

Art World

'This Donation Gives Meaning to Our Life:' Collectors Claude and France Lemand Donate 1,300 Works to Paris's Institut du Monde Arabe

The donation from the Lebanese-born dealer and collector also sets up an endowment for the museum.

Sarah Cascone, October 29, 2018



Mohammed Al-Rawak, *Urban Debris* (2004). Courtesy of the Institut du Monde Arabe, donated by Claude and France Lemand.

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The Paris-based art dealer and collector Claude Lemand and his wife, France, donated some 1,300 works of art to the **Institut du Monde Arabe**. It's one of the largest donations in the Paris museum's history and includes funds for an endowment that will support the future exhibitions, acquisitions, research, and catalogue publication.

Lemand left his native Lebanon in the mid-1970s, when civil war broke out. When he founded his gallery in Paris in 1988 he dedicated it to Arab artists who, like him, had settled in the West. He and his wife also amassed an impressive collection of Arab art themselves. The acquisition of the Lemands' collection will increase its holdings of Modern and contemporary art by two thirds.

"I remain personally very attached to the Arab world," Lemand said in a **statement**. "The goal of my gallery is to make better known the art of the Arab world to the West." Leaving his personal collection to a museum in his adopted hometown of Paris was a natural extension of that mission.



Claude and France Lemand. Photo courtesy of the Institut du Monde Arabe.

"I wanted to show how much an émigré of Arab culture and a French universalist is capable of initiative and generosity," Lemand added. "This donation gives meaning to our life and, when we are gone, the works of art will continue to testify to our passion to future generations called to visit this museum."

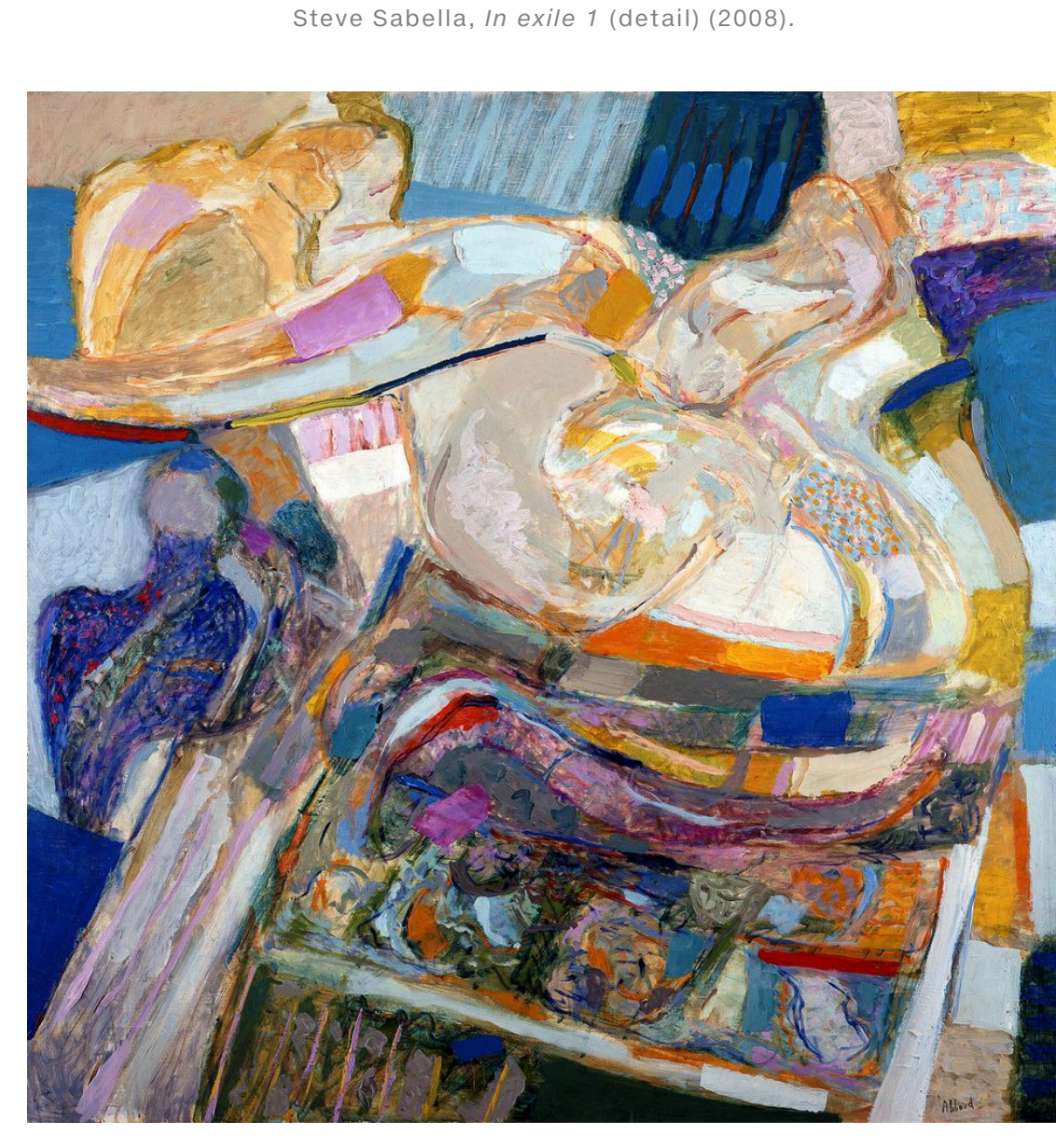
The works include oil paintings as well as watercolors and gouaches, drawings, sculptures, prints, artists' books, photographs and ceramics, dating from the present day back to the 19th century. The 94 artists in the collection include Algeria's Zoulikha Boudjellal, Syria's Youssef Abdelke, and Lebanon's Shafic Abboud.

