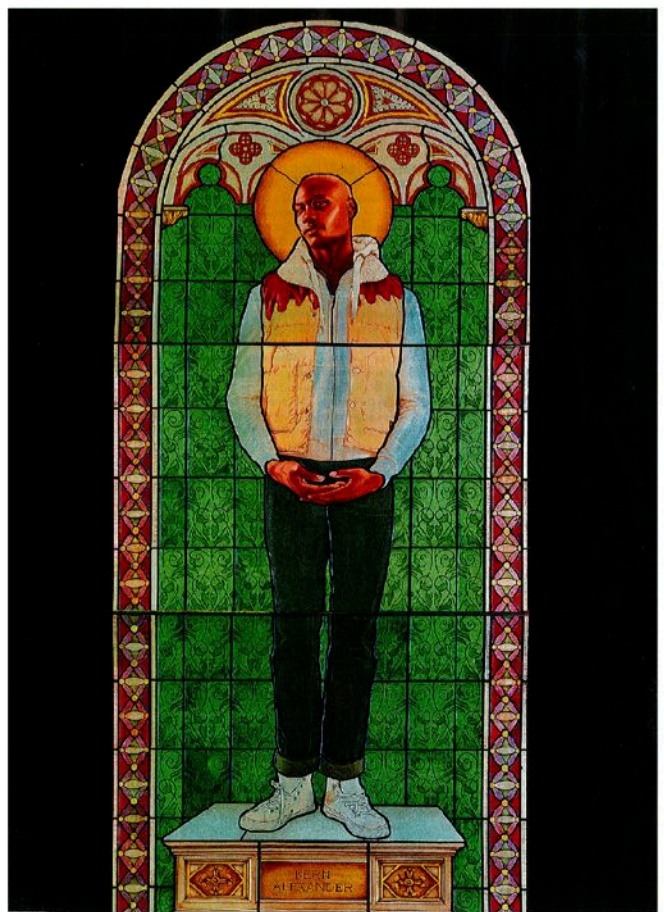
## Heroes and Men

A painter finds inspiration in stained glass

### ART

*Saint Amelie*, an eight-foot-tall stained glass window, is one of six glass works in a new show by **Kehinde Wiley** opening at the Brooklyn Museum this month. Wiley, a New York-based artist who will celebrate his 38th birthday soon after the show's opening, is known for reinterpreting old master portraiture with black subjects in heroic poses. This update swaps out a French royal posing as a saint (the namesake of Wiley's piece) who appeared in a 19th-century window by the great French painter Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres for a haloed young man in street clothes. Wiley says he hopes his use of the underappreciated medium of stained glass will, much like his earlier work with identity, provoke people "to look at things we think we know but then challenge the assumptions made about them." —MAX KUTNER

See more of Wiley's art at [Smithsonian.com/wiley](http://Smithsonian.com/wiley)



"SAINT AMELIE" (2014). COURTESY OF GALERIE DANIEL TEMPERON, PARIS. © KEHINDE WILEY. COURTESY OF GALERIE DANIEL TEMPERON, PARIS. © KEHINDE WILEY.

# Wmagazine

W-Feb. 2015

## WHEN CULTURAL CALENDAR



## 20<sup>th</sup> GAME OF THRONES

FOR OVER A DECADE, KEHINDE WILEY HAS ANOINTED YOUNG BLACK MEN AND WOMEN IN INDIA, SRI LANKA, ISRAEL, JAMAICA, AND NIGERIA—NOT TO MENTION STREET KIDS IN HARLEM—BY PAINTING THEM IN A BOMBASTIC POP STYLE THAT MIMICS THE OLD MASTERS. “KEHINDE WILEY: A NEW REPUBLIC,” A RETROSPECTIVE AT THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM (FEBRUARY 20 THROUGH MAY 24), IS A BLOCKBUSTER TOUR OF WILEY’S NEW ROYALS (ABOVE: WILLEM VAN HEYTHUYSEN, 2005).

## 17<sup>th</sup> SISTER ACT

“It’s pronounced ee-bey-EE,” Naomi and Lisa-Kaindé Díaz, the French-Cuban musicians who make up **Ibeyi**, say in unison of their oft-mispronounced moniker, which means “twins” in Yoruban. The sisters have been photographed by Bruce Weber, who also handpicked their track “Oya” as the score for *Beautiful Strangers*, his short film for Louis Vuitton. Though the extroverted Naomi and the introverted Lisa-Kaindé (below, from left) admit that they fight “a lot,” being born two minutes apart allows for creative synchronicity. Their self-titled debut album, out February 17 (XL Recordings), layers modern filters and synths over traditional Yoruban folk music—a genre their late father, Miguel “Anga” Díaz, a percussionist for Havana’s famed Buena Vista Social Club, helped bring to the mainstream. From its tricky name to its culture-clash sound, *Ibeyi* is the rare new act that feels completely authentic.

ALLYSON SHIFFMAN



## HAUTE-EL

Having turned the Hôtel Costes and L’Hôtel into luxe City of Light lodgings for the fashion set, the French architect and interiors whiz Jacques Garcia riffed on Belle Époque and 19th-century Parisian society in his latest do-over, **La Réserve Paris**, which opens this month in the 8th arrondissement. Owned by the French hotelier and vintner



Michel Reybier, the 40-room limestone mansion is done up in velvet, silk damask, and chic muted tones. Don’t worry if you forget to bring your favorite book or slippers: Four special suites come with personal-butler service. n.s.

# FADER

CULTURE / NEWS

## Catch Kehinde Wiley's New Exhibit At The Brooklyn Museum This Weekend

The firebrand artist shows "A New Republic" is showing at the Brooklyn Museum through May 2015.



# TIME

'IF THIS MOVIE ISN'T SEEN BY THE PUBLIC, IT IS A FAILURE IN ITSELF.' PAGE 56

THE WEEK  
SCANDAL  
RETURNS

## The Culture

ART

### A Hero's Welcome

Kehinde Wiley's work frames young black men in a way they're rarely seen in fine arts: as celebrated heroes. In 2001 the New York City-based artist began re-creating classic paintings by Manet, Titian and van Dyck, replacing their subjects with black men—whom he hired off the street—striking the same poses in contemporary dress. The new book **Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic**, available in late February, chronicles these works as well as Wiley's colorful "The World Stage" series, which features paintings he made all around the globe. An accompanying exhibit kicks off at the Brooklyn Museum on Feb. 20 and will travel to Fort Worth, Texas; Seattle; and Richmond, Va., in 2015 and 2016.

Mostly known as a painter, Wiley has also produced bronze busts like 2011's *Houdon Paul-Louis*



MOVIES

### Treasure Trove

An out-of-work submarine captain (*Jude Law*, below) goes after a sunken World War II U-boat full of gold in **Black Sea**. But the mission turns deadly when greed overcomes his crew in this thriller from Kevin Macdonald, who also directed the Oscar-winning documentary *One Day in September*. In theaters Jan. 23.



MUSIC

### Chill Pill

After a fling with dance music, R&B singer and in-demand songwriter Ne-Yo goes back to his roots on his sixth album, **Non-Fiction**, which arrives Jan. 27 and features guest spots by Pitbull and T.I.



TELEVISION

### Empty Nest

NBC's long-running drama **Parenthood** will air its series finale on Jan. 29 after six seasons. Lauren Graham (below, with co-star Dax Shepard) recently told TIME what fans should expect from the ending. "It's satisfying," she says of her character's arc, "but I think it's a little polarizing."



By Nolan Feeney

# NEW YORK



ENA JOHNSON in dress by Giorgio Armani

**I** WANTED BEAUTIFUL women," says the 37-year-old artist Kehinde Wiley. It was the summer of 2011, and Wiley—known primarily for his ornate, classical-style portraits of young black men—was scouting the streets of Harlem, Brooklyn, and Queens for new subjects. Female subjects, for his first formal attempt at painting women. "I knew that I wanted to cast a broad net and not go within the fashion-world-model look. I wanted women who had a sense of self-possession and a kind of haughtiness that you can just pick up on." With his team of two or three plus a camera crew (the project was filmed for a PBS documentary called *Kehinde Wiley: An Economy of Grace*), he took scouting snapshots on the street, eventually whittling his list of subjects down to just seven. Over the next several months, Wiley photographed them, had them fitted for haute-couture gowns designed by Riccardo Tisci at Givenchy, then painted them large-scale, in works modeled after French and British portraits from the 18th and 19th centuries (pictured this page). A number of them will be on display at a retrospective of Wiley's work opening February 20 at the Brooklyn Museum, in what will likely be one of the big exhibitions of the winter.

