

## Artist Resources – Kehinde Wiley (American, b. 1977)



Wiley, 2018  
Photograph: Micaiah Carter

[Kehinde Wiley Studio](#)

[Wiley Instagram](#)

[Wiley at Roberts Projects](#)

[Wiley at Sean Kelly Gallery](#)

Listen to a [2008 interview](#) with Wiley in conjunction with the National Portrait Gallery's exhibition, [RECOGNIZE! Hip Hop and Contemporary Portraiture](#), which was recently transcribed by the Smithsonian Digital Volunteers Transcription Center.

Read an article in New York Magazine about [Wiley's Beijing studio](#), which the artist set up in 2006.

Watch a [video interview](#) with Artnet and Wiley from 2015 about New York, the art world, and being stylish.

In 2015, *Kehinde Wiley: A New Republic* was organized by the [Brooklyn Museum](#) as a major mid-career retrospective. The exhibition featured sixty works spanning fourteen years and traveled to the [Seattle Art Museum](#), the [Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth](#), the [Virginia Museum of Fine Arts](#), and the [Phoenix Art Museum](#). Read a [review](#) in the New York Times by Roberta Smith and listen to an [NPR story](#) connected with the major exhibition.

Watch a [conversation](#) between Wiley and cultural commentator Ekow Eshun in anticipation of the London solo exhibition, [In Search for the Miraculous](#), at Stephen Friedman Gallery in 2017.

In 2018, Wiley was on [Time's Top 100](#) List of Most Influential People.

In 2017, Wiley was commissioned to paint the National Portrait Gallery's [presidential portrait of Barack Obama](#). Read a [New Yorker article](#) by Vinson Cunningham, "Kehinde Wiley on Painting Masculinity and Blackness, from President Obama to the People of Ferguson." Artnet also published an [article](#) with "3 Things You Might Not Know About [the Obama Portrait]" when it was traveling with its sister painting, Amy Sherald's [portrait of Michelle Obama](#). The Obama Portraits Tour began at the [Art Institute of Chicago](#) in 2021 and traveled institutions including the [Museum of Fine Arts, Houston](#), the [Museum of Fine Arts, Boston](#), the [High Museum of Art](#), the [Brooklyn Museum](#), the [de Young Museum](#), and [LACMA](#).

The Saint Louis Art Museum installed [Kehinde Wiley: Saint Louis](#) in 2018. [Watch the artist talk](#) given at the opening.

In 2021, the National Gallery in London launched the exhibition [Kehinde Wiley: The Prelude](#). Read interviews about his "[pandemic portraits](#)" on display and "[what it feels like to be young, Black, and alive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.](#)" The Art Newspaper's podcast [A Brush With...](#) also featured an interview with Wiley in anticipation of the exhibition, the artist's first collaboration with a major gallery in the UK.

Read a 2022 [interview](#) with Wiley for Juxtapoz Magazine, which featured the artist on its Fall 2022 cover.



Wiley in his Beijing studio, 2012  
Photograph: Matthew Niederhauser



Kehinde Wiley (American, b. 1977)  
**Morpheus**, 2008  
Oil on canvas

Private Collection; L2025:113.1

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Kehinde Wiley studied at the San Francisco Art Institute and Yale University before establishing his studio in New York. He is known for monumental adaptations of Old Master artworks, which are restaged to forefront contemporary Black figures. **Morpheus** draws inspiration from Jean-Antoine Houdon's sculpture, *Morphée* (1777), which depicts the Greek god of dreams settled into a deep sleep. Wiley's figure seductively meets the viewer's gaze, his hip-hop style and accessories contrasting against the brilliant background of budding flowers.



Jean-Antoine Houdon (French, 1741-1828)  
*Morphée*, 1777  
Musée du Louvre

*On view April 15 – July 19, 2026*

Kehinde Wiley (American, b. 1977)  
**Portrait of Kaysy J. Gotay II**, 2022  
Oil on linen

Private Collection; L2022:100.1

“What is portraiture? It’s a choice. It’s the ability to position your body in the world to celebrate you on your own terms.” Kehinde Wiley adapts the heroic style of European portraiture and Old Master paintings to contemporary Black figures. Perhaps best known for his presidential portrait of former President Barack Obama, Wiley also features people he meets on the streets of New York and Los Angeles. **Portrait of Kaysy J. Gotay II** presents the subject as confident and self-assured, standing in a highly detailed garden setting. Like many of Wiley’s works that engage with the complexities of post-colonial identity, race, and visual culture, the composition is inspired by historical materials. In this painting, the surrounding pattern is from an Indian design reproduced in a 1735 book entitled *Book of Chinese Design taken from the originals of Persia, of the Indies, of China and of Japan* by Jean Antoine Fraise.

*On view December 7, 2022 – March 12, 2023*