As reported by the **Art Newspaper**, the museum has already mounted three exhibitions featuring some of the donated works, which are on view through March 10, 2019. It plans to show the remaining works in a rotating display.

See some of the donated works below.



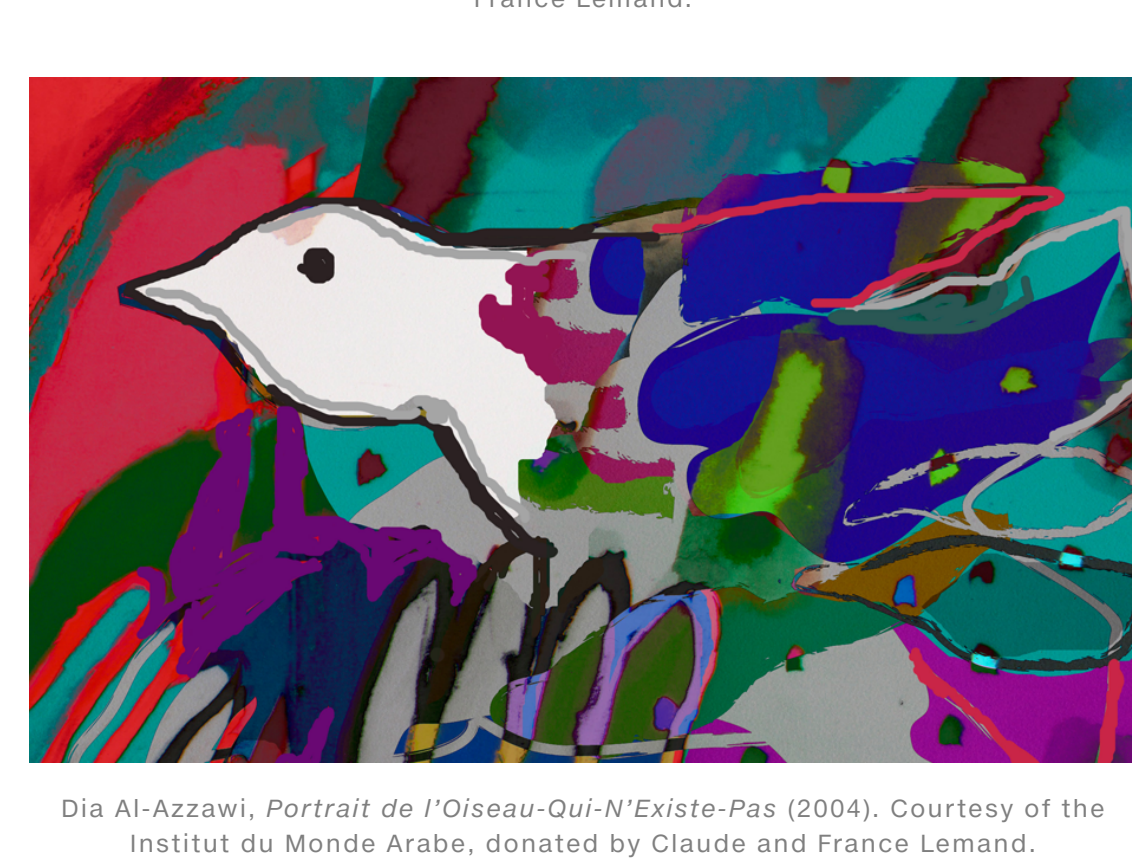
Steve Sabella, *In exile 1* (detail) (2008).