Here, in a portfolio of original photographs for *New York*, Wiley updates those paintings—six of the same women, styled in this season's gowns from the Row, Chloé, Erdem, Rodarte, and others and staged, as his paintings are, to seem both out of time and sumptuously of the moment. He calls the photographs, like the paintings, "intelligent, wasteful acts of spending." With their exaggerated hair and surreal makeup, and

accessorized with jewels, the women look both regal and demure. "What we wanted to do was to play up the real world within the language of glamour," Wiley says. "I wanted to have a reprise of that moment, to go back to this idea of fashion and art having something in common, the idea that fashion could change the perception of an individual."

The women hail from a variety of backgrounds. Ena Johnson, 25, is studying for her nursing degree. Candice Stevens, 30, works for the Department of Correction. Shantavia Beale, 23, is a mother of two. But Wiley isn't interested in turning anyone into a Cinderella story. "He portrayed us in a beautiful way without whitewashing our representation," recalls Johnson of the first time she saw Wiley's paintings. "He let little details about us shine through, things that are cultural—that are human. In the painting of Treisha, he pointed on her nail designs." Khalidiah Asante, 28 and an art teacher, says of her experience: "I have always been self-conscious about my feet. I'm a dancer, I have calluses underneath my feet that I'd never want to get rid of, because I need them. But when I was younger I wasn't really happy or confident about that, but the fact that he got every detail of my foot, every wrinkle—God, that is wonderful—the part I really hate about my body, I was like, *Wow, this is gorgeous.*"

"We need to see more positive representations of ourselves," Johnson says. "There's too much negative. When I was in the Chelsea gallery, my daughter pointed me out, and that was an experience that was so amazing, to be seen in that light."

THESSALY LA FORCE

Kehinde Wiley's *masses* as they first appeared, on canvas, in 2012



DACIA CARTER AND KHALIDIAH ASANTE



TREISHA LOWE



CANDICE STEVENS



SHANTAVIA BEALE



ENA JOHNSON

Styling by Rebecca Ramsey; makeup by Deja Smith for DD-Pro using Makeup Forever; hair by Dee Truongbear for DD-Pro using Redken.

PAINTING: JASON WICK/COURTESY OF KEHINDE WILEY; NEW YORK

# DETAILS

Art

## Artist Kehinde Wiley Recasts History in His New Brooklyn Show

The world-renowned portrait artist cements his status as an icon.

BY LAURENCE LOWE







ON VIEW

## A Sprawling Retrospective for Kehinde Wiley's Heroic Portraits

CULTURE | BY JOHNNY MAGDALENO |



Kehinde Wiley's "Napoleon Leading the Army over the Alps," 2005. Wiley's work will be the subject of a major retrospective at the Brooklyn Museum starting Feb. 20. *Sarah DiSantis, courtesy of the artist and Brooklyn Museum*

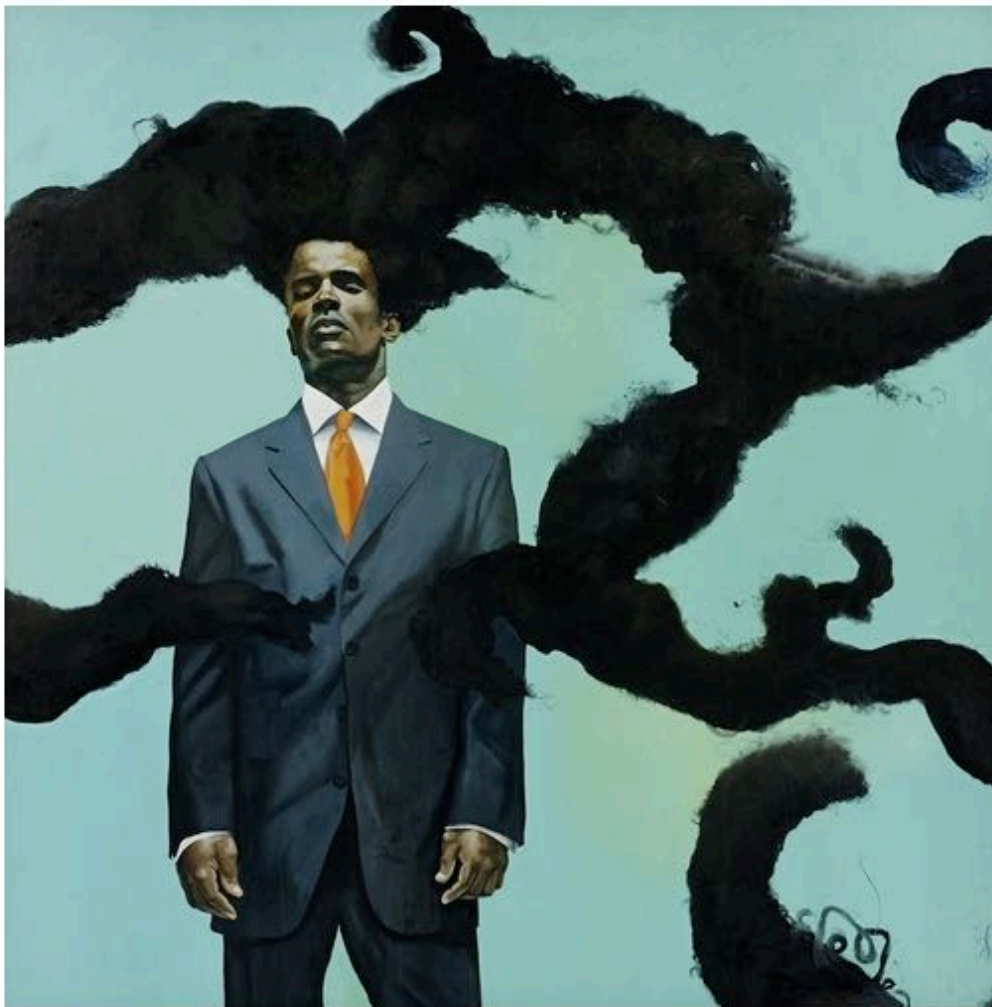


# VICE

## The Enduring Power and Beauty of Artist Kehinde Wiley's Representation of Black Men and Women

February 19, 2015

by Antwaun Sargent



*'Conspicuous Fraud Series #1 (Eminence),' 2001. Oil on canvas, 7912 x 7912 x 312 in. (201.3 x 201.3 x 8.3 cm). The Studio Museum in Harlem; Museum purchase made possible by a gift from Anne Ehrenkranz. © Kehinde Wiley.*

# THE ADVOCATE

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## In the Galleries: Kehinde Wiley

Wiley's classically composed work in the new exhibit "A New Republic" travels through time and culture at the speed of light.

BY CHRISTOPHER HARRITY



Above: *Femme piquée par un serpent*, 2008. Oil on canvas, 102 x 300 in. (259.1 x 762 cm).  
Courtesy of Sean Kelly, New York.

Kehinde Wiley's subjects stare back at you with a direct challenge. His models are men he has plucked off the streets around the world, hip-hop stars, friends. As the lush backgrounds of his paintings envelop the models, they seem to be daring you to question the various anachronistic props and patterns, the gender-nonconforming flowering and fabrics.

The first museum survey of the prolific artist's career includes nearly 60 objects and covers his early portraits combining the street life of Harlem and the salon styles of classical European portraiture. Also on view will be his bronze busts, as well as his recent portraits of women from his series "An Economy of Grace" and his new stained-glass "paintings."

