



ALMAS ART
FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2023



ANNUAL REPORT

2023

CONTENTS

Reference and Administrative Information	02
Our Mission	03
Introduction	04
Our Projects	05
Collaborations	15
Books Distributed to Libraries, Artist Spaces and Art Institutions	17
Our Publications and Media	18
Almas Art Foundation in the Press	19
Looking into 2024 Projects	20

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Board of Trustees

Farah Jirdeh Fonkenell, Founder, Chairman and CEO
Paul Drew Bayliss, Trustee

Team

Basak Tarman, Director of Operations
Lisa Mitchelson, Director of Administration
Sinclair Benintende de Hainault, Programme Coordinator and Logistics Manager

Office

Office S62, Somerset House, Strand,
London, WC2R 1LA,
United Kingdom

Charity registration number

1195449 Registered by the Charity Commission for England and Wales

Company registration number

12990359

Independent Examiner

Haines Watts
Old Station House
Swindon, SN1 3DU
United Kingdom

Principal Bankers

Barclays PLC
Leicester LE87 2BB

OUR MISSION

Almas Art Foundation is a London based non-profit organisation that is committed to celebrating the invaluable contributions made by African and African diaspora artists to modern and contemporary visual arts.

Almas aims to present and create an awareness for the practices of established and mid-career African and African diaspora artists through a programme of publications, exhibitions and films, documenting these artists' practices for a new generation of African artists, scholars and the wider international community.

Almas Art Foundation aims to foster collaborations with emerging artists, curators and writers to support the arts ecosystem in Africa and facilitate residencies through partnerships with universities, institutions and independent initiatives.

ALMAS ART FOUNDATION

Office S62, Somerset House, Strand,
London, WC2R 1LA,
United Kingdom

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INTRODUCTION

Since its inception in 2021, Almas Art Foundation has been passionate about delivering a public program of projects, doing justice to the depth and talent of the outstanding artists we have worked with. Our mission has been to document and present these seminal art practices, to contextualise them, and to recognise educational institutions and creative practitioners in each location. As the commercial interest in African contemporary visual arts is growing, we believe the whole art ecosystem needs further support and platforms to inspire a future generation of creatives. To this end, a key component of our mission has been making our exhibitions, publications and documentaries available to the public as well as distributing our print publications to educational institutions and public art spaces in Africa free of charge.

We started 2023 with the screenings of the acclaimed Nigerian film by director Akin Omatoso, *The Ghost and The House of Truth*. April saw our first exhibition, *Embodying Social Being*, featuring works by Ugandan artist Dr Lilian Nabulime. In September, we hosted the Lagos based artist Gerald Chukwuma in conversation with journalist Bola Mosura at the Africa Centre to mark the launch of the publication *Together Together* and Chukwuma's documentary. In October, we had the privilege of delivering projects featuring the Egyptian artist Souad Abdelrasoul. *Like a Single Pomegranate* was our first dual-language publication. This was followed by a collaboration with Kayd Somali Week to sponsor the screenings of Ahmed Farah's *AYAANLE*.

We finished the year on a high with the exhibition, *Social Game*, at the Africa Centre featuring Cameroonian artist Salifou Lindou Fouanta.

The institutional and public support, and enthusiasm we received throughout this year has been moving. Our community of artists, audiences and collaborators grows with each project, which has been rewarding for the Almas team. We look forward to delivering another year of exciting projects in 2024. Until then, we invite you to connect with us and explore our films and publications on the Almas website.

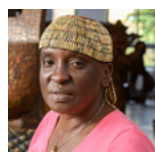
Farah Jirdeh-Fonkenell

Founder and CEO, Almas Art Foundation



OUR PROJECTS

01



Kampala, Uganda

Dr Lilian Mary Nabulime
Embodying Social Being
Collaborators – Martha Kazungu,
Prof. Andrew Burton, Daudi Karungi

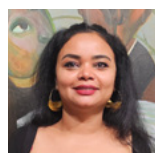
02



Douala, Cameroon

Salifou Lindou Fouanta
Social Game
Collaborators – Dr Afane Ruth Belinga, Dr
Joseph Fouman, King Lion, Mind The Film

