

# SEANKELLY

Editor. "Obama Portraitist Kehinde Wiley Brings Art, Color And Alicia Keys To Senegal For Artist Residency Program Launch." *Essence*. May 31, 2019.

# ESSENCE

OUR JUNE 2019 COVER GIRL WAS ONE OF MANY TO TRAVEL TO THE SENEGALESE CAPITAL OF DAKAR TO CELEBRATE THE LAUNCH OF BLACK ROCK SENEGAL, KEHINDE WILEY'S EXCLUSIVE ARTIST-IN-RESIDENT PROGRAM.



The city of Dakar was lit up on Sunday, May 26, as artist Kehinde Wiley launched his artist-in-residence program, Black Rock Senegal, with a stylish, star-studded soiree.

The New York-based artist, best known for his work on the official portrait of President Barack Obama, partied with the likes of ESSENCE's June 2019 cover girl Alicia Keys, Swizz Beatz and Naomi Campbell, among other chic glitterati, in the Black Rock Senegal's official residence.

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**kehindewiley**   
Dakar, Senegal

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kehindewiley

Thank you to all who joined us in celebrating the opening launch of Black Rock Senegal ! We have been thrilled to be joined and welcomed by such an incredibly vibrant community of artists, leaders, and creative thinkers in Dakar, Senegal. We can't wait to share this first year with you ❤️

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Me and my sis the magnificent @naomi all smiles and feeling the love and beauty of Senegal 🇸🇳 #blackrocksenegal #kehindewiley #therealswizzz #thedeancollection

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It was a colorful night and guests danced throughout the tastefully-furnished mansion and mingled by the stunning infinity pool.

Wiley was clad in a gold bou-bou, traditional Senegalese clothing, as he held court in the elegantly designed space he had passionately spent the last decade bringing to life.

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**naomi**  
Dakar, Senegal

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naomi

CONGRATULATIONS AND THANK YOU @kehindewiley TO BE HERE AT THE INAUGURAL OF @blackrocksenegal WAS HISTORICAL FIRST ARTIST RESIDENCE IN AFRICA !! SO PROUD AND BLESSED TO HAVE YOU IN MY LIFE !!! AFRICA THE DIVINE  
♥♥♥♥♥👏👏👏🇳🇮🇪 #NAOMIAFRICA

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He has come a long way since he first visited and fell in love with Senegal 20 years ago.

“Not even the thought of doing the official portrait of the first black president existed back then,” Wiley told The New York Magazine of when he initially envisioned the space. “I was just living, taking what I knew, believed in at that moment, and wanting to move things forward. And here we are.”

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LAST DAY : MONDAY 15 APRIL


-

Today is the last day to apply to join us for the inaugural year of [@blackrocksenegal](#) the new artist-in-residency program founded by [@kehindewiley](#) in Dakar, Senegal.

-

Link in bio. 📧 [@stefanruizphoto](#) [@nymag](#)

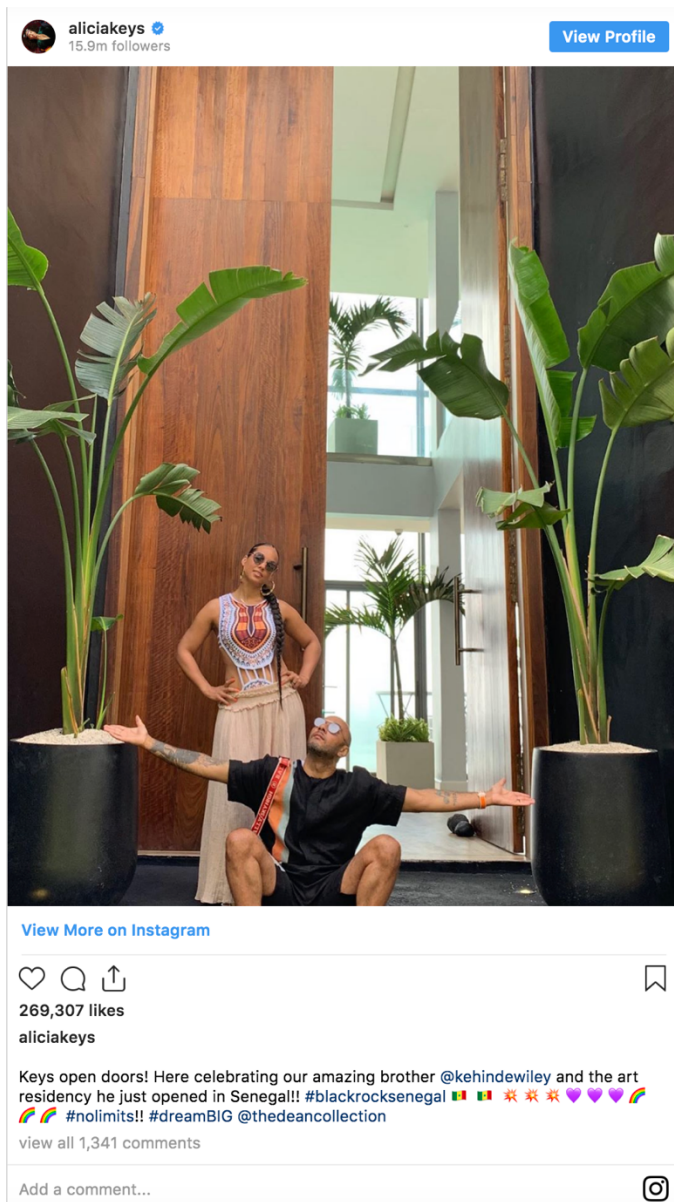
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The new Black Rock Senegal program is described as “a direct inspiration for Black Rock, the program was started in 1968 for emerging artists of African and Latino heritage and has helped launch the careers of William Cordova, Njideka Akunyili Crosby, and Leslie Hewitt, among others,” NY Magazine reports.

The stunning and expansive house, designed by Senegalese architect Abib Djenne, will be home to about 15 multi-disciplinary artists for the next few weeks in a program that offers one-to-three month stays with multi-language lessons, interactions with the local Senegalese artistic community and trips to Goree Island, the infamous former slave-trading center.



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More than 700 people from around the world have apparently applied, The Washington Post reports. And Senegalese President Macky Sall has already given his blessing.

But before the hard work starts, Wiley and friends like Senegalese fashion designer Adama Paris and Senegalese stylist Jenke Ahmed Tailly partied!

“Thank you to all who joined us in celebrating the opening launch of Black Rock Senegal!” he said on Instagram. “We have been thrilled to be joined and welcomed by such an incredibly vibrant community of artists, leaders, and creative thinkers in Dakar, Senegal. We can’t wait to share this first year with you.”