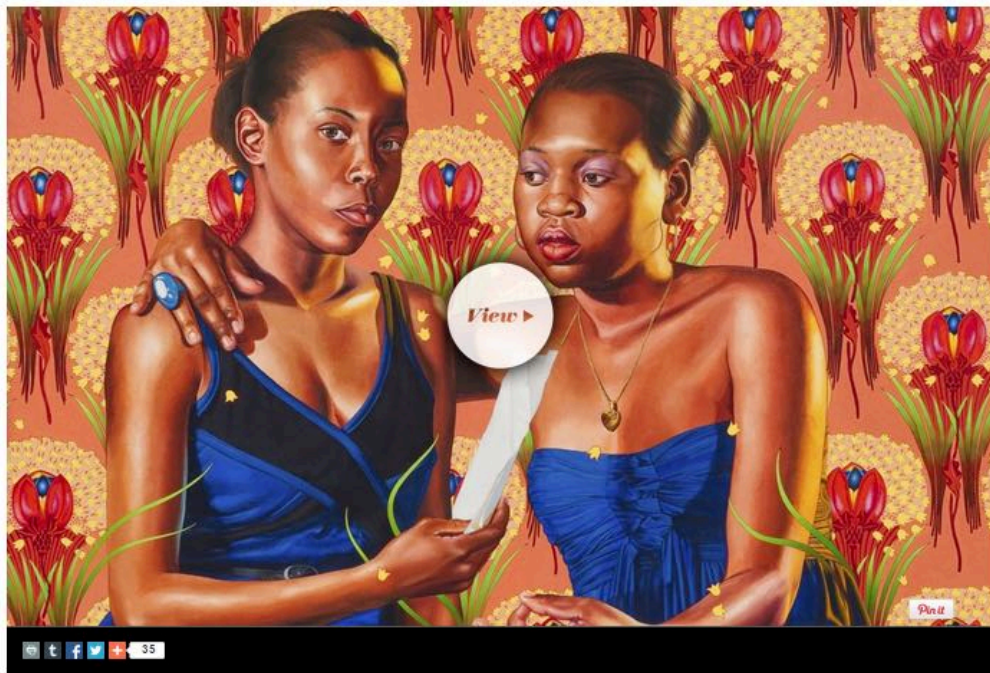
# EBONY

ENTERTAINMENT & CULTURE / Art

23  
FEBRUARY 2015

## Kehinde Wiley Paints Brooklyn Red [PHOTOS]

WITH KEHINDE WILEY: A NEW REPUBLIC, THE CELEBRATED PORTRAIT PAINTER DEBUTS HIS LATEST RETROSPECTIVE AT NYC'S BROOKLYN MUSEUM



CLASSIC GALLERY

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**Kehinde Wiley is a global art world megastar.** What's made him the distinguished artist he is comes from a synergy of exemplary practice, research and exhibition. Wiley's success came from the fusion of his talent plus the dynamic interplay of public response, art world reception and the market.

While many visual artists have achieved the status of becoming household names, few contemporary Black artists since Jean-Michel Basquiat have achieved commercial success while occupying the position of artist-as-celebrity. In fact, Kehinde Wiley may just be the postmillennial prototype.

# BROOKLYN MAGAZINE

ART

## Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic Reigns at the Brooklyn Museum

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(Photos by Nicole Dissler)

A new retrospective at [the Brooklyn Museum](#) is testament to the last 15 years of the artist [Kehinde Wiley](#)'s career as mostly a painter of young black men. But *A New Republic* goes beyond just the pieces that have come to define Wiley's body of work consisting mainly of massive, colorful paintings inspired by classical art as much as they turn these familiar influences on their heads.



# THE SOURCE

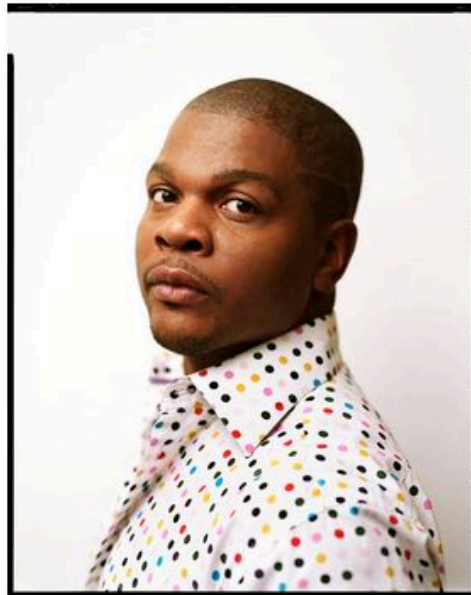
## “Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic” Review

Art/Design

Culture

April 9, 2015

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*“A New Republic” showcases 60 pieces from Wiley’s cohesive body of work spanning 14 years of excellence and creativity in the Brooklyn Museum*

Regardless of the series, each of Wiley’s pieces maintain relevancy throughout the years with their independent, yet interconnected focus on race, gender and politics. By transposing African Americans and hip hop cultural motifs into traditionally Caucasian-dominated Renaissance portraiture, Wiley highlights the absence of color and race throughout European artwork, history, and aristocracy.



## Elsewhere



**Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic**  
February 20–May 24, 2015  
**Brooklyn Museum**  
Brooklyn, New York  
[brooklynmuseum.org](http://brooklynmuseum.org)

This spring, our friends at the Brooklyn Museum will present the first museum survey of Kehinde Wiley's illustrious fourteen-year career. A Studio Museum Artist-in-Residence alum and the subject of our 2008 exhibition *The World Stage: Africa, Lagos - Dakar*, Wiley approaches the complicated intersections of race, gender, class and power in the politics of representation. *Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic* will feature an exciting range of the artist's work, from his early portrait paintings inspired by Harlem street life, to his ongoing "World Stage" series, to recent explorations in female portraiture, stained glass and bronze sculpture.

Kehinde Wiley  
*The Sisters Zénaïde and Charlotte Bonaparte*, 2014  
Courtesy Roberts & Tilton,  
Culver City, California  
© Kehinde Wiley

# Newspaper



# The New York Times

THEATER | MUSIC | FILM | DANCE  
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## Arts & Leisure

The New York Times

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2015

# A New Royalty

The painter Kehinde Wiley puts an old-master spin on his contemporary subjects.

By DEBORAH SOLOMON

KEHINDE WILEY BEGAN THINKING about the stereotypes that shadow black men long before events in Ferguson, Mo., pushed the phrase “unarmed black man” back into the headlines and inaugurated a new wave of the civil rights movement.

“I know how young black men are seen,” he said on a recent winter afternoon in his studio in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn. “They’re boys, scared little boys oftentimes. I was one of them. I was completely afraid of the Los Angeles Police Department.” He grew up in South-Central Los Angeles and was 14 when four white police officers were acquitted in the videotaped beating of Rodney King; riots flared in the neighborhood.

Now 37, Mr. Wiley is one of the most celebrated painters of his generation. He is known for vibrant, photo-based portraits of young black men (and occasionally women) who are the opposite of scared — they gaze out at us coolly, their images mashed up with rococo-style frills and empowering poses culled from art history. He maintains studios in China and Senegal in addition to New York. As a self-described gay man and the son of an African-American mother and a Nigerian father, he offers a model of the artist as multicultural itinerant.

At the moment, Mr. Wiley’s work seems to be everywhere, from the set of the Fox drama “Empire” to all of the right institutions. His first museum retrospective opens at the Brooklyn Museum on Feb. 20.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 23



Kehinde Wiley at his Brooklyn studio with his oil “Judith Beheading Holofernes” (2012), which is also the name of a Caravaggio work. “The stuff I do is a type of long-form autobiography,” he said, “but the starting place is not me.”

CHAD BASKA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Art

# Painting and a New Royalty

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

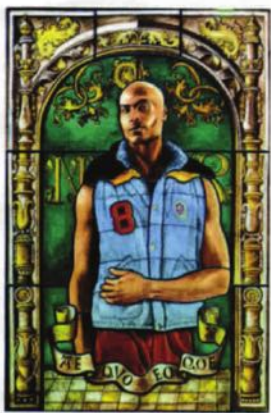
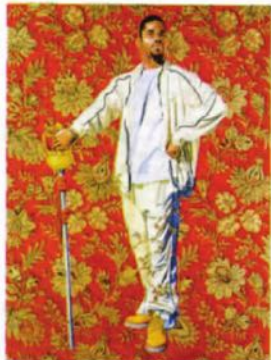
before traveling to museums in Fort Worth, Seattle and Richmond, Va. Last month, he was summoned to Washington to receive a Medal of Arts from the State Department. ("I brought my mother as my date," he said.)

