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Kehinde Wiley, *Equestrian Portrait of Prince Tommaso of Savoy-Carignan*, 2015. Oil on canvas. Collection of Dennis and Jeanne Masel. Image courtesy of the artist and Roberts Projects, Los Angeles. © 2019 Kehinde Wiley.

Park Projects: Kehinde Wiley

Equestrian Portrait of Prince Tommaso of Savoy-Carignan

On View March 3 – October 13, 2019

February 13, 2019— The Santa Barbara Museum of Art (SBMA) announces the presentation of a major work by Kehinde Wiley that appears as part of the Museum’s innovative series of public exhibitions, Park Projects. The painting, a large equestrian portrait fashioned after an early 17th-century painting by Dutch master Anthony van Dyck, will be on view from March 3 through October 13, 2019 in the Museum’s Park Entrance space.

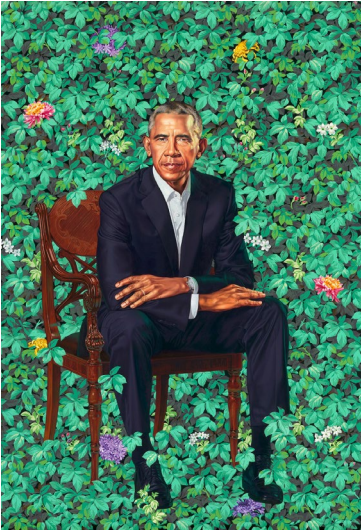
Kehinde Wiley has become internationally recognized for his examinations of the aestheticizing of power and masculinity through the time-worn genre of portraiture. This major painting, titled *Equestrian Portrait of Prince Tommaso of Savoy-Carignan*, is an extension of the artist’s *Rumors of War* series, which takes the form of historic equestrian portraiture. In Wiley’s hands, this established genre expands in scale to over nine feet in each dimension, and explodes in color with a revelry of bold and bright hues.

For this series, and in much of his work, Wiley cast his subjects from young black men he met on the street, mostly from New York. During this process, he invites the individuals to his studio, asks them to choose a painting from art history textbooks, photographs them in that pose—in their own clothing—and then paints them. In this way, Wiley subverts the tradition of portraying European nobleman in positions of power by depicting contemporary black men in the same poses. Addressing the politics of race and authority in art, Kehinde Wiley’s work points to the lack of representation of people of color in the history of Western painting, while also challenging present-day portrayals of masculinity.



The painting on view was inspired by a 1634–1635 equestrian portrait by Flemish artist Anthony van Dyck and depicts Prince Tommaso of Savoy-Carignan, an Italian military commander. Painted in a style of relaxed elegance and ease, the portrait attributes a noble status to the subject through artistic tropes used to convey glory, wealth, and prestige. Naming the work after the original source, Wiley’s *Equestrian Portrait of Prince Tommaso of Savoy-Carignan* blurs the boundaries between traditional and contemporary modes of representation. Painting his subject larger-than-life and isolated against a colorful floral background, Wiley emphasizes the dignity and nobility of his model.

Anthony van Dyck, *Equestrian portrait of Prince Tommaso Francesco of Savoy-Carignan*, ca. 1634-35. Oil on canvas. Collection of Sabauda Gallery, Turin, Italy.



In 2018, Wiley became the first African American artist to paint an official US Presidential portrait for the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery. Former US President Barack Obama selected Wiley for this honor. In 2015, Wiley was the subject of a solo exhibition at the Brooklyn Museum in New York, titled *A New Republic*, which traveled to six venues including the Toledo Museum of Art, Ohio; the Phoenix Museum of Art, Arizona; and the Seattle Art Museum, Washington.

Kehinde Wiley was born in Los Angeles, California and is based in New York. He received his BFA from the San Francisco Art Institute in 1999 and his MFA from Yale University in 2001. Shortly after, he became an Artist-in-Residence at the Studio Museum in Harlem. His work has been the subject of exhibitions worldwide and is in the permanent collections of numerous museums including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Studio Museum in Harlem; the Denver Art Museum; the Los Angeles County Museum of Art; The Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; the High Museum, Atlanta; the Columbus Museum of Art; the Phoenix Art Museum; the Milwaukee Art Museum; the Jewish Museum, New York; and the Brooklyn Museum, New York.

Kehinde Wiley, *President Barack Obama*, 2017. Oil on canvas. Collection of National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution. © 2019 Kehinde Wiley.

Equestrian Portrait of Prince Tommaso of Savoy-Carignan is the second iteration of *Park Projects*, a series of temporary installations utilizing the grand stairwell at SBMA's Park Entrance. Sited prominently at the Museum's main point of access during the ongoing renovation, this program features works by cutting edge contemporary artists that aim to add visual impact, as well as opportunities for meaningful engagement.

Special workshops and education programs are being planned for the duration of this project. *Equestrian Portrait of Prince Tommaso of Savoy-Carignan* appears at SBMA through a generous loan and support from Jeanne and Dennis Masel, and through the courtesy of the artist and Roberts Projects, Los Angeles.

The Santa Barbara Museum of Art is one of the finest museums on the West coast and is celebrated for the superb quality of its permanent collection. Its mission is to integrate art into the lives of people through internationally recognized exhibitions and special programs, as well as the thoughtful presentation of its permanent collection.

Santa Barbara Museum of Art, 1130 State Street, Santa Barbara, CA.
Open Tuesday – Sunday 11 am to 5 pm, Free Thursday Evenings 5 – 8 pm
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