

Ludovic Nkoth

Physical Proof

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**MASSIMODECARLO is pleased to present
Physical Proof, Ludovic Nkoth's first solo
exhibition in Milan.**

Ludovic Nkoth's latest body of work continues his exploration of the human form, pushing the boundaries of bodily awareness, physicality, and psychological depth. In these new paintings, Nkoth invites viewers into an introspective yet expansive realm, where bodies, often fragmented or caught mid-motion, are subjected to forces beyond their control. Rather than presenting fully realized individuals, the works offer glimpses: figures that exist more as symbols of movement than as complete beings. At the core of these paintings is not just the body, but the *Now* - the constantly shifting moment that defines what it means to be a creator, a witness, and a living being in an era marked by overlapping historical narratives.

Nkoth's approach to the body is not rooted in anatomy or gesture alone, but in presence amid turbulent global change, collective trauma, and personal reckoning. What does it mean to be a creator today, translating such a fraught moment into visual language? To be alive in a time of ongoing crisis, bearing witness as history unfolds in real time? Through painting, Nkoth channels this urgency to the canvas, rendering subjects who, whether in movement or stillness, reflect the emotional, psychological, and cultural weight of the present.

The *now* in Nkoth's work is captured not only in his figures' gestures, but in the act of creation itself. The artist becomes both observer and participant, filtering a world marked by political unrest, social upheaval, and inner searching through the discipline of the body. He often begins with his own body - filmed, posed, documented - before translating it into paint. "I exist in both spaces," he explains, "the observer and the performer." This dual role mirrors his biography: a teenager arriving from Cameroon to South Carolina, suddenly cast as African American, compelled to inhabit a history he was not born into but had to learn and perform. His figures echo that tension, suspended mid-motion - at once familiar and estranged, bearing the double weight of belonging and displacement. As we encounter figures engaged in physical rituals, such as boxing, fencing,

or dancing, we're reminded that these acts exist within cultural and historical frameworks. These are not merely individual expressions, but conversations about survival, endurance, and the construction of self in a world where change is constant and the past is never truly past.

The recurring motif of spectator sports in Nkoth's work serves as a powerful metaphor. Like athletes or performers, his subjects undergo ritual acts that speak to discipline and identity amid historical noise. Yet even in their exertion, there is vulnerability. Nkoth captures the body not just in strength, but in its striving - its search for resilience and purpose. In this way, he offers more than a meditation on the body: he extends an invitation to locate ourselves within the ongoing story of history, identity, and survival.

Ludovic Nkoth

Born in Cameroon, Ludovic Nkoth (b.1994) moved to the United States at the age of 13, he now lives and works in New York.

Ludovic Nkoth's artistic creations capture the essence of the Black experience with an unparalleled emotional depth that resonates with the diasporic life and the rich history of his heritage. Each of his thickly impastoed portraits is a gateway into a world of colour and texture.

Through his masterful use of distinct pink, red, yellow, blue, and brown regions, and fluid squiggles, Ludovic Nkoth transforms a single face into a map of complexity. With each stroke of the brush, he uncovers the beauty and the struggles that are so often hidden behind a façade of stoicism.

As a Cameroon-born artist who has made his home in the United States, Ludovic Nkoth brings a unique perspective to his work, infusing it with his own personal experiences of being a Black immigrant in a foreign land. His practice is a seamless fusion of art and introspection, with each piece serving as a reflection of his ruminations on family history, tradition, and the ongoing legacy of colonialism that continues to impact Black lives today.

In Ludovic Nkoth's hands, the canvas becomes a powerful platform for social commentary and an unflinching exploration of the many challenges that Black people face.