03



Cairo, Egypt

Souad Abdelrasoul
Like a Single Pomegranate
Collaborators – Sahar Behairy, Dr Mohamed Orabi
Fayad, Fatima Ali, Simba Designs

04



Lagos, Nigeria

Gerald Chukwuma
Together Together
Collaborators – Chibundu Onuzo, Ikenga Chuu
Krydz Ikwemesi, Zin Studios, Wale Visuals



📍 2023 PROJECT LOCATIONS

📍 2024 PROJECT LOCATIONS

OUR PROJECTS

A CLOSER LOOK

DR LILIAN MARY NABULIME

EXHIBITION
PUBLICATION
FILM

EMBODYING SOCIAL BEING, 17-23 April 2023, G16, New Wing, Somerset House, London

EMBODYING SOCIAL BEING, Published April 2023

CONTEMPORARY ROOTS OF MODERN UGANDAN ART, Launched 2022, reexhibited at Somerset House



Born in Kampala, Uganda, Dr Nabulime trained at the Margaret Trowell School of Industrial and Fine Art (MTSIFA) at Makerere University. She obtained her PhD at Newcastle University with her dissertation, “The Role of Sculptural Forms as a Communication Tool in Relation to the Lives and Experiences of Women with HIV/AIDS in Uganda.” She currently lives and works in Kampala, Uganda and is a senior lecturer at Makerere University alongside her busy studio practice. She has taught and mentored multiple generations of Ugandan artists.

Since the 1990s, Dr Nabulime has built a body of work recording the societal pressures and their effects on women and children that is unique in its honesty and tenderness. Describing herself as a ‘social being’ continuously affected by the events faced by her community, her practice offers a subjective registry of these events, the ensuing emotions and pressures, always with a look to empowering her subjects. Through her work, Dr Nabulime often delves into themes such as familial and social relations, taboos, stigmas around HIV infections and experiences of young women on campus. Dr Nabulime’s works often juxtapose reclaimed monumental tree parts and roots with found and recycled materials such as soda cans, chains and plastic. Reclamation, recycling and working with found objects crafted by local artisans have been fundamental to her practice, allowing her to fold the stories behind these objects and their symbolisms into her works.

Almas Art Foundation organised an exhibition of works of Dr Lilian Nabulime in the G16 space in the New Wing of Somerset House, which was open to the public for a week as well as a preview event.

The digital publication and the film are available to the public on Almas Art Foundation website and YouTube Channel.

OUR PROJECTS

A CLOSER LOOK

DR LILIAN MARY NABULIME

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EMBODYING SOCIAL BEING, Published April 2023

CONTEMPORARY ROOTS OF MODERN UGANDAN ART, Launched 2022, reexhibited at Somerset House



OUR PROJECTS

A CLOSER LOOK

GERALD CHUKWUMA

EXHIBITION
PUBLICATION
FILM

The artist had a gallery exhibition with his London gallery Kristin Hjellegjerde during September 2023.
TOGETHER TOGETHER, Published September 2023
GERALD CHUKWUMA, Launched September 2023



Gerald Chukwuma (b. 1973) lives and works in Lagos, Nigeria. He graduated in 2003 with First Class Honours from the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Chukwuma is one of Nigeria's fastest rising contemporary artists, noted for his intricately crafted sculptures on wood panels.

The materials he chooses are common enough; however, using in his unique way a range of techniques — including burning, chiselling and painting — he captures a richly layered history that is imbedded with personal and political meaning.

The use of traditional Uli and Nsibidi symbols links his work to the Nsukka art tradition which is credited with expanding and modernising the Igbo cultural aesthetic. Meanwhile, the transformation of found objects into highly detailed artworks roots him firmly in the contemporary moment, with its concern for rapid environmental and ecological change.

Almas Art Foundation hosted a book and film launch for Gerald Chukwuma at the Africa Centre. The book launch saw Gerald Chukwuma in conversation with journalist Bola Mosuro and was attended by members of the public and art professionals. The publication, the documentary film and the filmed conversation between Gerald Chukwuma and Bola Mosura are available on Almas Art Foundation website and YouTube Channel.