Shafic Abboud, *Confidences* (1981). Courtesy of the Institut du Monde Arabe, donated by Claude and France Lemand.



Mario Murua, *livre unique peint, à suspendre pour le déployer en oiseau* (2005). Courtesy of the Institut du Monde Arabe, donated by Claude and France Lemand.



Dia Al-Azzawi, *Portrait de l'Oiseau-Qui-N'Existe-Pas* (2004). Courtesy of the Institut du Monde Arabe, donated by Claude and France Lemand.



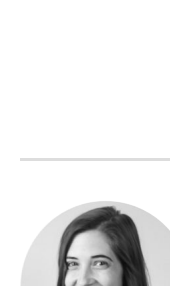
Shafic Abboud, *L'Aube* (2003). Courtesy of the Institut du Monde Arabe, donated by Claude and France Lemand.



Dia Al-Azzawi, *Peace Lover* (1986). Courtesy of the Institut du Monde Arabe, donated by Claude and France Lemand.

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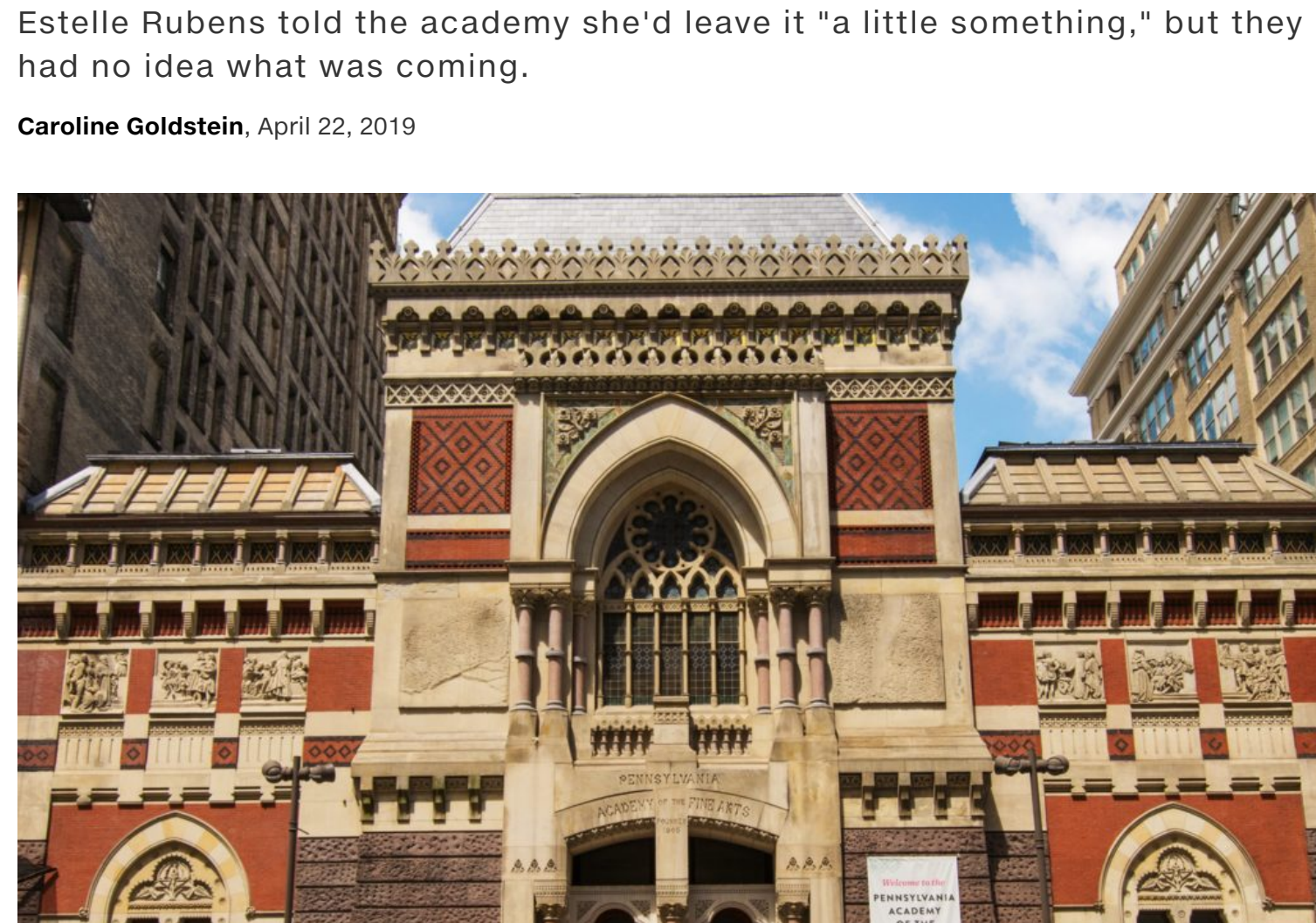


People

A Volunteer Docent Told a Philadelphia Museum She Would Leave It 'a Little Something' in Her Will. She Surprised Them With \$8 Million

Estelle Rubens told the academy she'd leave it "a little something," but they had no idea what was coming.

Caroline Goldstein, April 22, 2019



The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts building. Photo courtesy of Google Arts and Culture.

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Over the 15 years that Estelle Rubens served as a beloved volunteer docent at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, she and her husband Raymond were amassing a collection of modern and contemporary American art. The couple had donated several works to the museum over the years, so it wasn't a big surprise when Estelle mentioned in her will that she would be "leaving a little something" to the academy.

