



THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF
ANCIENT CULTURES MUSEUM
West Asia & North Africa

EXHIBITION PRESS RELEASE

Artifacts Also Die اللقى ايضاً تموت

A Special Exhibit at the ISAC Museum
April 5–August 27, 2023

This exhibition is part of the ongoing research project *Ruins, Rubble, and Renewal: Co-existent Ruins—Exploring Iraq's Mesopotamian Past through Contemporary Art*. This long term, interdisciplinary, expanded-media, and collaborative project seeks to address how it might be possible to have renewed engagements with four ancient Mesopotamian heritage sites (Babylon, Nimrud, Nuffar, and Ur), as well as the Iraq Museum in Baghdad, by local Iraqi artists in post-conflict Iraq. These sites, while still providing security guards and space for international archaeological research, have become derelict during the recent traumatic wars and conflicts. The project has the specific aim of exploring the critical question of how contemporary collaborative art projects conducted at these key archaeological sites can enable a renewed engagement with this ancient heritage and history. This project explores the capacity for a form of artistic research that attends to political and social context, and a new aesthetic where the heritage of ancient Mesopotamia—a region known as “the cradle of civilization”—is reclaimed for Iraq’s current traumatic identity, and for its people’s future.

The project is led by Iraqi-British artist and academic Hanaa Malallah, who has lived in London since 2007 and works in collaboration with the following Iraqi artists at specific ancient sites inside Iraq:

- The Ziggurat at Ancient Nippur/Nuffar/Al-Qadisiyah. With Fatimah Jawdet.
- The Ziggurat at Ancient Ur/Tell al-Muqayyar/Dhi Qar. With Reyah Abd Al-Redah.
- The Ruins of Ancient Babylon/Hillah/Babil. With Mohammed Abd Alwasi.
- Kahlu/Nimrud/Nineveh. With Rozghar Mustafa.
- Iraq Museum, Baghdad. With Betoul Mahdey.

Project Founder/Research Director: Dr. Hanaa Malallah

Project Partner: Dr. Mo Throp

Project Team:

Archaeological Adviser: Prof. Zainab Bahrani

Assistant Researcher: Annie Webster

Iraqi Artists: Fatimah Jawdet, Reya Abd Al-Redah, Rozghar Mustafa, Betoul Mahdey,
Mohammed Abd Alwasi

Exhibition Curator: Dr. Kiersten Neumann

Exhibition Webpage: isac.uchicago.edu/artifacts

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