OUR PROJECTS

A CLOSER LOOK

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TOGETHER TOGETHER, Published September 2023
GERALD CHUKWUMA, Launched September 2023



OUR PROJECTS

A CLOSER LOOK

SOUAD ABDELRASOUL

EXHIBITION	LIKE A SINGLE POMEGRANATE, 9-15 October 2023, Fitzrovia Gallery
PUBLICATION	LIKE A SINGLE POMEGRANATE, Published October 2023
FILM	SOUAD ABDELRASOUL, Launched October 2023



Souad Abdelrasoul's paintings exalt in the feminine and the emotional. They explore the idea of the modern woman, informed by her own experiences of being a woman in a patriarchal society. Reflecting on her experiences as a mother, Abdelrasoul draws attention to the ways women evolve and adapt in oppressive environments. Often using familiar myths and legends, she paints stories through her figures that question the roles women hold in society and cultural history in disruptive and thought-provoking ways.

By reconceptualizing perceptions of space, she repurposes notions of form, science and nature into strikingly personal configurations. Working between the abstract and figurative, she intertwines human, animal and vegetal forms, believing we are all intrinsically connected to the earth. Tree-like figures with branching veins and arteries and giant insect-like creatures merge on her canvases to remind the viewer of the vital bond between our internal lives and the exterior world we live in.

Abdelrasoul graduated with a BFA in 1998 from Minia University and in 2005 completed her master's degree in History of Art. In 2012, she completed her PhD in Modern Art History.

Almas Art Foundation organised an exhibition of works by Souad Abdelrasoul, curated by Sahar Behairy during the week of 1-54 Art Fair and Frieze London. We were pleased to host SOAS students alongside Dr Polly Savage for a private visit and Q&A with Souad Abdelrasoul and Sahar Behairy.

The digital publication and the film are available to the public on Almas Art Foundation website and YouTube Channel.

