

## THOMAS DANE GALLERY

**Akram Zaatari**  
***Father and Son***

Private view: Saturday 20 April, 12–6pm  
Exhibition dates: 23 April–20 July 2024

Thomas Dane Gallery  
Via Francesco Crispi, 69  
Napoli

Thomas Dane Gallery is pleased to announce *Father and Son*, a solo exhibition of Akram Zaatari, opening in April 2024. The exhibition will be Zaatari's third with the gallery and the artist's first major solo exhibition in Italy.

Akram Zaatari (b. 1966, Saida) has played a critical role in developing the formal, intellectual and institutional infrastructure of Beirut's contemporary art scene. He has produced more than fifty films and videos, a dozen books and countless installations of photographic material, all sharing an interest in writing histories and the search for records and objects, keeping track of their changing hands, the retrieval of narratives and missing links that have been hidden, misplaced, lost, found, buried or excavated. The act of digging itself has become emblematic of his practice while acting to restore connections lost over time, or due to war and displacement. Zaatari has dedicated a large volume of his work to the research and study of photographic practices in the Arab world and has made uncompromising contributions to the wider discourse on preservation and archival practice.

Rooted in this research practice, Zaatari's exhibition in Naples retraces the element of restitution in the artist's work, expressed mainly through text, documents and photographs that revisit descriptions and recreate objects or ties that once existed but are now lost. The exhibition features works across many media from the last two decades, beginning with his two-hour-long video, *Ain el Mir* (2002), in which the artist looks for a buried letter that never reached its destination. It spans through to Zaatari's most recent body of work, *Father and Son* (2024), in which the sarcophagi of two Phoenician Kings (father and son), separated since antiquity, are reunited. The project is accompanied by a series of new works on paper that look at the Mediterranean as a locus of exchange, extraction and movement across millennia.

Amongst these works *Archeology* (2017), *Photographic Currency* (2019) and *Venus of Beirut*, (2022), and a new work, *Ibrahim and the Cat, For Inji Efflatoun* (2024), all engage in the process of recreating objects that have either vanished or were never produced. The brass relief *Ibrahim and the Cat* – made with artisans in Naples – gives new form to a forgotten photograph taken by the father of Egyptian artist Inji Efflatoun for the purpose of making a painting that was never produced.

Zaatari's idea of 'giving life to things that do not exist in the present' also applies to the recreation of a stone monolith used to seal King Tabnit's tomb, which was completely destroyed when his sarcophagus was extracted in 1887. *All that Refuses to Vanish* (2022) was made from drawings and notes left by Ottoman statesman and painter Osman Hamdi during his excavation of the Sidon Necropolis.

Akram Zaatari lives and works in Beirut, Lebanon. Recent exhibitions include: *Against Photography. An Annotated History of the Arab Image Foundation*, Sharjah Art Foundation, Sharjah,

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UAE (2019); *The Script*, New Art Exchange, Nottingham, England (2018); *The Fold*, Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati OH (2018); *Letter to a Refusing Pilot*, Moderna Museet, Malmö, Sweden (2018); *Against Photography. An Annotated History of the Arab Image Foundation*, MACBA, Barcelona, Spain (2017); travelling to: K21, Düsseldorf, Germany (2018); Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, Seoul, Korea (2018); *Double Take: Akram Zaatari and the Arab Image Foundation*, National Portrait Gallery, London, England (2017); *This Day at Ten*, Kunsthau Zürich, Zürich, Switzerland (2016); *Unfolding*, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden (2015); *Akram Zaatari: The End of Time*, The Power Plant, Toronto, Canada (2014); Lebanese Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy (2013); *Projects 100: Akram Zaatari*, Museum of Modern Art, New York NY (2013); *This Day at Ten / Aujourd'hui à 10*, Magasin Centre National d'Art Contemporain de Grenoble, France (2013); *Tomorrow Everything Will be Alright*, MIT List Visual Arts Center, Cambridge MA (2012); *The Uneasy Subject*, MUAC, Mexico City, Mexico (2012); Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León, León, Spain (2011).

Additionally, Zaatari's work has been part of Sharjah Biennial 14, Sharjah, UAE (2018); the 12th Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul, Turkey (2011); The Yokohama Triennale, Yokohama, Japan (2014); the 55th and 52nd Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy (2013 and 2007); dOCUMENTA (13), Kassel, Germany (2012); 27th São Paulo Biennial, São Paulo, Brazil (2006); the 6th Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju, South Korea (2006); and the 15th Biennale of Sydney, Sydney, Australia (2006).