A Wiley painting is easy to recognize. More often than not, it shows a solitary figure, an attractive man in his 20s, enacting a scene from an old-master painting. Dressed in contemporary garb — a hooded sweatshirt, perhaps, or a Denver Broncos jersey — the man might be crossing the Swiss Alps on horseback with the brio of Napoleon or glancing upward, prophetic-style, golden light encircling his head. Typically the man has a lean frame, and his clear skin gives off a coppery sheen. His posture is regal: shoulders rolled back, head turned slightly to reveal the elegant sweep of a jawline.

Every Wiley painting is a two-punch affair — the masculine figures contrast sharply with the ornately patterned, Skittles-bright backdrops unfurling behind them. Based on design sources as varied as Victorian wallpaper and Renaissance tapestries, the backgrounds can look as if thousands of curling petals had somehow been blown into geometric formations across the canvas. For the moment depicted in the painting, the men are protected and invincible, inhabiting an Arcadian realm far removed from the grit of the artist's childhood.

Mr. Wiley's champions tend to view his work in overt political terms. He redresses the absence of nonwhite faces in museum masterpieces, "using the power of images

Right, Kehinde Wiley at his Williamsburg, Brooklyn, studio with his painting "Jose Alberto de la Cruz Diaz and Luis Nunez" (2013). Below, with his mother, Freddie Mae Wiley, at a reception in Washington in January. Far right, from top: "Willem van Heythuysen" (2006) and "Arms of Nicolas Ruterius, Bishop of Arras" (2014).



called. He added, "You're ill, and you don't want to be seen jumping out to go through your neighbor's garbage. That's social death!"

At 11, everything changed. His mom enrolled him in a free art course at a state college. Suddenly, he knew how he wanted to spend his life; his career unfolded with remarkable velocity. He attended college at the San Francisco Art Institute, before winning a scholarship to Yale. He arrived in New York in 2001 as an artist-in-residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem.

Since then, Mr. Wiley has "street-cast" his paintings, heading out to scout for models — initially along the jammed sidewalks on 125th Street in Harlem and later, when he had enough money, overseas, in China, Israel and elsewhere.

His paintings all begin with an exchange of glances between artist and subject. Mr. Wiley describes the process as "this serendipitous thing where I am in the streets running into people who resonate with me, whether for cultural or sexual reasons. My type is rooted in my own sexual desire."

He added, with amusement, "Most people turn me down." The willing few are instructed to come to his studio to pose for photographs that serve as source material for the portraits.

Mr. Wiley delegates much of his production to a team of assistants, so much so that

CHAD BAYKA FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

JEAN KELLE, NEW YORK

KATHERINE WETZEL, VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

GABRIEL DANIEL, TENNISON PARK



to remedy the historical invisibility of black men and women," as Eugenie Tsai, the curator of the Brooklyn Museum show, observes in the accompanying catalog.

But you can also read his work in psychological terms, and Mr. Wiley himself emphasizes the never-ending tension in the paintings between their male and female aspects. "It's about a figure in the landscape," he said of his output, adding that the backdrops symbolize the land. "For me the landscape is the irrational. Nature is the woman. Nature is the black, the brown, the other." He added, "That's the logic behind it, but everyone has their own sort of reading."

Mr. Wiley, who attended graduate art school at Yale, has a taste for academic language. During our conversation he used the words "slippage" and "surd," the last of which sent me to the dictionary. It's a math term for irrational numbers with no square root.

Surd, in truth, seems to capture something essential about Mr. Wiley, his distrust of reductive explanations. Although he has a warm manner and a winning gap-tooth smile, there is an aloofness about him, too, especially when he does not care for a question. I asked him whether he felt an affinity with the work of Chuck Close, who similarly paints portraits that disclose next to nothing about their subjects.

"He fetishizes the material process instead of an external story," he said.

What about John Currin, his fellow Yale and devotee of brazen pastiche? "We have different projects," was Mr. Wiley's businesslike reply.

Even his sexuality, by his description, defies categorization. "My sexuality is not black and white," he said. "I'm a gay man who has occasionally drifted. I am not bi. I've had perfectly pleasant romances with women, but they weren't sustainable. My passion wasn't there. I would always be looking at guys."

Before meeting Mr. Wiley, I had seen a photograph of him in a magazine and was struck by his stylishness. He was wearing a suit whose jazzy stripes matched the background of one of his paintings. Jeffrey Deitch, the art dealer who gave Mr. Wiley his first one-man show in New York and represented him for a decade, had urged me, only half-jokingly, to try to look in the artist's bedroom closet if I wanted to understand him. It contains, Mr. Deitch said,



Top, "Femme Piquete par un Serpente" (2008). Above, in Mr. Wiley's studio, from left: "Equestrian Portrait of Prince Tomaso of Savoy-Carignan" (2014) and "Alfonso Martinez and Jeannette Silberberg Bonnet" (2011).

#### Redressing the absence of nonwhite faces in museum masterpieces.

ONLINE: KEHINDE WILEY  
More works in the Brooklyn Museum show: [nytimes.com/design](http://nytimes.com/design)

dozens of custom-made suits, many of them by Ron & Ron, a tony label founded by Haitian twins.

Mr. Wiley's studio does not look like the haunt of a dandy. You enter the building by buzzing past a steel-frame security door that opens onto a long, sunless courtyard. The heat wasn't working on the day of my visit, and the artist met me at the door bundled in layers of paint-stained work clothes. He proposed that we talk in a small front office warmed by a space heater, and night was already falling.

A fish tank glowed with blue light. Above it hung what appeared to be a Basquiat from the '80s, a smattering of cryptic words ("teeth," for instance) scratched into its brushy surface. When I complimented the painting, Mr. Wiley replied mischievously, "I painted it myself."

Clearly, he has a gift for mimicry. He can do a Velázquez. He can do a Jacques-Louis David. He can do a Basquiat. His devotion to pastiche has kept him operating on a meta level, and perhaps at a deliberate remove from his past. "The stuff I do is a type of long-form autobiography," he said, with his usual attention to paradox, "but the starting place is not me."

The artist said he never met his father

during his childhood, or even saw a photograph of him. Isaiah D. Obot — a Nigerian citizen who came to the United States as a scholarship student — returned to Africa after finishing his studies. He went on to have a second family in Nigeria and a substantial career in city planning.

The artist's mother, Freddie Mae Wiley, a Texas native, studied linguistics and eventually became a teacher. Kehinde was the fifth of her six children, and a twin. For most of his childhood, he said, the family subsisted on welfare checks and whatever spare change came in from his mother's thrift shop. The store didn't have a sign or a retail space, other than a patch of sidewalk in front of the house on West Jefferson Avenue. But everyone in the neighborhood thought of it as Freddie's Store. Mr. Wiley recalls the mounds of merchandise: used books, windup Victrolas, tarnished gold-leaf picture frames, porcelain figurines of rosy-cheeked lovers.

"It was like 'Sanford and Son,'" he said, referring to the '70s sitcom about two men with a salvage shop, "junk everywhere."

The children would help their mother scout for new inventory, driving around in a Dodge van that backfired noisily. "That was the more embarrassing part," he re-

spend his life; his career unfolded with remarkable velocity. He attended college at the San Francisco Art Institute, before winning a scholarship to Yale. He arrived in New York in 2001 as an artist-in-residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem.

Since then, Mr. Wiley has "street-cast" his paintings, heading out to scout for models — initially along the jammed sidewalks on 125th Street in Harlem and later, when he had enough money, overseas, in China, Israel and elsewhere.

His paintings all begin with an exchange of glances between artist and subject. Mr. Wiley describes the process as "this serendipitous thing where I am in the streets running into people who resonate with me, whether for cultural or sexual reasons. My type is rooted in my own sexual desire."