OUR PROJECTS

A CLOSER LOOK

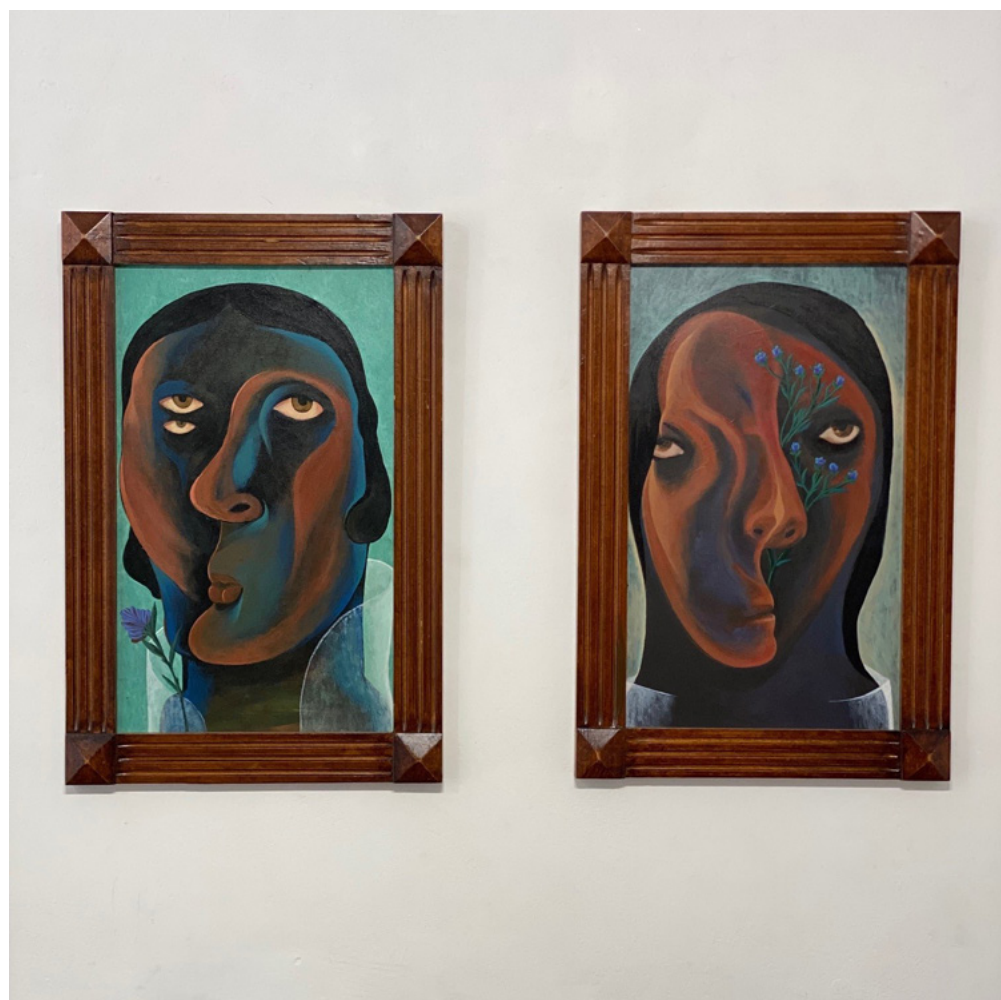
SOUAD ABDELRASOUL

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LIKE A SINGLE POMEGRANATE, 9-15 October 2023, Fitzrovia Gallery

LIKE A SINGLE POMEGRANATE, Published October 2023

SOUAD ABDELRASOUL, Launched October 2023



OUR PROJECTS

A CLOSER LOOK

SALIFOU LINDOU FOUANTA



EXHIBITION	SOCIAL GAME, 14-26 November 2023, Mandela Space, The Africa Centre
PUBLICATION	SOCIAL GAME, Published October 2023
FILM	SOCIAL GAME, Launched November 2023

Salifou Lindou's practice reflects the human desire and struggle to live with dignity in the face of societal and political pressures. Scheming corrupt politicians and families torn by emigration emerge out of spontaneous, energetic lines that express both the vulnerability and the power of human bodies, capturing the impulses and reactions that mark their daily struggles. Similarly, daily scenes with neighbours engaged in lively conversation or children engrossed in their games reflect the moments of connection and community. Salifou Lindou is a keen supporter and mentor to the younger generation of artists in Douala.

A self-taught artist, Salifou Lindou has experimented with a wide range of materials, including metal, leather and paper, and produced complex installations and performances throughout his career. He is a founding member of the Kapsiki Circle, whose performances, projects, and interventions transformed the art scene in Douala in the late 90s. By bringing art to the streets and the public, the Kapsiki Circle firmly established art as an agent of political commentary and social change.

Almas Art Foundation organised an exhibition of works by Salifou Lindou Fouanta at the Africa Centre. Students from the Westminster School's African and Caribbean Society visited the exhibition to meet Salifou Lindou Fouanta and the Africa Centre director Olu Alake.

The digital publication and the film are available to the public on Almas Art Foundation website and YouTube Channel.

OUR PROJECTS

A CLOSER LOOK

SALIFOU LINDOU FOUANTA

EXHIBITION
PUBLICATION
FILM

SOCIAL GAME, 14-26 November 2023, Mandela Space, The Africa Centre
SOCIAL GAME, Published October 2023
SOCIAL GAME, Launched November 2023



