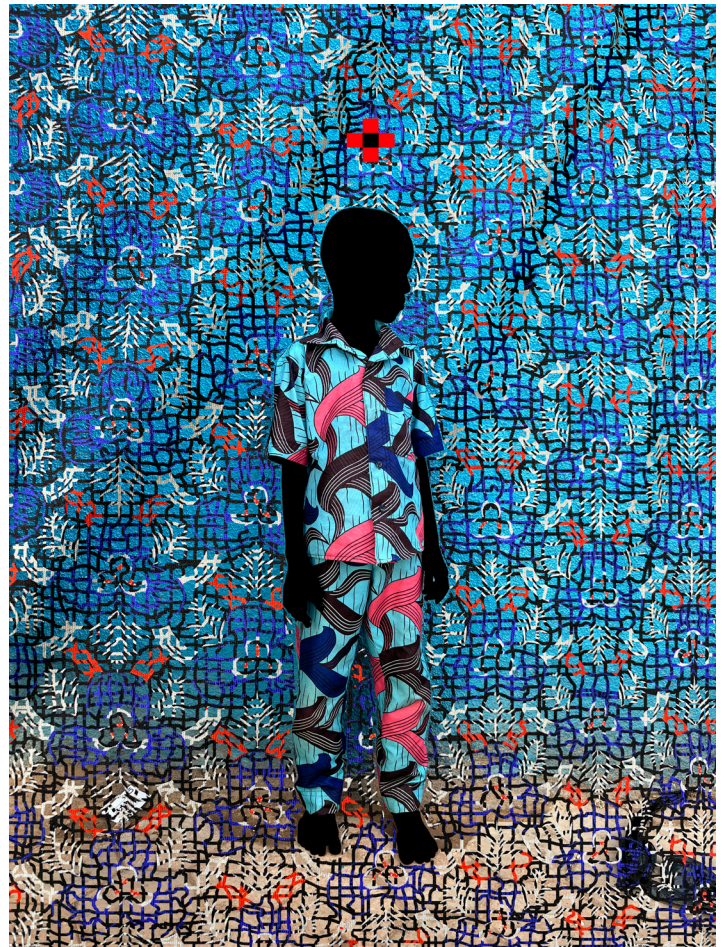


## AT AFIKARIS GALLERY, SAÏDOU DICKO SENDS THE VISITORS BACK INTO THEIR OWN CHILDHOOD, THROUGHOUT PLAYFULL SHADOWS

*In parallel with the publication of his eponymous monograph, published by AFIKARIS Gallery – The Prince of Shadows – the solo show devoted to Saïdou Dicko bears witness to the multiplicity of the artist's work through some twenty exclusive drawings, painted photographs and works on fabric. The Prince of Shadows call to the imagination and souvenirs of the visitors. If some questions arise, the viewers have to solve the mystery. Saïdou Dicko doesn't hide any preconceived and universal solution. It is the viewers' duty to project their personal feelings.*

**7 May — 7 June, 2022**



Left. Saïdou Dicko, *Moon Princess TMS1*, 2022. 160x120 cm. Painted photography. Courtesy of AFIKARIS Gallery.

Right. Saïdou Dicko, *The Bleu Prince Plastique T Plumes*, 2022. 100x75 cm. Painted photography. Courtesy of AFIKARIS Gallery.

25 April, 2022 (Paris, France) – While AFIKARIS Gallery hosts *-The Prince of Shadows-* Saïdou Dicko's solo show (b. 1979, Burkina Faso) - it publishes in parallel an eponymous book dedicated to the artist, retracing his career since 2014. The exhibition, enriched with the book, testify from the richness and diversity of the artist who appropriated the shadows as his signature. Thus, from May 7<sup>th</sup> to June 7<sup>th</sup>, some twenty new works unfolding though the 130m<sup>2</sup> Parisian space and leave the visitors with control and freedom of interpretation. The words do not count but how the melody carries us along.

