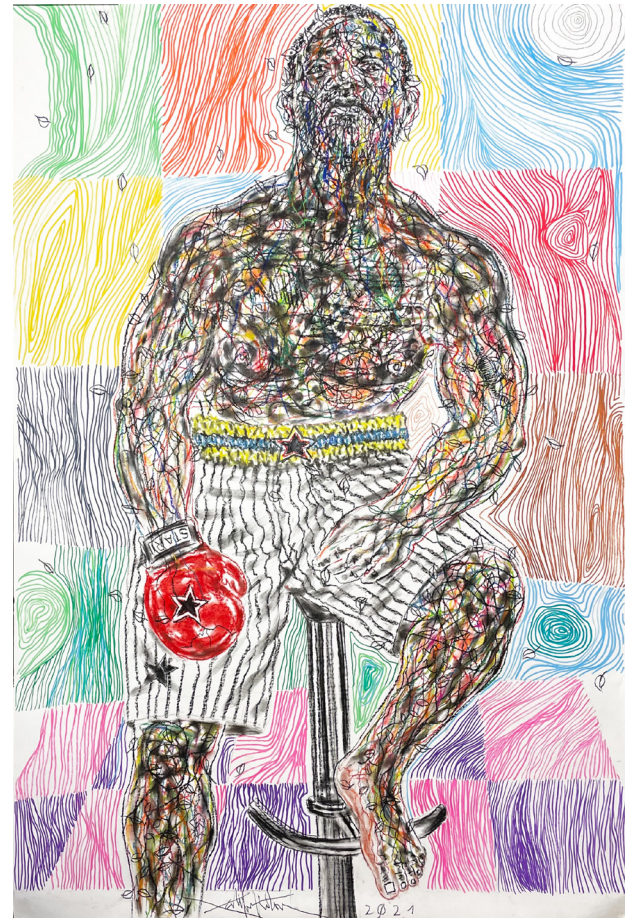


## AT AFIKARIS GALLERY, SALIFOU LINDOU DEPICTS THE ANGLOPHONE CONFLICT IN CAMEROON THROUGH HIS SOLO EXHIBITION *LIGNE DE DÉPART*

*With the Anglophone Crisis that has been raging in Cameroon since 2017, in the background, Salifou Lindou's first solo exhibition in France - Ligne de Départ - explores the very notions of departure and conflict - both internal and political - through the analysis of movement. From 26 February to 29 March, the Cameroonian artist's dozen of new works on paper stage the duality that governs humans, focusing particularly on the antagonism between stability and movement.*

**26 February – 29 March, 2022**



Left. Salifou Lindou, *Combattant 4*, 2021. 150x130 cm. Pastel and posca on paper mounted on canvas. Courtesy of AFIKARIS Gallery.

Right. Salifou Lindou, *Combattant 3*, 2021. 150x100 cm. Pastel and posca on paper mounted on canvas. Courtesy of AFIKARIS Gallery.

January 14, 2022 (Paris, France) – February 14, 2022 (Paris, France) - AFIKARIS Gallery confirms its will to promote the work of historical artists of the African contemporary scene by hosting the first solo exhibition of Salifou Lindou in France. A major figure on the Cameroonian scene and a mentor of the young generation of artists in Cameroon, Salifou Lindou (b. 1965, Foumban, Cameroon) is one of those artists who benefit from a late international recognition. Lindou is also a long-standing artist of the gallery - their collaboration began in 2018 when AFIKARIS was formed - and has so far resulted in a duo show held at the gallery - *Résiste* (13 February - 23 March 2021) and the presentation of his work at international art fairs: 1-54 London (2020, 2021), 1-54 New York (2020), Art Paris (2021), Investec Cape Town (2022) and artgenève (2022). In *Ligne de départ* (26 February - 29 March), through a dozen exclusive works on paper and canvas, Lindou transposes the conflict between the independentists of north-west Cameroon and the government into the study of the switch from stillness to movement.

