

components of Wiley's career.

tend to fare best at auction.

**Kehinde Wiley** 

Hirth Fine Art

**Nicole Martinez** 

Decks

Scott Indrisek Jul 9, 2019

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\$40,000

Kehinde Wiley 'Head of a Young Girl Veiled' Print, 2019, 2019

than anything we'd ever seen up to that point."



Kehinde Wiley, Portrait of Mickalene Thomas, the Coyote, 2017. © Kehinde Wiley. Courtesy of

the artist and Phillips.

The Coyote (2017) sold at Phillips for \$378,000 in December 2020. The work came from the collection of Virginia philanthropists William and Pam Royall, longtime collectors who played an instrumental role in the VMFA's acquisition of Rumors of War, a monumental bronze statue that directly engages with an international conversation around monuments and representation. "Our attraction to Wiley's work was a matter of recognizing the importance of portraying Black men and women in a 'spectacular' fashion that was not present in art history," Pam Royall said in an email (her husband recently passed away). "Given the time and the subject matter, Bill and I believed very strongly that Rumors of War belonged in Richmond—and at the VMFA specifically—and that it could play an important role in the healing that is so necessary as we strive to empower all Virginians."

His earliest secondary-market sale was in 2005 at Christie's, where the

painting Saint Francis of Paola (2003) garnered \$33,600. Fifteen years later,

his auction record is more than 10 times that: Portrait of Mickalene Thomas,

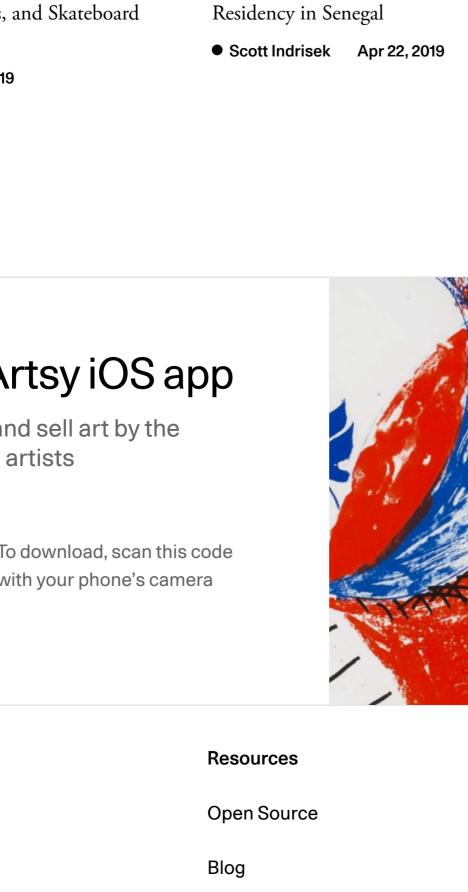
**Kehinde Wiley** Kehinde Wiley, Portrait of a Florentine Nobleman, 2018. © Kehinde Wiley. Photo by Jean-Paul Torno. Easter Realness 6, 2004 Courtesy of the artist; Roberts Projects, Los Opera Gallery Angeles, California; and Crystal Bridges Museum Contact for price of American Art, Bentonville, Arkansas. Special projects like Rumors of War, his ambitious Black Rock artist residency in Senegal, and upcoming solo exhibitions—Roberts Projects will host a show of new works in 2022—continue to place Wiley in dialogue with the themes that have driven his practice from the outset, and have rendered him a beacon of Black liberation. As Cassel Oliver put it: "Wiley is really always trying to shift the perception of how Black bodies should exist in society, demanding that people see that so that hopefully perceptions can shift. He is in a long line of Black artists who have endeavored in portraiture—Barkley Hendricks, Kerry James Marshall, and so many others—who have worked toward an evolution of what portraiture can be." •

Correction: An earlier version of this article misstated the price range of Wiley's

work on the primary market. The text has been updated.

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