He added, with amusement, "Most people turn me down." The willing few are instructed to come to his studio to pose for photographs that serve as source material for the portraits.

Mr. Wiley delegates much of his production to a bevy of assistants, so much so that he has been accused of outsourcing his entire output. "Wiley's paintings are created by teams of assistants in China," the critic Ben Davis observed in an ulcerous review at [BlouinArtInfo.com](http://BlouinArtInfo.com) in 2012.

At the time, Mr. Wiley had declined to say much about his process, but during our meeting, he was candid about the division of labor. In general, he said, his assistants are responsible for painting the super-busy, detail-packed backgrounds. "Let's face it," he said, "I'm not doing all that."

After a background is laid in place, he starts in on the figure, the gently lit face and body, which he seems to view as the heart of his work. Rendering skin tones, especially black and brown ones, is a subtle process, and, if you look closely at a patch of cheek or forehead in his paintings, you are likely to notice an array of indigo blues and alizarin reds.

Even so, his surfaces are thinly painted, and he speaks with distaste for the Expressionist tradition of visible brush strokes. "My work is not about paint," he told me. "It's about paint at the service of something else. It is not about goopy, chest-beating, macho '80s abstraction that allows paint to sit up on the surface as subject matter about paint," he said.

Mr. Wiley has his share of critics who say his work is formulaic and repetitive. Whether he's working in oil or watercolor, he deploys the same strategy of inserting dark-skinned figures into very white masterpieces of the past.

To be fair, he has varied his subjects over the years. In 2012, for his debut show at the Sean Kelly Gallery, he added women to his roster of models. ("It was my idea," Mr. Kelly said, explaining that he was pushing Mr. Wiley to branch out.) Mr. Wiley has also ventured into sculpture, and his coming show at the Brooklyn Museum will include two stained-glass windows as well as a few bronze heads that can put you in mind of the portrait busts of Jean-Antoine Houdon, who flourished during the French Enlightenment.

"I am interested in evolution within my thinking," he said. "I am not interested in the evolution of my paint. If I made buttery, thick paintings, there would be critics of that. You just have to proceed."

In all fairness, he is only 37, which is still young for an artist. It would make more sense to talk about his evolution when he is 60 or 70. See you back here then.

# WALL STREET JOURNAL



## GREATER NEW YORK

### Full Circle

Nets' Garnett Heads Back to Timberwolves **SPORTS A17**



A Small Space Packs a Punch  
**HAPPY HOUR A14**

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THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Friday, February 20, 2015 | **A13**

## Beyond the Hoodie: An Artistic Discourse

By **ANDY BETA**

Kehinde Wiley finds it maddening when he hears his body of artwork summed up as if all he does is paintings of rappers in classic art styles.

Yes, his subjects often wear baseball caps and hoodies. And yes, many are shown on thrones, on horseback and in other heroic poses and contexts traditionally reserved for kings and military leaders and saints.

But his work isn't simply portraiture with a twist—it carries provocative commentary about the politics of race and representation throughout the history of art.

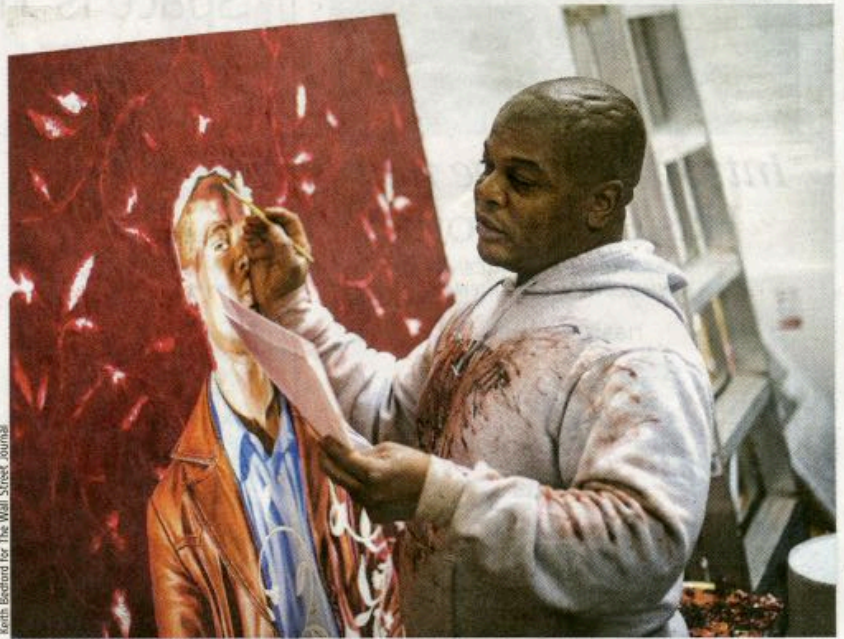
A midcareer retrospective of Mr. Wiley's work, "Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic," opens Friday at the Brooklyn Museum, in-

cluding a selection of his immense, eye-popping paintings—some measuring 25 feet long—that have made him one of the most recognizable artists of the 21st century. Also on view: some of his most recent portraits, done in the more archaic medium of stained glass.

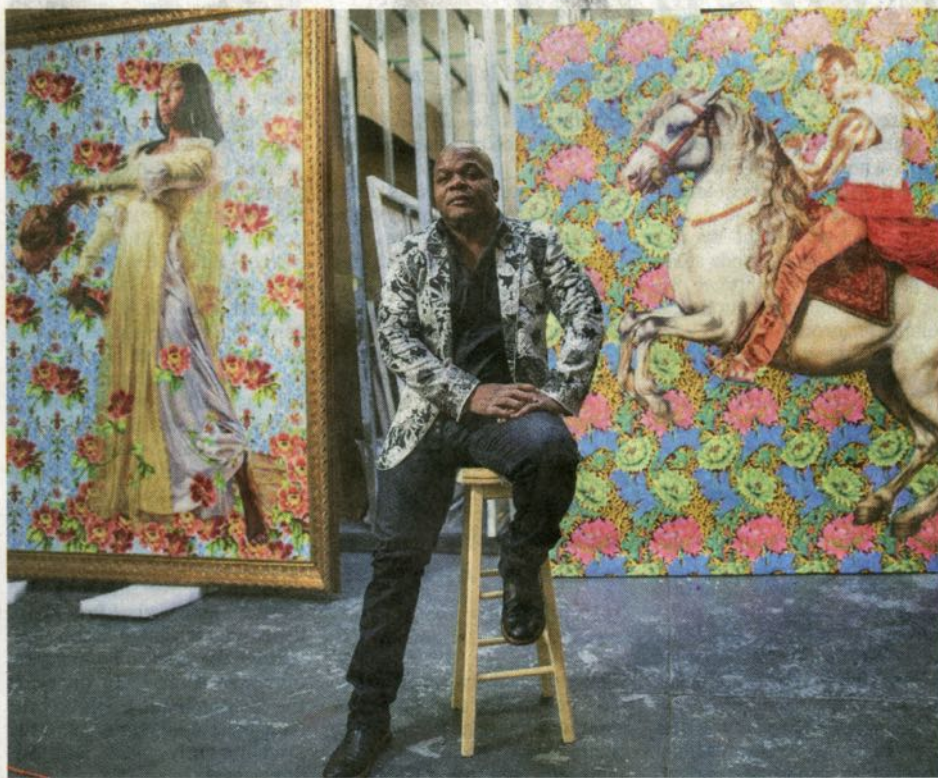
"It was super particular, with crazy-high stakes," said Mr. Wiley, 37 years old, of reassembling and installing the stained-glass panels, which had been produced and shipped over from the Czech Republic. "If anything drops, the whole exhibition is over."

An early supporter of Mr. Wiley's work was New York art dealer Jeffrey Deitch, who said he values artists whose work engages with artistic precedence while still being accessible and

Please see **WILEY** page **A16**



Kehinde Wiley, in his Williamsburg studio; a midcareer retrospective of his work is at the Brooklyn Museum.



'Kehinde connects with people in a big way,' one art dealer said of artist Kehinde Wiley, above.

## WILEY

*Continued from page A13*  
part of a broader cultural dialogue.