# AFIKARIS

Lindou opposes the muteness of the shapes displayed on paper, to the eloquence of their gestures. If pastel is silent, he carries the voices of the world. The conflict Lindou alludes to is not only geopolitical. It is universal. Beyond one contemporary historical event, he decodes the mysteries of a millennial being: humans.

In Lindou's self-portraits as a boxer, everything suggests the idea of movement: still the central figure seems ready to tilt, to face its destiny. The fighter costume - boxing gloves on - embodies this inner strength. It illustrates this internal fight between force and reason, as they are the metaphor of his own force and daily victories. These fighters are still and leave room for their internal struggles.

This introspective work does not cut the artist off from the outside world. Salifou Lindou is an observer of the society around him and feeds his imagination with everyday scenes. He infuses his characters with the same passion that governs people: from sports predictions to political debates. Thus, the series of politicians, a satire that began in 2020 and that Salifou Lindou has continued to explore since, makes fun of their mimics, their clownish gestures and their grandiloquent verve. The artist explains:

*" When I'm watching politicians speaking on TV, their comical expressions and mimics inspire me because it entertains me a lot."*

No sound escapes from the paper when observed. Only the gestures are perceptible. And yet, Salifou Lindou's politicians are very eloquent. So much so that their words become audible. Gestures



Above. Salifou Lindou, *Politiciens #39*, 2021. 149x150 cm. Pastel on paper mounted on canvas. Courtesy of AFIKARIS Gallery.

bring the debate to life. It turns an inanimate image into a theatre of lively exchanges and speeches. The Ariane's thread in his work, Salifou Lindou once again stages duality. The eloquent gestures oppose the silence of the fixed drawing. The dynamic within the work makes the work itself. It provides it with a sense of accomplishment.

Ultimately, if Lindou does not deal frontally with the Cameroonian conflict, it impregnates the ensemble of the works featured within *Ligne de départ*. The Anglophone Crisis, occurring since 2017 in western Cameroon, opposes the secessionists to the Cameroon government. The first ones are calling for the independence of the self-proclaimed Republic of Ambazonia, in the face of the latter's inactivity in addressing social problems.

By devoting a central place to gestures, Salifou Lindou shows the contradiction between passive and active actors, underlining the inner struggles of human beings and how the latter are influenced by society. Salifou Lindou's work is like life itself: sensitive to external events, even if he does not speak about them directly. It reflects the way the artist perceives the shocks around him and how he externalises them through his art.

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## **PRESS CONTACT:**

Michaëla Hadji-Minaglou | Gallery Manager | [michaela@afikaris.com](mailto:michaela@afikaris.com)

## **NOTES TO EDITORS:**

### **Salifou Lindou:**

Salifou Lindou (b. 1965, Fouban, Cameroon) is a multidisciplinary artist who works and lives in Douala. A self-taught artist, Salifou Lindou is part of the former generations of artists in Cameroon who now teach the new generation.

If Salifou Lindou deals with topical issues, he always illustrates the passion and desire to live in opposition to the vulnerability of the body. Internal as well as external fights, stirring the society, arise under his pastels. On the paper as well as on the canvas, Salifou Lindou explores the complexity of human beings through scenes of daily life, fed with references to legends and classics, whilst within modern painting.

Salifou Lindou's work has been featured in numerous international fairs such as Art Paris (Paris); 1-54 London (London); 1-54 New York (New York); ARCO Madrid (Madrid); Art Paris (Paris); and exhibition in institutions including the National Museum of Yaounde (Yaounde); Institut des Cultures de l'Islam (Paris); Art Hub Copenhagen (Copenhagen).

*Ligne de départ* is the first solo show of the artist in France.

### **About AFIKARIS Gallery, Paris :**

Founded in 2018 by Florian Azzopardi, AFIKARIS Gallery started as an online platform and showroom specialized in the work of both emerging and established artists from African and its diaspora, before opening 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.

Salifou Lindou, *Ligne de départ* | 26 February — 29 March, 2022

AFIKARIS Gallery  
38 rue Quincampoix  
75004 Paris, France  
[info@afikaris.com](mailto:info@afikaris.com)  
[www.afikaris.com](http://www.afikaris.com)