

# AFIKARIS

PRESS RELEASE

## JEAN DAVID NKOT ART BRUSSELS

23 — 26 APRIL, 2026



BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

# JEAN DAVID NKOT ART BRUSSELS

PRESENTATION FROM 23 TO 26 APRIL, 2026

BRUSSELS EXPO – ENTRANCE HALL 5 – PLACE DE LA BELGIQUE 1, 1020 BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

*On the occasion of the 2026 edition of Art Brussels, AFIKARIS gallery presents a monographic exhibition dedicated to Jean David Nkot, highlighting a new series of works that extends the artist's exploration of bodies, materials, and extraction systems.*



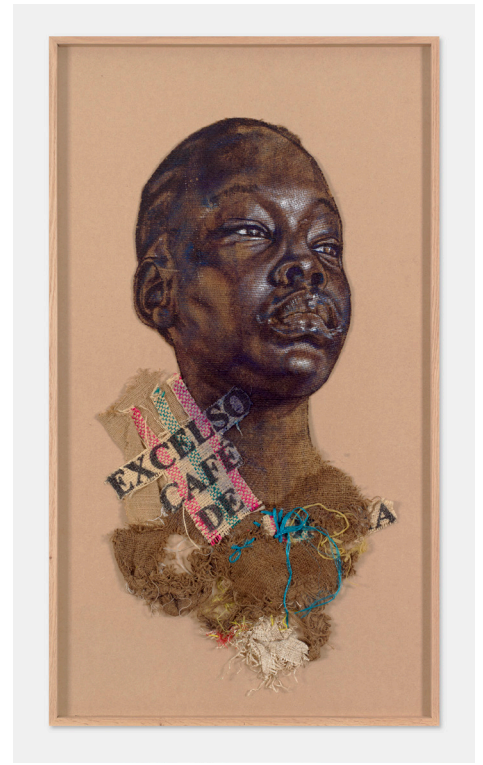
Previous page. Jean David Nkot. [www.brasier végétal.com](http://www.brasiervégétal.com), 2026. Acrylic and silkscreen printing on canvas. 156x205 cm.  
Above. Jean David Nkot. [##Essoufflement végétal.com](http://##Essoufflementvégétal.com), 2026. Acrylic and silkscreen printing on canvas. 151x165 cm.  
Courtesy of AFIKARIS gallery and the artist.

Following the solo exhibition *Théâtre des corps, drame de la matière*, presented in May 2025, this body of work marks a shift in the artist's practice. He develops an evolving visual language in which painting and sculpture intertwine within a clearly defined spatiality. Balancing material grounding and sensory tension, the works adopt a three-dimensional approach where figures unfold simultaneously as motif, surface, and volume.

The exhibition develops a dense reflection on contemporary logics of resource and bodily exploitation, embedding them within broader historical, memorial, and political layers. In Jean David Nkot's work, Black bodies appear as fundamental presences, long rendered invisible in the construction of global economies as well as material and symbolic infrastructures. This act of making visible goes beyond mere representation: bodies—already central to the artist's practice—now merge with matter and environment. Inspired by *Devenir vivants* (2021) by Séverine Kodjo-Grandvaux, Nkot sketches an expanded ecology, adopting the term “echology,” conceived as a resonance between beings, environments, and systems of production.

In the paintings, this porosity between body and environment appears in scenes where bluish figures rest on piles of coal and dead wood. Following cotton and cocoa, coal and cobalt extend his exploration of extractive materials. Screen-printed backgrounds, often composed of imagined maps, introduce ideas of territory, appropriation, and the circulation of wealth. Blue, derived from chromatic variations of cobalt, acts as a connecting thread. It condenses multiple meanings: a trace of exploited soils, an index of extractive chains, but also an ambivalent symbol of transformation and transition. In certain traditions, particularly among the Bassa, it refers to widowhood—a liminal time of purification and protection—adding a ritual and symbolic dimension to its material charge. The color thus becomes both scar and threshold.

This dynamic continues in the portrait series created on jute bags, *Corps//matière.cm.org*. Initiated in 2025 and further developed during a residency in Japan, it marks a shift in the artist's practice toward modest supports laden with silent histories. By working with materials drawn from cocoa, coffee, or cotton circuits, Nkot does more than inscribe figures onto them: he reactivates their memory. The portrait thus lies at the intersection of material and human experience. It brings individual trajectories into dialogue with the forces of labor, capital, and consumption that traverse and shape the world. Visible seams, tears, and perforations function as bodily marks, evoking scars left by colonial history as well as contemporary working conditions.



Left. Jean David Nkot. *#Behind @ flag//.cm*, 2026. Mixed media. 143x186 cm.  
Right. Jean David Nkot. *Corps//matière.cm.org*, 2025. Acrylic on jute bag. 92x47 cm.  
Courtesy of AFIKARIS gallery and the artist.