"Kehinde has that," Mr. Deitch said.

"Of all the artists I've shown, Kehinde connects with people in a big way: in the art world, in the music world and beyond," he said. "The work speaks to people."

Lately, Mr. Wiley's work has become something of a cultural touchstone, appearing on screen in Lee Daniels's new Fox television series "Empire" and Spike Lee's latest film, "Da Sweet Blood of Jesus."

Mr. Wiley has gained pop-culture renown for a series of large paintings juxtaposing famous African-American celebrities in settings drawn from old-master paintings—from singer Michael Jackson in a suit of armor to New York Knicks' Carmelo Anthony bearing a broad sword.

But Mr. Wiley said that giving contemporary black figures in hoodies and sneakers the same treatment traditionally used for history's white elite has also led him to be pigeonholed.

"Everyone talks about my work as though it is just hip-hop meets classic painting and it is

so frustrating," Mr. Wiley said. "People reduce it to, 'You paint rappers.'"

Mr. Deitch laughs off such generalizations, calling them a measure of the paintings' accessibility.

"A lot of Kehinde's message is asserting a black presence in this largely white, male history of Western art," he said. "It is a profound statement he is making. It is a global vision versus a Western vision of art history."

Some of Mr. Wiley's most potent work portrays models he encountered around the world—again using traditional art-historical treatments to give anonymous figures a sense of iconic power and presence.

From his first solo show at the Brooklyn Museum in 2004, "Passing/Posing," to his more recent series of portraits, "The World Stage," which showcases subjects found in Jamaica, Lagos and Brazil, Mr. Wiley has expanded his vision globally.

The artist now has workspace outside his home base in the Williamsburg neighborhood of Brooklyn, including studios in Beijing and Senegal.

The Brooklyn Museum has had a long-term commitment to Kehinde's work, said Eugenie Tsai, the museum's managing curator of contemporary art who oversaw "A New Republic."

Eleven years after "Passing/Posing," she said, "it seemed like a good time to catch up and see where he's gone and where he's going."

Mr. Wiley acknowledged "every artist wants a big fabulous show like this and that it feels really good." But, he added, "you have to put it in perspective and not allow it to be an occasion to put the nail in the coffin."

On the day of the stained-glass installation—where no drops occurred—the artist returned to his studio and resumed work on a painting.

The image is one of a farmer he photographed in Cameroon who, except for his skin color, looks as if he could easily hail from a farm in Kansas, sporting an outdated leather jacket and big American-flag belt buckle.

"The question is, how do you mix color and light together in a way that exists in the world and not the way that it exists in a camera?" Mr. Wiley asked rhetorically as he set to work adding color to his subject's brow, gazing intently at the canvas.

"It is one of the aspects of the work I enjoy," he said, noting the strange fashion he encounters around the globe.

"Being in these small villages, I get a snapshot of what it is like to be alive in the 21st century right now."

# The New York Times

Fine Arts | Leisure

## Weekend Arts II

The New York Times

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2015 C19



BYRON SMITH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

## Scores to Settle, Possibilities to Explore

You can love or hate Kehinde Wiley's bright, brash, history-laden, kitschy portraits of confident, even imperious young black men and women. But it is hard to ignore them, especially right now, with scores of them bristling forth from "Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic," the artist's mind-teasing, eye-catching survey at the Brooklyn Mu-

seum.

Since 2001, Mr. Wiley has been inserting black individuals into the generally lily-white history of Western portraiture, casting them in poses — including on rearing steeds — derived from Renaissance and old master paintings of saints, kings, emperors, prophets, military leaders, dandies and burghers. Usually these works have titles identical or similar to their sources, among

Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic *The show, at the Brooklyn Museum, features "Randerson Romualdo Cordeiro" (2008). Above, a detail of the work.*

them "Napoleon Leading the Army Over the Alps," and "Colonel Platoff on his Charger," creating the delicious sense that Mr. Wiley's updates are perfectly normal, which in a way they are.

Still, they are conceptually provocative and should startle just about anyone, regardless of race, creed or color, even if his often thin, indifferently worked surfaces can leave something to be desired as paintings.

In a way that few other living artists match, Mr. Wiley's art is overtly, legibly full of the present. His paintings reflect some of the problems and pleasures of being alive right now, in times fraught

with corrosive bigotry and inequality; flooded with images, goods and sounds; and enriched by the incessant, even ecstatic interplay of cultures — whether high, low or sub — around the globe.

In the 44 paintings here, Mr. Wiley's subjects wear hip-hop fashion or designer gowns, and in addition to posing as kings and saints, they mimic aristo-

*Continued on Page 24*

ROBERTA SMITH

ART REVIEW



# Scores to Settle and Possibilities to Explore

From Weekend Page 19

cratic ladies in well-known paintings from the Louvre or masterworks of African sculpture. Very occasionally, as in "Equestrian Portrait of King Philip II (Michael Jackson)" based on Jacques-Louis David's valorizing image (which he painted five times). In Mr. Wiley's reprise, produced in 2009, the face of the tragic pop star, who died that year, is overwhelmed by the ostentatious royal armor and hovering cherubs.

Often, Mr. Wiley's subjects are seen against decorative patterns based on textiles from various cultures — rich



KEHINDE WILEY, PRIVATE COLLECTION

brocades, British Arts & Crafts designs, Africa-inspired Dutch wax-resist fabrics. Mostly floral designs, they curl across the figures, confusing foreground and background. Anointed with carved black or gold frames that look a little too fake, these paintings keep company with other borrowings from art history: among them six imposing full-length portraits in stained glass that are too photographic, and four bronze portrait busts that muster a terrific hauteur but otherwise are generically academic. In nearly every instance, the figures are larger than life; some paintings are nearly as big as billboards.

But there are also small-scale portraits of young black men, some on gold leaf, like Byzantine icons, and others enscined in sturdy wood frames equipped with doors. Resembling portable altarpieces, and based on the austere portraits from the 1400s by Hans Memling, they bring to mind the quiet perfection of Northern Renaissance works amped up with a contemporary sense of seductiveness.

When it comes to art history, Mr. Wiley has not only scores to settle but also possibilities to explore. He sees this terrain as ripe with potential, a revisionist approach that he shares with artists as diverse as Nicole Eisenman, Dana Schutz, Carroll Dunham, John Currin and especially Mickalene Thomas, who also inserts black women into art history (and with a degree of painterly innovation that exceeds Mr. Wiley's).

Mr. Wiley also belongs to a tradition of Pop Art-infused figuration that includes Mel Ramos, Wayne Thiebaud and Barkley L. Hendricks. And he owes something to the flamboyance and painting-consciousness of artists from the 1980s, especially the slyly layered images of David Salle and the sampled patterns of Philip Taaffe.

But as an artist and a persona, Mr. Wiley may best be described as a combination of Andy Warhol, Norman Rockwell and Jeff Koons. Like Warhol, he makes striking images of his contemporaries. Like Rockwell, he elevates everyday Americans with somewhat corny portrayals that are more interesting as images than as art objects. Like Mr. Koons especially, Mr. Wiley's is largely an accessible public art that also raises issues about the role of the artist's hand and the use of workshop production. Like all these artists, Mr. Wiley has a carefully cultivated public persona, and is, along with his art, the subject

"Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic" runs through May 24 at the Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Parkway, Brooklyn; 718-638-5000, brooklynmuseum.org.



BYRON SMITH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



KEHINDE WILEY, COLLECTION OF PHOENIX ART MUSEUM

Above, detail from "Saint John the Baptist in the Wilderness" (2013); far left, "Mame Ngagne" (2008); near left, "After Memling's Portrait of a Man in a Red Hat" (2013); below left, "The Sisters Zénaïde and Charlotte Bonaparte" (2014); and below right, "The Two Sisters" (2012).



BYRON SMITH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

of considerable art-world argument, which matters little. Mr. Wiley's work is part of the larger culture, and so is he.