OUR PROJECTS

A CLOSER LOOK

FILM SCREENING – THE GHOST AND THE HOUSE OF TRUTH

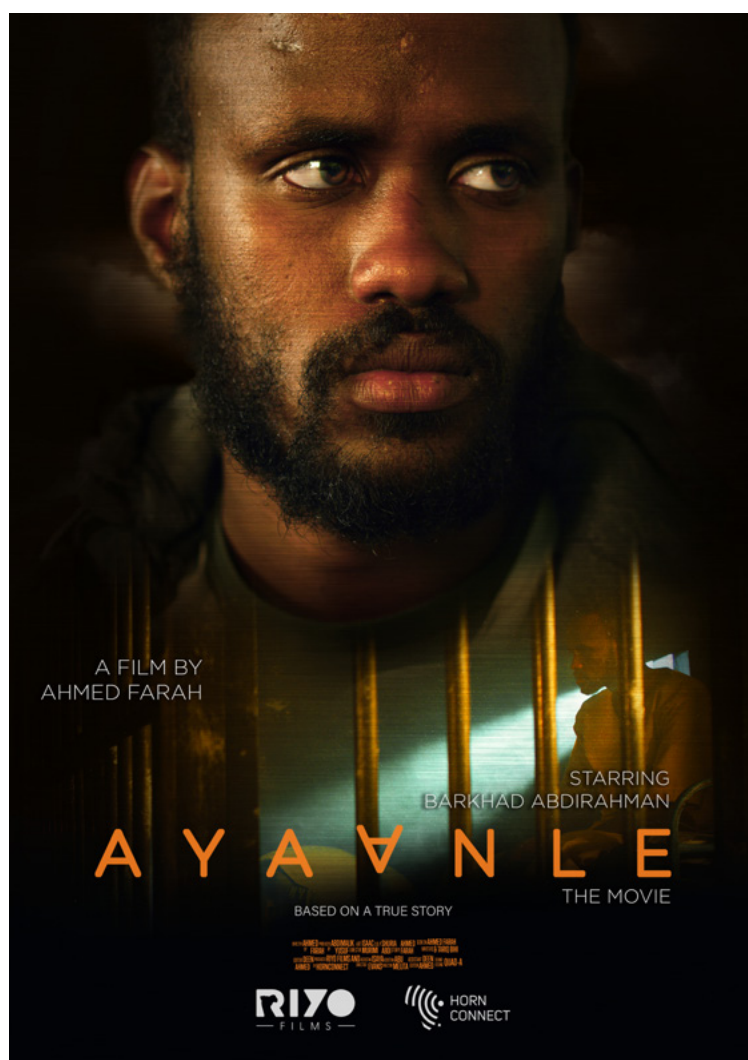


Almas proudly hosted the UK premiere of "The Ghost and The House of Truth," a compelling film directed by Akin Omotoso, at Courthouse Hotel Cinema during January 2023.

The film masterfully unfolds the harrowing story of Bola Ogun, a dedicated counsellor, who facilitates reconciliation services between convicts and the victims of their crimes. Her steadfast belief in forgiveness and her trust in the system is severely tested when her own daughter mysteriously disappears.

The screenings were attended by 400 members of the public.

COLLABORATIONS



KAYD SOMALI WEEK SCREENINGS OF AYAANLE, A FILM BY AHMED FARAH.

Almas Art Foundation sponsored screenings of AYAANLE during the KAYD Somali Week in October 2023 at the Courthouse Hotel in London.

AYAANLE is a 21-year-old young man, living in Nairobi, who aspires to become an actor like Denzel Washington and reach Hollywood. Despite his conservative upbringing and coming from an impoverished background, he remains optimistic about making it in the film industry. His life turns upside down after a series of unlikely events that led him to becoming the most wanted man in Kenya.

The screenings were attended by 300 members of the public and the ticket sales benefited KAYD's program of cultural events. Almas also organised a premier of the film at the Somerset House followed by a Q&A with the director Ahmed Farah and journalist Mary Harper.

VIRTUAL ARTISTS' TALK DR LILIAN NABULIME, MARTHA KAZUNGU AND DR POLLY SAVAGE OF SOAS, LONDON.

SOAS University hosted Dr Lilian Nabulime for a virtual presentation of her work and a discussion with Martha Kazungu and Dr Polly Savage. The recorded conversation is available on the SOAS YouTube channel with the link available on the Almas Art Foundation website.

COLOURFUL RADIO INTERVIEWS WITH JULIUS MBALUTO, AFRICA IN FOCUS – GERALD CHUKWUMA, SOUAD ABDELRASOUL, AHMED FARAH.

Colourful Radio is a commercial radio station broadcasting on DAB across London, Birmingham, Manchester as well as online. Journalist and historian Julius Mbaluto takes a deep dive into current affairs from across Africa. Julius hosted interviews with Gerald Chukwuma, Souad Abdelrasoul and Ahmed Farah which reached a substantial audience in the UK and in the Continent.



COLLABORATIONS continued

AFRICA PATRONS' CIRCLE, DELFINA FOUNDATION

Almas Art Foundation proudly took part in Delfina Foundation's Network of Africa Patrons, supporting residencies for the next generation of creative practitioners from the region. Delfina Foundation is an independent, non-profit foundation based in London, dedicated to facilitating artistic exchange and developing creative practice through residencies, partnerships and programming.

