

Sean Kelly Gallery
528 West 29 Street 212 239 1181
New York, NY 10001 www.skny.com

Binlot, Ann. "I Wanted to Go to the Best": A Q&A With Artist Kehinde Wiley on His Collaboration with Givenchy Designer Riccardo Tisci," *Artinfo*, June 8, 2012.

ARTINFO

SILHOUETTES

Fashion & Style News

JUNE 8, 2012, 8:00 AM

"I Wanted to Go to the Best": A Q&A With Artist Kehinde Wiley on His Collaboration with Givenchy Designer Riccardo Tisci

In **Kehinde Wiley's** current exhibition, "Economy of Grace" — the artist's first portrait series of females — at **Sean Kelly Gallery**, his female subjects wear custom-made goddess-like gowns by **Riccardo Tisci**, the creative director of Givenchy. Wednesday night, at the opening for "[The Little Black Jacket: Chanel's Classic Revisited](#)," Wiley told **ARTINFO** what it was like to collaborate with Tisci, their first meeting about the Louvre, and how his models felt when they slipped on the dresses.

Why Riccardo Tisci?

Riccardo is a genius, and when I decided to make a portrait of only women, I wanted to go to the best.

How did the collaboration come about?

Riccardo and I have mutual friends, and the idea was out there, and luckily our aesthetics met in time.

Did you work with Riccardo to design the gowns, or did you let him have free reign?

Each gown was designed for each model, so all of those girls were women I found on the streets of Queens and Harlem — all throughout the New York metropolitan area. We worked together in conversation. We actually had our first conversation in the Louvre. We had a private audience of the Louvre. The Louvre was shut down for a day, so imagine me and Riccardo walking through there, standing in front of some of the world's most important paintings and talking about art and fashion.

How did your models react when they put on the gowns?

We're in the process of producing a film this year about this whole process. Some of the video outtakes of that day, when they first saw the gowns and put them on, there wasn't a dry eye in the room.



-Ann Binlot