

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wassef Boutros-Ghali: A Retrospective
November 12 – December 19, 2020
albertz benda, New York



The Night Raiders, 1974. Acrylic on Canvas. 50 x 38 inches / 127 x 96.5 cm



Untitled, 2013. Acrylic on Canvas. 65 x 55 inches / 165 x 140 cm

New York, NY - albertz benda is thrilled to announce *Wassef Boutros-Ghali: A Retrospective*, the artist's debut gallery exhibition, on view from November 12 to December 19, 2020. An accomplished painter and architect, Boutros-Ghali will present paintings and drawings from the 1960's through the present day with an emphasis on work of the past twenty years. Drawn from the artist's personal collection, *Retrospective* marks the first time these pieces have been shown publicly.

In his paintings, Boutros-Ghali's primary goal is to elicit a "shock" using "as little explanation on the canvas as possible." In earlier works, such as *The Night Raiders* (1977), groupings of asymmetrical geometric shapes allude to recognizable figures - angular limbs, distorted shadows - without becoming literal. Within the past twenty years, the artist has "transformed reality by simplifying it...abolishing a subject and having only forms." *Untitled* (2013) features overlapping and contrasting pale blue and blood red triangles that seem to balance on an invisible fulcrum. Each composition is a self-contained world existing in a state of tense equilibrium.

With its purity of line and skillful manipulation of space, Boutros-Ghali's work can be understood within the context of other architecturally influenced schools of painting such as Le Corbusier's Purism, Patrick Henry Bruce's Cubism, or the Precisionist paintings of Manierre Dawson. Yet his relationship with color for its emotional capabilities reveals an affinity with abstract expressionists like Mark Rothko and Ad Reinhardt, without the impassioned gesture of the former nor the latter's goal of taking abstraction to its final conclusion.

albertz benda

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Boutros-Ghali's style represents an original synthesis of his architectural training and a continuous and indispensable passion for painting and drawing throughout his life. Born into a family that includes some of Egypt's most influential politicians and statesmen, his interest in art was encouraged as a hobby but not as career. Nevertheless, he persisted in creating a distinct oeuvre while designing buildings throughout Egypt and Africa and serving as a technical advisor to the United Nations. Today, at the age of 96, Boutros-Ghali continues to work at his home studio in Cairo.

ABOUT ALBERTZ BENDA

Founded in 2015 by Thorsten Albertz and Marc Benda, albertz benda is devoted to an international contemporary visual arts program featuring rediscoveries as well as introductions — from seminal figures in their field whose work warrants further exploration, to debut presentations of artists that are new to New York.

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