Zaatari's work is included in the collections of Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Louis Vuitton, Paris, France; Bristol Museum & Art Gallery, Bristol, England; Tate Modern, London, England; MCA Chicago, Chicago IL; Guggenheim Museum, New York NY; Museum of Modern Art, New York NY; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles CA and Walker Art Center, Minneapolis MN.

The *Father and Son* project is also the artist's doctoral project in Arts at ENSAPC and the Cy University, France, under the direction of François Pernot, Alejandra Riera and Bénédicte Savoy. It has been supported in part by:

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Gallery Hours: Tuesday to Friday 11am–1:30pm & 2:30pm–7pm, Saturday 12pm–6pm, or by appointment

Admission: Free

Nearest station: Piazza Amedeo

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Instagram: [@thomasdanegallery](https://www.instagram.com/thomasdanegallery)

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## Akram Zaatari

### *Father and Son*

23 April - 20 July 2024

#### Room 1

##### *I Tabnit*, 2024

inkjet print, acrylic  
52 x 74 cm.  
20 1/2 x 29 1/4 in.

##### *All that refuses to Vanish: The Tabnit Monolith*, 2022

3D-Routed hand-polished Spuma Limestone, Bchaaleh, North Lebanon, crane  
dimensions variable

##### *Above and Below*, 2024

porcelain tiles, in 2 parts  
80 x 40 cm.  
31 1/2 x 15 3/4 in.

##### *[BL 'T BL KTBT BL 'DM] Before Time Before Alphabet Before Adam*, 2024

ink on mulberry paper  
36.6 x 60 cm.  
14 1/2 x 23 1/2 in.

##### *Ain el Mir 23.11.2002*, 2002

video, mono sound  
15+ minutes

#### Room 2

##### *Father and Son: A Mother's Voice*, 2024

mirror, blank printed forex, polyurethane foam, black semi-refractory porcelain stoneware, led light, print, photopolymer print, acrylic paint  
270 x 350 x 185 cm.  
106 1/4 x 137 3/4 x 72 3/4 in.

##### *An Extraordinary Event*, 2018

inkjet print  
44.6 x 557 x 3.5 cm.  
17 1/2 x 140 1/2 x 1 1/2 in.

#### Room 3

##### *Archeology*, 2017

pigment inkjet print on gelatin treated glass plate with earth, glass, metal, acrylic medium, steel mounts, floor standing preservation flood light  
210 x 317 x 115 cm.  
82 3/4 x 124 3/4 x 45 1/4 in.

#### Room 4

##### *Photographic Currency*, 2019

Traditional quilts, satin and linen fabric, cotton-filled, hand-made by Mustapha Al-Qady, Saida, Lebanon, and photographs of quilt makers by Hashem el Madani, silver prints on glossy harman gds fb.

##### *[L YM] On Sea*, 2024

ink and cotton thread on mulberry paper  
36.6 x 60 cm.  
14 1/2 x 23 1/2 in.

#### Room 5

##### *Ibrahim and Cat for Inji Efflatoun*, 2024

brass  
26 x 28 x 1.5 cm.  
10 1/4 x 11 x 1/2 in.

##### *The Fold*, 2018

photographic prints, text, projector  
dimensions variable

#### Room 6

##### *[RS' YM] Sea Land*, 2024

ink and cotton thread on mulberry paper  
36.6 x 60 cm.  
14 1/2 x 23 1/2 in.

##### *[MS' MRB] East West*, 2024

ink on mulberry paper  
36.6 x 60 cm.  
14 1/2 x 23 1/2 in.

##### *Venus of Beirut*, 2022

3D routed, hand-polished Grey Bardiglio imperiale  
50.5 x 50.5 x 4 cm.  
20 x 20 x 1 1/2 in.  
edition of 5 + 2AP

#### Veranda

##### *Mediterranean Ruins: Provenance*, 2024

routed beech wood stamp, clay, earth, ink, acrylic  
dimensions variable  
edition of 5

##### *Mediterranean Ruins: Constantinople*, 2024

routed beech wood stamp, clay, earth, ink, acrylic  
dimensions variable  
edition of 5

##### *Mediterranean Ruins: Paris*, 2024

routed beech wood stamp, clay, earth, ink, acrylic  
dimensions variable  
edition of 5