AFRICA CENTRE

Dr Lilian Mary Nabulime and Souad Abdelrasoul were very moved by the community work done by the Africa Centre and donated artworks to their renowned art collection.

We are very pleased to see the Africa Centre collection can grow through these donations and the public can engage with the work of these artists when their work goes on display.

PAPERCUP BOOKSTORE

We were delighted to offer our print publications for sale to the public during the 1-54 Art Fair in London in October with the help of Papercup Bookstore. This allowed further visibility for the artists we have published so far.



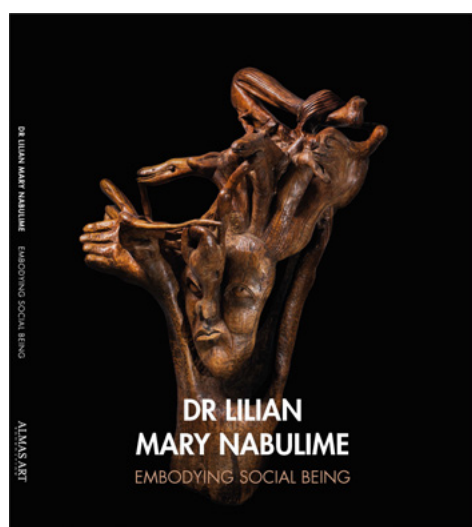
BOOK DISTRIBUTION TO LIBRARIES, ARTISTS' SPACES AND ART INSTITUTIONS

Our titles have started reaching our audiences in the continent and beyond. Below is a growing list of organizations where you can see some of our titles. Alongside these, we have distributed numerous publications to galleries, writers and creative practitioners.

University of Foumban	CAMEROON	Arete Arts Foundation	SOUTH AFRICA
University of Maroua	CAMEROON	Njabala Foundation	UGANDA
Helwan University	EGYPT	Makerere University, Uganda	UGANDA
Addis Ababa University	ETHIOPIA	Xenson Gallery	UGANDA
AWARE Archives of Women Artists	FRANCE	32 Degrees East Ugandan Arts Trust	UGANDA
Balme Library, University of Ghana	GHANA	Stuart Hall Library	UK
Nairobi University	KENYA	Delfina Foundation	UK
Nairobi Contemporary Art Institute	KENYA	SOAS University of London	UK
Fondation H	MADAGASCAR	GASWORKS London	UK
University of Namibia (UNAM), Windhoek	NAMIBIA	Africa Centre	UK
University of Nigeria, Nsukka	NIGERIA	Wellcome Collection	UK
G.A.S. Yinka Shonibare Foundation Lagos	NIGERIA	Newcastle University Library	UK
Tiwani Lagos	NIGERIA	British Library Legal Depository	UK
Hiddingh Hall Library, University of Cape Town	SOUTH AFRICA	Library of the National Museum of	USA
Merensky Library, University of Pretoria	SOUTH AFRICA	African Art Smithsonian Libraries	

OUR PUBLICATIONS AND MEDIA

Almas publications are available to view and purchase on the Almas Art Foundation website.



EMBODYING SOCIAL BEING
Published April 2023

**DR LILIAN MARY
NAMBULIME**



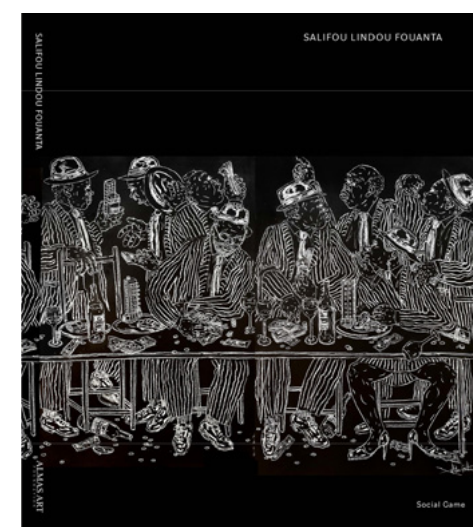
TOGETHER TOGETHER
Published September 2023

