

**Kadir Nelson** is an award-winning American painter and author based in southern California. His original and illustrative works focus on historic and contemporary narratives in American culture.

Nelson is a 2025 inductee of the Society of Illustrators Hall of Fame, and the recipient of the Randolph Caldecott Medal and the Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award for *THE UNDEFEATED*, written by Kwame Alexander. Nelson's numerous accolades include the prestigious Hamilton King Award from the Society of Illustrators in New York, NAACP Image Awards, numerous gold, silver, and bronze cubes and the Freelancer of the Year Award from The Art Directors Club, multiple Caldecott Honors and Coretta Scott King Author and Illustrator Awards from the American Library Association, New York Times Best Illustrated Book Awards, and an Olympic Art Bronze Medal.

He has authored and/or illustrated several award-winning New York Times Best Selling® picture books including, *WE ARE THE SHIP: The Story of Negro League Baseball*, which was featured on the cover of *Sports Illustrated* magazine, *Heart and Soul: The Story of America and African Americans*, and Nelson's most recent bestselling book, *BASKET BALL: The Story of the All-American Game*. Currently, he has over 30 children's titles in print with a global circulation in the millions, and in multiple languages.

Nelson's artwork is also often featured the cover of *The New Yorker* magazine, paying tribute to historical figures, New York City, and popular American life. In 2020, Nelson was tapped by the publication to visually document the turbulent year as the world faced both a global pandemic and critical social and political movements. His masterful cover painting, *Say Their Names* reverently memorialized the murder of George Floyd and was named the most viral cover of the year by *Adweek* receiving over 8 million social impressions. For the July cover issue of *Rolling Stone*, Nelson commemorated grassroots activism and the swirling Black Lives Matter movement with, *American Uprising*, a modern spin on Eugène Delacroix's masterpiece, *Liberty Leading the People*. And finally, to celebrate season 7 of ABC's hit television sitcom *Black-ish*, Nelson was commissioned to paint *Blackish Tea*, a classy and humorous commentary on the social impact of the tumultuous year.

Nelson was also commissioned by DreamWorks Pictures to create conceptual artwork and inspire visuals for Steven Spielberg's Oscar® nominated feature film, *Amistad*, and the animated feature, *Spirit: Stallion of the Cimarron*. He has since created artwork for HBO, *Rolling Stone*, *National Geographic*, *Disney*, *ABC*, *Hennessy*, and *Sony Music*, for whom he painted the cover artwork for Michael Jackson's posthumous album, *Michael*™ Nelson was also commissioned to create the album cover for the multi-platinum selling album, *Nothing Was the Same* by recording artist Drake; as well as over a dozen popular commemorative US postage stamps honoring Major League All-Stars Ted Williams and Joe DiMaggio, NBA great Wilt Chamberlain, and the prince of soul, Marvin Gaye.

His original paintings reside in the permanent collections of notable institutions including the United States House of Representatives, the Muskegon Museum of Art, The National Baseball Hall of Fame, United States Postal Museum, the International Olympic Committee in Lausanne, Switzerland, the World Trade Center, and most recently, the Lucas Museum of Narrative Art, the Smithsonian, National Portrait Gallery, and the National Museum of African American History and Culture, among others.