

DIA AL-AZZAWI

1939

Born in Baghdad, Iraq

1962

BA, Archaeology, Baghdad University

1964

BA, Fine Arts, Baghdad

1969

Moved to London, where he is still based

Over more than half a century, Dia al-Azzawi's work has been shown in countless group and solo exhibitions worldwide, especially in Europe, across the USA, and the Arab world. Azzawi is one of the pioneers of modern Arab art. Even during the oppressive years between 2003 and 2016, and amidst the region's turbulent events, Azzawi continued to produce artworks marked by an enduring presence and artistic force.

Azzawi's practice is eclectic and wide-ranging. A trained archaeologist, his art draws from Arab cultural heritage, classical literature, marginalized figures, revolutionary movements, and current events. It oscillates between figuration and abstraction, guided by experimentation with new mediums, materials, and styles. Azzawi's impressive body of work comprises paintings, murals, sculptures, prints, and artist books, which amalgamate an immediate visual language with poetic and political commentary.

His works (especially movement paintings and limited-edition prints) address themes of grief, exile, and injustice. Azzawi's prolific production (he has created nearly 15,000 works) has featured in myriad publications and can be found in numerous public and private collections across the world.

Selected Collections

Azzawi's work has been collected by public and private art institutions worldwide, including:

The Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation Collection of Arab Art, Jordan

The Arab Museum of Modern Art (Mathaf), Doha

Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah

Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris

British Museum, London

Darat al-Funun, Amman

Jordan National Gallery of Fine Arts, Amman

Khalid Shoman Collection, Amman

Leila Albasi Collection, London

Library of Congress, Washington D.C.

Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA), Los Angeles

Museu Calouste Gulbenkian Collection, Lisbon

Qatar Foundation, Doha

Royal Society of Fine Arts, Amman

Sursock Museum, Beirut

Tate Modern, London

Victoria and Albert Museum, London

World Bank, Washington D.C.