

# TEMPLON

## ii

KEHINDE WILEY

*ARTNETNEWS.COM*, 21 June 2019

**Art World**

## For His First Public Artwork, Kehinde Wiley Is Installing a Monumental Bronze Equestrian Statue in Times Square

After its debut in Times Square, the statue will be permanently installed at the entrance to the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts.

**Caroline Goldstein**, June 21, 2019



Artist Kehinde Wiley will unveil a public sculpture this fall. (Photo by Dimitrios Kambouris/Getty Images)

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The artist [Kehinde Wiley](#), best known for painting Barack Obama's official portrait, is giving New Yorkers a new reason to visit Times Square.

For his first foray into public sculpture, Wiley is constructing a bronze statue that may, from afar, appear familiar—a man astride a regal horse—though in keeping with the artist's characteristic style, Wiley's version depicts a young black man dressed in the uniform of urban streetwear—jeans and a hoodie.

The work, *Rumors of War*, is intended to “both embrace and subsume the fetishization of state violence” by upending the traditional notion of the equestrian portrait, Wiley said in a statement. It's a theme the artist has revisited many times in works like *Napoleon Leading the Army over the Alps* and *Equestrian Portrait of Prince Tommaso of Savoy-Carignan*, which replace white European noblemen with everyday black men, oftentimes depicting people Wiley met on the streets of New York.



Kehinde Wiley's *Napoleon Leading the Army over the Alps* (2005).  
Courtesy of the artist.

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The sculpture, which will be erected between 46th and 47th Streets on Broadway Plaza this September, will be on view through December before being installed permanently at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts. It is presented by Times Square Arts, the VMFA, and Wiley's gallery, Sean Kelly.

It's no accident that *Rumors of War*, Wiley's largest work to date, will come to life in Times Square, which Wiley selected to "sit at the crossroads of human movement on a global scale."

Its future permanent home on Arthur Ashe Boulevard in Richmond, Virginia, is even more significant, as Southern states increasingly begin to reckon with their monuments to Confederate soldiers. Virginia itself has at least 220 Confederate statues in public places, more than any other state in the US.

*Kehinde Wiley's "Rumors of War" will be unveiled September 27, 2019, in Times Square, on display through December 2019.*