The shock came after Rubens died in January 18, at the age of 88, and that "little something" turned to be a gift in the form of an endowment scholarship fund totaling almost \$8 million—one of the largest donations in the institution's history. Rubens lived her entire life in Philadelphia and, along with her late husband, Raymond, became an active member and supporter of the museum and the school, which counts artists Njideka Akunyili Crosby, Thomas Eakins, and Mary Cassatt among its alumni.

The museum's president David R. Brigham **told the Philadelphia Inquirer**, "we knew the bequest was coming, but we had no idea of the magnitude. It far exceeded our expectations."



Red Grooms, *Wounded Blvd* (1978), gift from the private collection of Estelle and Raymond Rubens. Courtesy of D&A.

The result is a two-part gift from the Raymond D. and Estelle Rubens Travel Scholarship Fund, awarded to students based on merit. Participating students receive \$5,000 for travel expenses to Europe following their third year of study, as well as two semesters at the academy paid in full. The fund stipulates that at least three scholarships will be awarded each year. Eight scholarships will be announced at the academy's upcoming commencement celebration on May 10.

The couple previously donated an additional six works to the museum by artists **Larry Rivers**, **Alexander Calder**, **Red Grooms**, **Earl Hester**, **Al Hirschfeld**, and **Alice Neel**.

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