**GERALD
CHUKWUMA**



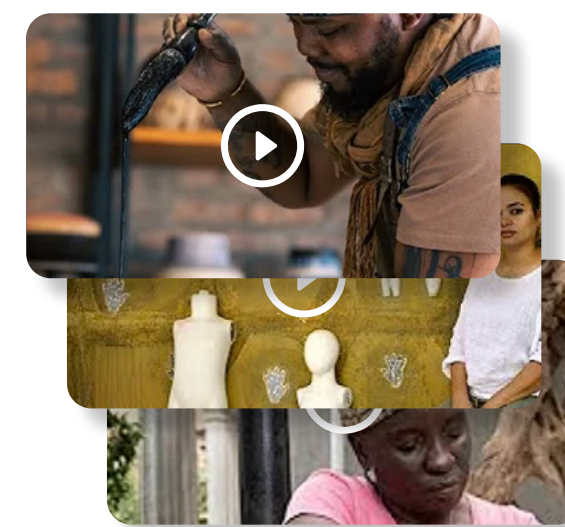
LIKE A SINGLE POMEGRANATE
Published October 2023

**SOUAD
ABDELRA SOUL**



SOCIAL GAME
Published October 2023

**SALIFOU LINDOU
FOUANTA**



View our films via the Almas Art Foundation Youtube channel.

SUBSCRIBE:
[youtube.com/@AlmasArtFoundation](https://www.youtube.com/@AlmasArtFoundation)

ALMAS ART FOUNDATION IN THE PRESS

Please find below links to some of the articles mentioning our projects in 2023:

**The
Guardian**



Cameroonian artist Salifou Lindou: 'I don't calculate ... I start from nowhere'

<https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2023/nov/10/cameroonian-artist-salifou-lindou-i-dont-calculate-i-start-from-nowhere>

FLOLondon



Salifou Lindou Fouanta: Social Game

<https://www.flolondon.co.uk/all-posts/whats-on-in-london-this-week-13-19-november-2023?rq=salifou%20lindou%20fouanta>

**THE
NEWARAB**



Like a Single Pomegranate: When Souad Abdelrasoul's surrealist Egyptian art adorned London

<https://www.newarab.com/features/souad-abdelrasouls-surrealist-egyptian-art-london>

FLOLondon



Dr. Lilian Mary Nabulime to showcase Embodying Social Being at Somerset House

<https://www.flolondon.co.uk/all-posts/the-almas-art-foundation-aaf-launches-an-exhibitions-program-at-somerset-house?rq=nabulime>

FLOLondon



36 art exhibitions to see in London in October 2023

<https://www.flolondon.co.uk/all-posts/art-to-see-in-london-in-october-2023?rq=souad%20abdelrasoul>

LOOKING INTO 2024 PROJECTS

We are working to deliver exciting projects again in 2024 as well as making advances in fundraising towards the future self-reliance of Almas Art Foundation. Alongside the artists projects, Almas will again be looking to sponsor screenings of acclaimed feature films. We are delighted to announce the artists we are aiming to work with in 2024:

Andile Dyalvane is guided by a deep spiritual connection to his Xhosa ancestors. His medium of clay or “umhlaba” (mother earth) is, at its most fundamental, a life-affirming connection to the soil. Dyalvane completed a National Diploma in Art and Design at Sivuyile Technical College in Gugulethu, Cape Town, followed by a National Diploma in Ceramic Design from Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in 2003.

In 2005, he and Zizipho Poswa co-founded Imiso Ceramics. He has developed a language of incision marks inspired by the ancient African tradition of body scarification.

Project Launch Date: February 2024

Born 1971 in Nyeri, **Richard Kamathi** studied Graphic Arts at the Nairobi Creative Art Centre. In 1996, he joined the artists’ incubator Kuona Trust studios. Kamathi’s work represents the human tendencies,

how we feel and behave in political and social situations. Kamathi has represented Kenya at Dak’Art in Senegal, has taken part in the Kenya pavilion in 2017.

Project Launch Date: April 2024

Ermias Ekube (b. 1970, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia) studied at the Addis Ababa School of Fine arts and Design, graduating in 1990. He lives and works in Kalmar, Sweden. Merging figurative and conceptual strands, Ekube’s work draws on thoughts and memories to imbue stories with meaning via simple objects, signs and gestures.

Project Launch Date: June 2024



ALMAS ART
FOUNDATION

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