In the series *Behind a Flag*, these same portraits are now deployed on textiles reminiscent of flags. Inspired by strip-weaving traditions from West and Central Africa, these textiles are dyed in colors associated with national flags, without referencing any specific country. The aim is not to represent a flag, but to question what it embodies: a symbol of power, identity, and collective narrative. The screen-printed backgrounds combine archival and contemporary images with fragments of text drawn from the Harkin-Engel Protocol—an agreement by the chocolate industry to comply with the Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour (ILO, 1999). Deliberately rendered barely legible, these inscriptions point to the opacity of such international agreements and the persistence of invisible forms of exploitation.

With the ceramic sculptures gathered under the title [www//essorage de Gaïa.com](http://www//essorage de Gaïa.com), this reflection takes shape through volume and material. Covered in a dense cobalt blue, the figures appear both archaeological and contemporary, as if traversed by an expanded temporality where the memory of the earth overlaps with the history of bodies. The ceramic material, patinated and stratified, evokes both ore and ancient artifact, situating the figures within a geological and historical continuity. Here, cobalt acts as an imprint: it covers, connects, and inscribes. Details of clothing, hairstyles, and jewelry individualize the figures while placing them within a shared regime of display and reconfiguration. The reference to Gaia opens a symbolic reading: that of a nurturing yet strained Earth, placed under pressure by contemporary extractive logics.



Left and right. Jean David Nkot. *www//essorage de Gaïa.com*, 2026.  
Glazed clay sculpture, solid form technique (unique piece). 55x24x29 cm.  
Courtesy of AFIKARIS gallery and the artist.

By bringing together these three bodies of work—paintings, textile works, and sculptures—the exhibition creates a resonant space in which each medium extends and reconfigures the others. Forms circulate and respond to one another, outlining a conception of matter as a site of memory and tension. Through this “echology” of forms, Jean David Nkot offers an expanded reading of systems of extraction and exploitation, while opening a sensitive space in which human and earthly bodies emerge as sites of passage, tension, and resistance.

23 — 26 April 2026  
Art Brussels | Jean David Nkot

VIP PREVIEW : Thursday 23 April, 11 AM — 4 PM  
OPENING RECEPTION : Thursday 23 April, 4 PM — 9 PM

AFIKARIS Gallery  
Booth 5A-26  
Brussels Expo – Entrance Hall 5, Place de la Belgique 1, 1020 Brussels, Belgium

# ABOUT JEAN DAVID NKOT

B. 1989 in Douala, Cameroun where he lives and works



## SELECTION OF SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2026

Art Brussels, AFIKARIS Gallery, Brussels, Belgique

2025

*Théâtre des corps - drame de la matière*, AFIKARIS gallery, Paris, France

*Épigraphie des corps*, Annie Kadji art center, Douala, Cameroon  
*Map of Resources*, Espace doual'art, Douala, Cameroon

2023

*Les Dompteurs de nuages*, AFIKARIS Gallery, Paris, France

2022

*Corps de P@ge*, Gallery The Melrose, Johannesburg, South Africa  
*Les pommes de la discorde*, AFIKARIS Gallery, Paris, France

2021

Untitled Miami Art Fair, AFIKARIS Gallery, Miami, USA  
*État des lieux*, Gallery Jack Bell, London, United Kingdom  
*Human@Condition*, AFIKARIS Gallery, Paris, France  
*Le dessous des cartes*, Espace Bolo, Douala, Cameroon  
*Corps et Espace*, Espace doual'art, Douala, Cameroon

2020

*Esprit rêveur*, Jack Bell Gallery, London, Royaume-Uni  
1-54 Marrakech Art Fair, AFIKARIS Gallery, Marrakech, Maroc

2018

*Cartographies mentales*, Gallery Jack Bell, London, Royaume-Uni

2016

*À fleur de peau*, Espace Doual'art, Douala, Cameroon

## SELECTION OF GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2026

*AfrobLue*, Fondation Blachère, Bonnieux, France

2025

*What The Mountain Has Seen*, curated by Christine Eyene, ERL gallery, Liverpool, United Kingdom

2024

*Il était une fois, la naissance du Staat Kamerun 1884-1914*, Musée National de Yaoundé, Cameroon  
*Resilience*, Gallery Sanaa, Utrecht, The Netherlands  
*Inhabiting the World*, AFIKARIS Gallery, Paris, France  
1-54 NY, AFIKARIS Gallery, New York, USA  
Miart, AFIKARIS Gallery, Milan, Italie  
1-54 Marrakech, AFIKARIS Gallery, Marrakech, Morocco

2023

*Africa Supernova : the contemporary African painting collection of Carla and Pieter Schulting*, Kunsthal KAdE, Amersfoort, The Netherlands

