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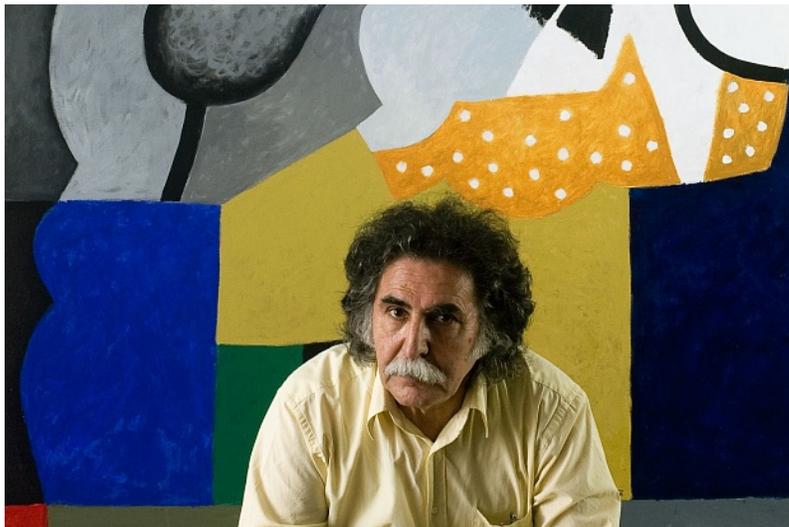
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Qatar to stage largest-ever solo exhibition of works by an Arab artist

Dia Al-Azzawi is a central figure of Iraqi art scene

by AIMEE DAWSON | 9 August 2016



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Dia Al-Azzawi (Image: © Anthony Dawten)

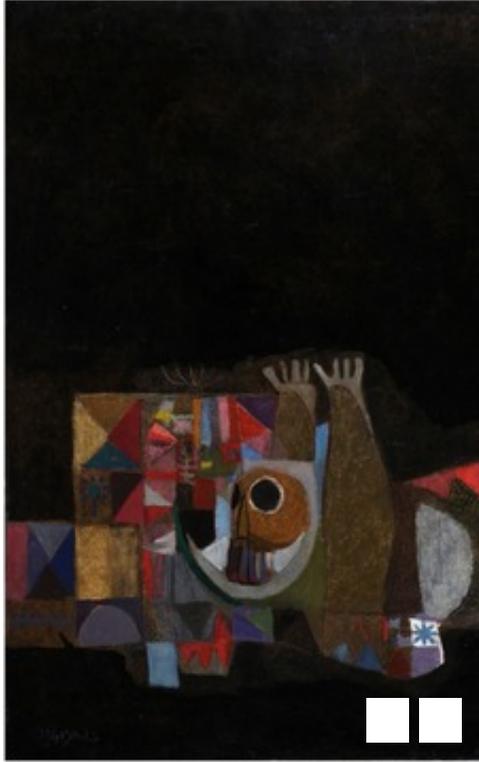
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Qatar Museums (QM) is due to stage a major retrospective of the Iraqi Modernist artist Dia Al-Azzawi in October. The exhibition is believed to be the largest-ever solo exhibition of works by an Arab artist. Spanning two venues in Doha, Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art and QM Gallery Al Riwaq, the exhibition will cover 9,000 sq. m and include 400 works.

Curated by Catherine David, the deputy director of the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the show includes works in a variety of media, including painting, sculpture, drawing, print and artist books, as well as original and limited editions of works on view for the first time. The two venues, across the city from one another, will highlight two different narratives in Al-Azzawi’s work. The first will focus on the artist’s use of image and text, and the other will trace the artist’s engagement with the political history of Iraq and the

Arab world.



Dia Al-Az:

Al-Azzawi, who was born in Baghdad in 1939, has been a central figure in Iraq's art scene. Before moving to London in 1976, where he continues to live and work today, Al-Azzawi was the director of the Iraqi Antiquities Department in Baghdad and an active member of the country's emerging art groups at the time. "Al-Azzawi is considered one of the most important artists of the Arab world and for the first time a major retrospective will allow visitors to study the evolution of his practice and themes," says Sultan Sooud Al-Qassemi, the founder of the Barjeel Art Foundation, whose collection features many works by the artist.

Alongside 90 works from the QM collection, the exhibition will feature loans from 17 private collections and four institutions, including the Barjeel Foundation, Sharjah; Centro de Arte Moderna Fundação Calouste, Lisbon; Kinda Foundation, Riyadh; and Tate Modern, London. The Tate is lending one of Al-Azzawi's most renowned works, the vast mural Sabra and Shatila Massacre (1982-85). Often likened to Picasso's seminal painting Guernica (1937), Al-Azzawi's painting depicts the massacre of Palestinian refugees in 1982 during the civil war in Lebanon.

• *I am the cry, who will give voice to me? Dia Al-Azzawi: a Retrospective (from 1963 until tomorrow), Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art and QM Gallery Al Riwaq, Doha, Qatar, 16 October-16 April 2017*

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