Mr. Wiley was born in Los Angeles in 1977 and grew up looking at old master

paintings and sculpture at the Huntington Library in San Marino, Calif. He earned his B.F.A. from the San Francisco Art Institute in 1999 and his M.F.A. from Yale in 2001, followed immediately

by a residency at the Studio Museum in Harlem. One day, on a street near the museum, he picked up a piece of paper featuring the image of a young black man; it was a confidential police mug

ONLINE: KEHINDE WILEY

More works in the Brooklyn Museum show:

nytimes.com/design

shot of a suspect. Looking at the image in the catalog, or the painting from 2006 based on it, one can see why the innocence and nobility of this young face became, as Eugénie Tsai writes, "a catalyst for his subsequent work."

Covering just 13 years of activity, this exhibition was organized by Ms. Tsai, the museum's curator of contemporary art, and offers an early midcareer report on Mr. Wiley's progress. It presents the scope of his ambition and his carefully constructed artistic and social project, which has improved as he has gone global, finding subjects in Africa, Brazil, Jamaica and Haiti. It shows his willingness to risk and fail. The primary flaw is his seeming indifference to the physicality of painting, as he more or less said in a recent article, but that may be changing.

However, Mr. Wiley is, as all artists should be, aspirational. In the first gallery, "Conspicuous Fraud series #1 (Eminence)" portrays a young man in a business suit whose black hair swirls around him like a large, powerful serpent. It is so cursorily painted as to seem unfinished.

His later paintings adhere to a formula of repeating elements: figure, pose, garments, props, background, as do most portraits. The problem is that in many of his efforts, the elements battle one another. The figures, which are painted by Mr. Wiley, convey a certain intensity, but the backgrounds, painted by assistants, often seem skimpy, filled in, not quite up to the task. The imbalance can be even worse in canvases that replicate the actual setting of the borrowed work, as in "Gossiping Women" and "Santos Dumont: The Father of Aviation II," in which marvelously solid subjects (two women and two men respectively) are set in landscapes that resemble sloppy stage sets or images painted by numbers.

The patterned backgrounds are especially overdone in the first paintings Mr. Wiley made of young black women, a 2011 series titled "An Economy of Grace." For this he went all out, outfitting the women in Givenchy gowns, with piled-up hair and elaborate make-up. It doesn't help that they also seem ill-at-ease, having been removed from the comfort zone of their own clothing in a way that their male counterparts are not. The fashion photographs that Mr. Wiley orchestrated for a recent issue of *New York* magazine, using some of the same models, are better. And so are his latest paintings of women in everyday dress: especially "The Sisters Zénaïde and Charlotte Bonaparte," after another Jacques-Louis David, where two young women, seated, reading a letter before what may be the artist's simplest background pattern, based on a William Morris design.

A general complaint here is that the labels cite the paintings' high-art sources intermittently. The origins of the backgrounds are almost never mentioned. Full disclosure for each would strengthen the show.

But aspiration pays off. Like the artist's most recent paintings of women, his three small and highly detailed portraits based on Hans Memling in the show's final galleries end the exhibition on a high note, especially the muscular, slightly androgynous Rasta-braided subject of "After Memling's Portrait of a Man in a Red Hat." This is perhaps the only work in the show that you can imagine seeing anywhere near its Flemish original. The smooth pore-less surfaces and intimacy of Mr. Wiley's effort have a rare physical and emotional concentration. Now that he has our attention, he may find his true métier working small, in oil on wood panel, in the manner of Northern Europe's self-effacing early portraitists. At least for a while.

ft.com > life&arts > arts >

## Visual Arts

March 8, 2015 5:15 pm

### Portraits by Kehinde Wiley on show at the Brooklyn Museum

Ariella Budick

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Black faces have long been excluded from art history. Kehinde Wiley has intervened eloquently — but when it comes to women, his paintings fall flat



# The New York Times

THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, MAY 15, 2015

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## THE Listings May 15-May 21

Selective listings by critics of *The New York Times* of noteworthy cultural events in the New York metropolitan region this week.

★ denotes a highly recommended play, film, concert, dance performance, comedy show or exhibition.

### Theater

Approximate running times are in parentheses. Theaters are in Manhattan unless otherwise noted. Full reviews of current productions, additional listings, showtimes and ticket information are at [nytimes.com/theater](http://nytimes.com/theater). A searchable, critical guide to theater is at [nytimes.com/events](http://nytimes.com/events).

#### Previews and Openings

**'AN ACT OF GOD'** (in previews; opens on May 28) Broadway doesn't usually take a chance on a first-time playwright, but this one has an unusually impressive bio. Yup, God has written a comedy (though he may have been assisted by the "Daily Show" scribe David Javerbaum). Under Joe Mantello's direction, Jim Parsons will incarnate the divinity as he talks Broadway audiences through the meaning of life. Studio 54, 254 West 54th Street, Manhattan, 212-239-6200, [anactofgod.com](http://anactofgod.com). (Alexis Soleski)

**'AFGHANISTAN, ZIMBABWE, AMERICA, KUWAIT'** (previews start on Thursday; opens on June 9) The playwright and director Daniel Talbot returns to Rattlestick Playwrights Theater with a new play, co-produced by Piece by Piece Productions and set in an unusually belligerent future, where soldiers await further orders in a never-ending war. The actorly platoon includes Kathryn Erbe ("Law & Order: Criminal Intent"), Brian Miskell and Seth Num-



BYRON SMITH FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

#### LAST CHANCE

★ **BROOKLYN MUSEUM: 'KEHINDE WILEY: A NEW REPUBLIC'** (through May 24) You can love or hate this artist's bright, brash, history-laden, kitsch-tinged portraits of confident, even imperious young black men and women usurping heroic roles from the generally lily-white history of Western painting. No matter, the two-decade survey of his extravagant canvases rewards. His career seems to be one of ceaseless ambition, socially conscious generosity and an uncanny skill. (Above, from left, "Mrs. Siddons," "Judith and Holofernes" and "Mrs. Waldorf Astor," all from 2012.) 200 Eastern Parkway, at Prospect Park, 718-638-5000, [brooklynmuseum.org](http://brooklynmuseum.org). (Roberta Smith)

# Online



# COMPLEX

## Kehinde Wiley's First Museum Survey Exhibition Will Be Presented by The Brooklyn Museum of Art

BY ANDREW LASANE

© OCT 10, 2014



Image via The Brooklyn Museum of Art / Kehinde Wiley



## Art

# Kehinde Wiley Takes Us to Church With New Exhibition at Brooklyn Museum

Kehinde Wiley has been known to find inspiration in unexpected places. It was a crumpled piece of paper he picked up off 125th Street while a resident at the Studio Museum in Harlem that piqued his interest in portraiture in the first place. The piece of paper in question was the balled up mugshot of a young black man.

Fourteen years later, Wiley's first retrospective will open tomorrow at the Brooklyn Museum. *Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic* marks the first museum survey of the 37-year-old portrait artist's extensive works. The exhibition, which includes 60 mixed-medium pieces—portraits, sculpture, stained glass windows and video—will be on view through May 24.

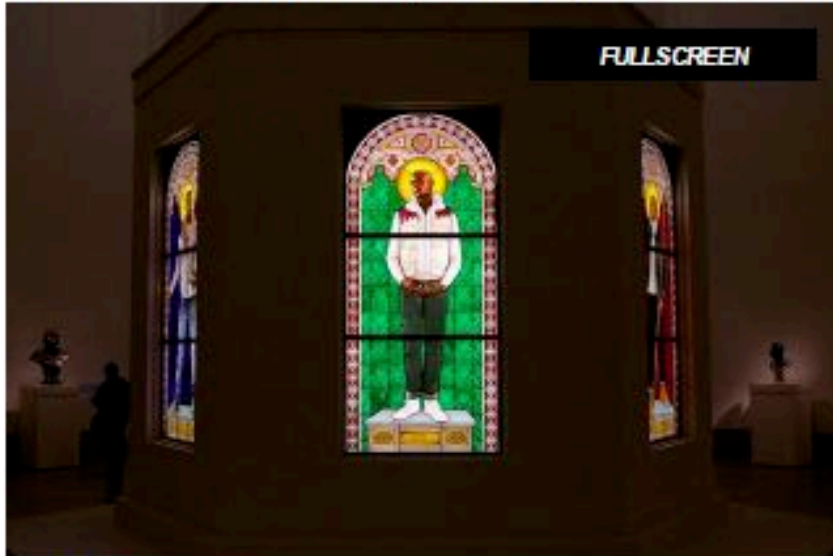
"He's best known as a painter of portraits of young black men," says Eugenie Tsai, curator of contemporary art at Brooklyn Museum. "He's very interested in the black and brown diaspora and has a huge awareness of the world. He's quite observant in plucking from different traditions to create something that's uniquely his own."