1-54 London Art Fair, AFIKARIS Gallery, London, Royaume-uni

*Ce que nous donne la terre*, AFIKARIS Gallery, Paris, France

*L'Art dans la Cité*, La Rotonde des arts, Fondation Dapper, Abidjan, Ivory Coast

ZonaMaco, AFIKARIS Gallery, Mexico City, Mexico

2022

*Shout Plenty*, African Artists' Foundation, Lagos, Nigeria

*Classique !*, AFIKARIS Gallery, Paris, France

*The New African Portraiture. Shariat Collections*, Kunsthalle Krems Museum, Vienna, Austria

*One song is very much like another, and the boat is always from afar*, Times Museum de Guangdong, China

Investec Cape Town Art Fair, AFIKARIS Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa

2020

*Raupe-nimmersattism*, SAVVY Contemporary, Berlin, Allemagne

Art Paris, AFIKARIS Gallery, Paris, France

*We Paint Humans*, AFIKARIS Gallery, Paris, France

2018

La Banque mondiale, Yaoundé, Cameroon

2017

*SUD*, Salon Urbain de Douala, Douala, Cameroon

*Mémoires Libérées*, National Museum of Cameroon, Yaoundé, Cameroon

*Behind the portail*, Bandjoun Station, Bandjoun, Cameroon

*Our Wishes*, Léopold Museum, Vienna, Austria

2016

*Congo – Cameroon : Esthétique en partage au-delà des*

*Géographies*, Dakar Biennale, Dakar, Senegal

*BIND : Images contemporaines*, Dakar Biennale, Dakar, Sénégal

## COLLECTIONS PUBLIQUES

FRAC Sud Cité de l'art contemporain, France

Fondation H, Madagascar & France

Almas Foundation, United Kingdom

West Collection, United States

Jean Pigozzi Collection, Switzerland

Fondation Blachère, France

Collezione Genesi, Italy

Amir Shariat Collecion, Austria

# CURRENTLY AT THE GALLERY



Mohamed Saïd Chair. *Les deux héros*, 2025. 140x120 cm. Oil on canvas.  
Courtesy of AFIKARIS gallery and the artist.

MOHAMED SAÏD CHAIR | OUT OF THE SHADOWS  
14 March – 9 May, 2026 | AFIKARIS, Paris

In *Out of the Shadows*, Mohamed Saïd Chair stages a contemporary Moroccan youth through large nocturnal canvases that blend references to art history with scenes from everyday life. By subversively reinterpreting iconic works, the artist places anonymous figures—often marginalized—into a quasi-heroic dimension while deconstructing the classical codes of portraiture and history painting. His compositions, marked by chiaroscuro and a tension between chaos and stillness, depict ambiguous situations that oscillate between play, violence, and solidarity. Rejecting any exoticizing perspective, Chair offers a form of painting deeply rooted in social reality, where gestures, postures, and fragments of life become clues to a broader narrative, revealing both the aspirations and the fragility of a youth balanced between idleness and vitality.

## UPCOMING EXHIBITIONS

Ozioma Onuzulike | *Shields*  
AFIKARIS Gallery, Paris, France  
21 May – 8 August, 2026

Hervé Yamguen | *Nos géographies intimes*  
AFIKARIS Gallery, Paris, France  
3 September – 31 October, 2026

1-54 London | London, United Kingdom | 26 – 29 March, 2026  
Nasreddine Bennacer, Matthew Eguavoën, Eva Obodo, Ozioma Onuzulike, Géraldine Tobe, Hervé Yamguen

# ABOUT THE GALLERY

Founded in 2018 by Florian Azzopardi in his apartment, AFIKARIS Gallery opened its first public space in Paris in 2020, before moving in 2022 to a larger venue in the heart of the Haut Marais, on Rue Notre-Dame de Nazareth.

Committed to fostering intercultural and interdisciplinary dialogue, AFIKARIS Gallery has, from the beginning, focused its program on artists from the African continent and its diaspora. Today, the gallery represents around fifteen artists, often socially engaged and driven by a desire to speak about society, their culture, their heritage, and to write their own story.

AFIKARIS offers its artists a platform for expression through ambitious solo exhibitions, for which it regularly collaborates with internationally renowned curators such as Christine Eyene, Louise Thurin, and Pascal Odille. The gallery also supports its artists in their institutional exhibitions and Biennials. Finally, the gallery takes part in numerous international art fairs, mainly in Europe and the United States. In 2022, AFIKARIS opened a residency space in Montreuil for artists preparing projects with the gallery.



Above. View of the AFIKARIS gallery located at 7 rue Notre-Dame-de-Nazareth.  
Courtesy of the AFIKARIS gallery.  
Photo credit: Studio Vanssay

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

AFIKARIS Gallery  
7 rue Notre-Dame-de-Nazareth  
75003 Paris, France

Tuesday – Saturday  
11 AM — 7 PM

## PRESS CONTACT

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