

SOPHIA CONTEMPORARY GALLERY ANNOUNCES EXCLUSIVE UK REPRESENTATION OF THE ALFRED BASBOUS ESTATE

Sophia Contemporary Gallery, London is pleased to announce its exclusive representation of the estate of Alfred Basbous (1924-2006) in the UK. Born in Rachana, Lebanon, Basbous is considered to be a major pioneer of Modernist sculpture in the Middle East.

The gallery's co-director Vassili Tsarenkov stated, "*We are delighted to be working with the Estate of Alfred Basbous and exclusively representing his internationally renowned sculptural work in the UK.*" Focused on the aesthetic principles of shape, movement, line and material, his sculptures display a deeply ingrained sincerity and a search for the essence of beauty. Working in the tradition of sculptors such as Auguste Rodin, Jean Arp and Henry Moore, Alfred Basbous explores the potential of noble materials such as bronze, wood and marble to express the sensuality and purity of the human form. This aversion towards frivolous and meaningless embellishments echoes his own philosophy of simplicity.

Sophia Contemporary Gallery and Alfred Basbous Charity Auction

To celebrate the new representation and in line with the gallery's philanthropic values, Sophia Contemporary Gallery and the Alfred Basbous Foundation have partnered with The Centre for Lebanese Studies (CLS) and the Arabic-British Chamber of Commerce (ABCC) to organise a charity auction at Sophia Contemporary Gallery in Mayfair, London, on the 17 September 2016. The sculpture *Femme dans le Sommeil* (1970) will be auctioned and the proceeds will go to the Centre of Lebanese Studies.

Summer Exhibitions

Furthermore, three of Alfred Basbous' sculptures, *Accolade* (1993), *Phoenician Head* (2003) and *Woman Nude* (2001), will be exhibited at Sophia Contemporary in the context of the *Summer Exhibition* from 27 July to 22 September and twenty sculptures will be exhibited at the ABCC in partnership with the Alfred Basbous Foundation from 15 to 17 September.

A Pioneer of Modernist Sculpture in the Middle East

Alfred Basbous held his first exhibition in Beirut, at the Alecco Saab gallery in 1958, marking the beginning of a long and successful career as a sculptor. In 1960, he received a scholarship from the French government and became a pupil of the sculptor René Collamarini at 'The National Fine Arts School in Paris' (L'Ecole Nationale des

Beaux-Arts de Paris). In 1961, his works were included in the *International Sculpture Exhibition* at the Musée Rodin, in Paris. Cementing his position as a cultural icon at home and abroad, Basbous organised the International Symposium of Sculpture in Rachana from 1994 to 2004, attracting sculptors from across the world to participate in a group exhibition and resulting in the creation of the International Park of Sculpture. The Park includes 71 sculptures by 66 sculptors from 39 countries and was declared the UNESCO 'International Capital of Open Air Sculpture' in 1997.