Born in Los Angeles and raised by a single mother who encouraged him to explore his interest in art at a young age, Wiley's signature style involves painting realistic portraits of young people of color he meets on the street. Oftentimes his subjects assume the aristocratic stances of classic European portraits he finds in art history books, which he sets off by maximalist backgrounds of bright, floral wallpaper like the type of Rococo designs you'd find in 18th-century French interiors. The opulence is emphasized by ornate, gilded frames he designs himself. While old-world masters are clearly an influence in his work, Wiley is equally as interested in the globalized world in which we live today. Along with his studio in Williamsburg, he keeps studios in several major international cities and has devoted entire series to subjects from places like Brazil, Haiti, Jamaica and India. Race, power and the politics of representation are recurrent themes Wiley explores within his works. He consistently challenges the stereotypes of class and color through juxtaposition.

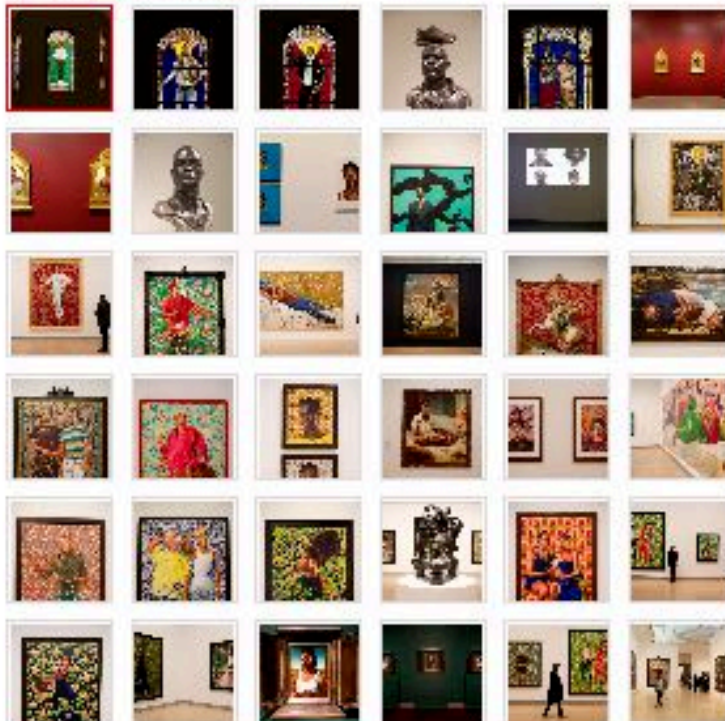
For his first retrospective, much of the focus has been placed on Wiley's allusions to religious artwork. The rotunda on the fifth floor of Brooklyn Museum, where *A New Republic* begins, is consumed by a hexagonal column inlaid with six stained glass windows of the kind you'd typically find inside a gothic cathedral. The only difference being that the saints and bishops have been replaced by young black men in street clothes—Timberland boots, denim jeans, hoodies and down vests, eyebrows impeccably arched and fresh-cut fades enveloped in halos of light. Anthony Sookdeo holds a scepter and releases a dove in a stained-glass portrait titled *Saint Remi* (pictured above; caption info below)—all Wiley's windows are fabricated in Prague.



Photos: Catch Kehinde Wiley's Stunning Show At The Brooklyn Museum



(Photo by [Sai Mokhtan](#))



On Friday, [Kehinde Wiley's](#) exhibit will be unveiled at the Brooklyn Museum. Taking over the fifth floor through May 24th, the show aims to "raise questions about race, gender, and the politics of representation by portraying contemporary African American men and women using the conventions of traditional European portraiture." It's a classic-contemporary mash-up, and here's how his process works:

# arrestedmotion

## Previews: Kehinde Wiley – “A New Republic” @ Brooklyn Museum

Posted by sleepboy, February 20, 2015



Today marks the public opening of Kehinde Wiley's massive mid-career survey entitled *A New Republic* at the Brooklyn Museum. For this exhibition, the locally-based artist has a selection of Wiley's *World Stage* paintings, which started in 2006, many of which feature his signature "street castings" – taking urban youths off the street and posing & dressing them like the upper crust of society in Renaissance and old master paintings. Rounding things out are a series of bronzes, stained glass paintings, and smaller "altarpieces."

Photo credit: Byron Smith and Chad Batka for The New York Times.  
Discuss Kehinde Wiley here.





# flavorpill

Art



## 5 Things You Didn't Know About Kehinde Wiley

TWEET

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By Sehba Mohammad on February 20, 2015

Kehinde Wiley is famous for his portraits of everyday African American men and women captured in poses reminiscent of traditional European portraiture, and set against wildly patterned backgrounds. Below are a few more things one should know about this California born artist and identical twin before seeing his first retrospective at the Brooklyn Museum, which opens today.

Wiley's new show includes 60 works and include his early paintings of street life in Harlem and his more recent explorations in stained glass.

# HI-FRUCTOSE

MAGAZINE

## On View: Kehinde Wiley's "A New Republic" at the Brooklyn Museum

by Soojin Chang Posted on February 25, 2015



Kehinde Wiley's larger-than-life paintings (featured in HF Vol. 29) insert black and brown individuals into the typically all-white history of Western portraiture. His subjects, a majority of whom are urban males, are cast in poses that assertively beckon old master paintings of European kings and emperors. Some gallantly ride horses, while others don regalia. All figures peer commandingly at the viewer in Wiley's 14-year survey "Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic" currently on view at the [Brooklyn Museum](#).

Wiley is a New York-based artist from South Central Los Angeles. Growing up in the '80s, he recalls his introductions to art to have been through predominantly European-centric works available in the city's institutions of the time. Since then, Wiley has developed a practice that explores identity, gender, and sexuality through portraits of strangers he casts on streets.

# AFROPUNK



FEATURE: KEHINDE WILEY'S 'A NEW REPUBLIC'  
EXHIBITION AT THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM

Posted by Eye Candy on March 16, 2015 at 8:30pm



Check out the captures below taken at [Kehinde Wiley](#)'s latest exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum. Titled 'A New Republic', the overview of Wiley's fourteen year career raises "questions about race, gender, and the politics of representation by portraying contemporary African American men and women using the conventions of traditional European portraiture". Ending May 24th, the exhibition features sixty paintings and sculptures. More info [here](#).

By Alexander Aplerku, AFROPUNK Contributor

# BuzzFeed

## Artist Blends Hip-Hop With Renaissance To Make Beautiful Art

Artist Kehinde Wiley blends contemporary life with art history to make beautiful paintings that raise questions about identity, culture, and race.

posted on Feb. 26, 2015, at 1:57 p.m.



**Gabriel H. Sanchez**  
BuzzFeed Staff

Kehinde Wiley is a Los Angeles-born artist whose work reimagines Western conventions in art history and gives a voice to black men and women who have otherwise appeared underrepresented in museums and on gallery walls. *Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic*, on view now at the Brooklyn Museum until May 24, offers an unprecedented survey of his prolific 14-year career with a collection of more than 60 of the artist's paintings and sculptures.

Wiley begins his process in the streets. Meeting complete strangers, he asks his subjects if they would be interested in sitting for a portrait. Once in the studio, he encourages them to pick a historical art pose based on how they perceive themselves — whether that be with the prowess of victorious emperor or the sensuality of reclining goddess. The final painting blends aspects of contemporary life — Timberland wear, hoodies, baseball caps, sneakers — with contrasting historical poses and ornate backgrounds that recall Old Master paintings. By replacing the wealthy European aristocrats with contemporary black subjects, Kehinde Wiley asks viewers to re-evaluate art history and to question how images affect our ideas of identity and culture.

