

# Galerie Claude Lemand

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## DIA AL-AZZAWI, RETROSPECTIVE, DE 1963 A DEMAIN. Exposition du 15 Octobre 2016 au 16 Avril 2017.

Du 15 octobre 2016 au 15 avril 2017 - QATAR MUSEUMS Mathaf + Al Riwaq, Doha.



AZZAWI, *Sunset over Basrah*.

*Sunset over Basrah*, 1990. Acrylique sur toile, 90 x 120 cm. Donation Claude & France Lemand. Musée, Institut du monde arabe, Paris. © Dia Al-Azzawi. Courtesy Galerie Claude Lemand, Paris.

**Dia Al-Azzawi : A Retrospective, from 1963 until tomorrow.**

### Communiqué.

A major retrospective of the work of Dia Al-Azzawi is to take place simultaneously at Mathaf : Arab Museum of Modern Art and QM Gallery Al Riwaq in Doha, opening over two days on 16 and 17 October 2016 and running until 16 April 2017.

Dia Al-Azzawi is an internationally recognised and prominent figure of modern and contemporary art in the Arab world. The exhibitions will showcase 400 works spanning two museum spaces totalling 9,000 square metres, this will almost certainly be the largest ever solo exhibition by any Arab artist. Azzawi has lived in London since 1976.

### I am the cry, who will give voice to me ?

The exhibition is curated by Catherine David, Deputy Director at Centre Pompidou in Paris. Work on all scales and media will be featured, including painting, sculpture, drawing, print and artist books, incorporating original and limited editions of artworks on view for the first time.

Conceived for the two venues, Mathaf and QM Gallery Al Riwaq, the retrospective is organised in two parts tracing the trajectory of the artist's practice. One trajectory charts the emergence of a relationship between image and text in Azzawi's work, and its evolution as a solution to an artistic problem of representation ; the other trajectory follows the artist's engagement with the key moments in the political history of Iraq and the Arab world. Both routes depart from an encounter with the poet Muzaffar al-Nawwab in 1968.

Dia Al-Azzawi (born Baghdad, 1939, lives and works in London) started his career as an artist in 1964, after graduating from the Institute of Fine Arts in Baghdad and completing a degree in archaeology from Baghdad University in 1962.

In 1969, Al-Azzawi (with Rafa Nasiri, Mohammad Muhriddin, Ismail Fattah, Hachem al-Samarchi and Saleh al Jumaie) formed the New Vision group (Jama'at al-Ru'ya al-Jadidah), uniting fellow artists ideologically and culturally as opposed to stylistically. Through his involvement with the New Vision group Al-Azzawi found inspiration in contemporary subjects and issues, particularly the plight of the Palestinians. He was also briefly a member of Shakir Hassan Al Said's One Dimension group (Jama'at al-Bu'd al-Wahid).

From 1968 to 1976, Al-Azzawi was the director of the Iraqi Antiquities Department in Baghdad. He has lived in London since 1976, where he served as art advisor to the city's Iraqi Cultural Centre, from 1977 to 1980. Al-Azzawi's move to London led him to rediscover artist books (dafatir), an art form that he has encouraged other artists from Iraq and the region to explore.

His work is held in international private and public collections including the Museums of Modern Art in Baghdad, Damascus and Tunis ; Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, Amman ; Mathaf : Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha ; Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah ; Kinda Foundation, Saudi Arabia ; Una Foundation, Casablanca ; Arab Monetary Fund, Abu Dhabi ; Development Fund, Kuwait ; Jeddah International Airport ; British Museum, Tate Modern, and Victoria and Albert Museum, London ; Institut du Monde Arabe, Bibliothèque Nationale de France and Colas Foundation, Paris ; Harba Collection, Iraq and Italy ; Gulbenkian Collection, Barcelona ; and Library of Congress and the World Bank, Washington, DC.

Dia Al-Azzawi has had a long association with Qatar Museums, featuring in the opening exhibition of Mathaf Arab Museum of Modern Art and QM Al Riwaq in 2010. His work is included in the ongoing Mathaf Encyclopedia of Modern Art and the Arab World, a pioneering online project developed by Qatar Museums, Qatar Foundation and Mathaf, to comprehensively document the work of Arab artists of the 20th and 21st century.

Qatar Museums will publish an authoritative book on the artist, documenting the full spectrum of his work and career. The monograph will include essays by leading experts in the field : Catherine David, in her role of Exhibition Curator ; Nada Shabout, Professor of Art History and Director of Contemporary Arab and Muslim Cultural Studies Initiative at the University of North Texas ; May Muzzafar, poet and writer on the subject of Iraqi art since the early 1970s and Zainab Bahrani, Professor of Ancient Near Eastern Art and Archaeology in the Department of Art History at Columbia University.

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