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*“That’s also what’s important to me. It’s a big part of my job to listen to how people interpret and feel about my work. It’s like music, there’s no translation: you listen, you look and then there you go, no need for interpretation. That’s how I define my little works, like visual music.”*

Through his artworks, the Prince of Shadows writes his legend. Whilst he turns his characters into shadows, they are the shadows that turned him into an artist while he was a young shepherd. Keeping his herds in the heat of the Sahel, these are the shadows of his animals that were appearing on the ground that pushed him to draw. By replicating them on the walls of the city and the embroideries of his mother, he appropriated them, until he tamed them later with his camera, and, then, gave them life with his brushes.

Dicko’s drawings and works on fabric embody the necessity to reuse what already exists. He plays with materials. Plastic wastes become the substrate of his creations, as well as a source of life from which bouquets of flowers spring.

The painted photographs by Dicko echo the photo studios from his childhood. Whilst they made the fame of contemporary African photography with major works by Malick Sidibé, Samuel Fosso and Seydou Keïta, to only quote them, studio photography remains a family moment of sharing. All in their most beautiful clothes, with a spotless smile, pose in front of the lens on a background made of graphical fabrics or views from abroad. Dicko remembers:

*“In these studios, we had the freedom to choose between several backgrounds: several drawn landscapes, in nature with wild animals, etc. We had posters with skyscrapers in New York. There were a lot of possibilities. So that is also what I try to share through my photos.”*



Above. Saïdou Dicko, *L'Email*, 2022. 40x30 cm. Watercolour on paper. Courtesy of AFIKARIS Gallery.

If his work is like music, Saïdou Dicko is the maestro. He leads these shadows from his brush strokes and takes us with them to dreamland, on the tracks of our souvenirs.

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## **PRESS CONTACT:**

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# AFIKARIS

## NOTES TO EDITORS:

About Saïdou Dicko:

Saïdou Dicko (b. 1979, Déou, Burkina Faso) is a multidisciplinary artist who lives and works in Paris. A self-taught artist, Saïdou Dicko's art pays tribute to the Peul culture in which he grew up. The shadow is the master in his work, erasing social and cultural differences.

Although he is known for his painted photographs, the artist does not consider himself a photographer but an artist using the medium of photography. Thus, Dicko's characters can be found in one medium to another: drawing, embroidery and video. He captures moments of play and bears witness to the infinite imagination of the children who inhabit his works.

Awarded a prize at his first exhibition at the Dakar Biennial in 2006, his work is now exhibited in many international events (biennials, fairs, exhibitions). Since 2003, he has participated in numerous fairs such as Paris Photo (Paris), Photo Basel (Basel), 1-54 London (London) and 1-54 New York (New York).

In parallel to the exhibition *The Prince of Shadows*, his photographs will be on display in London during the Photo London fair (12 - 15 May) on the stand of AFIKARIS Gallery (D12).

About AFIKARIS Gallery, Paris :

Founded in 2018 by Florian Azzopardi, to promote emerging and established artists from Africa and its diaspora, AFIKARIS Gallery opened a dedicated Paris-based gallery space in 2021. Engaged in promoting cross-cultural and disciplinary exchange, AFIKARIS acts as a platform for artists to engage with the wider public. A mirror onto and space for reflection on the contemporary African art scene, it provides artists with a space to address the topical local and international issues at the heart of their art.

AFIKARIS's curated program includes group and solo exhibitions; art fairs; publications; as well as institutional partnerships.

Saïdou Dicko, *The Prince of Shadows* | 7 May — 7 June 2022

PRESS OPENING: **Friday, 1 April, 14h — 19h**

BOOK SIGNING: **Saturday, 2 April, 14h — 18h**

PUBLIC OPENING: **Saturday, 2 April, 18h — 21h**

AFIKARIS Gallery  
38 rue Quincampoix  
75004 Paris, France

Tuesday - Saturday : 11h — 19h

Sunday : 14h — 18h

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