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Google Arts & Culture

WORLD MONUMENTS FUND AND GOOGLE ARTS & CULTURE LAUNCH ONLINE PLATFORM FOR THREATENED IRAQI HERITAGE

Drone footage, 3D models bring dozens of cultural heritage sites at risk to your fingertips

*****Embargoed until Tuesday, June 5th, 6am EST*****

(New York, NY, June 5, 2018) -- World Monuments Fund and Google Arts & Culture today announced the launch of an online platform via Google Arts & Culture that showcases the unique stories of Iraq's endangered heritage sites and the extraordinary efforts to preserve them. The platform allows anyone, anywhere, the opportunity to experience a diverse range of sites, from the earliest settlements of ancient Mesopotamia, to the great 18th and 19th century cities of trade.

In recent years, Iraq's cultural heritage has been particularly impacted by conflict, from the US-led invasion in 2003, to the explosion of Mosul's al-Nuri mosque by ISIS in 2017. Other factors including changing environmental conditions, neglect, and lack of resources have affected many of the country's iconic sites. Because of Iraq's long history of human habitation, its heritage uniquely reflects vast multicultural influences – from Assyrians and Babylonians, to Armenians, Jews, Christians, and Muslims, to name just a few.

The digital collaboration launches with eight online exhibitions that incorporate drone footage, new 3D models, imagery, architectural drawings, and expert video and audio interviews to explore the country's most treasured sites and World Monuments Fund's work to conserve them. Visitors can explore the northern Kurdish region to Mosul via sites of Hatra, Nimrud, Nineveh, and the destroyed al-Hadba' Minaret. Venturing further south, visitors can learn how physical restoration and digital documentation work is being carried out in ancient Babylon and Borsippa. Detail is provided to users to explore and learn about the country's rich history and its heritage at risk.

“Iraq is brimming with extraordinary cultural heritage sites that many have heard of, but few will have the opportunity to visit,” said Joshua David, President and CEO, World Monuments Fund. “This exciting, interactive platform allows us to bring heritage conservation to your fingertips, including sites previously known to only a few. We are thrilled to partner with Google Arts & Culture to share these places and their stories with the world.”

“We’re honored to have collaborated with World Monuments Fund to promote the diverse and historically-significant stories of heritage preservation across Iraq,” said Chance Coughenour, Program Manager at Google Arts & Culture. “Now on Google Arts & Culture, you can learn about physical preservation work at iconic locations such as Babylon and the free-standing arch at Ctesiphon, an amazing example of ancient architecture.”

Much of WMF’s work grows from its biennial advocacy campaign, the World Monuments Watch, which has included six sites in Iraq since its launch in 1996 – including Amedy, Babylon, Erbil Citadel, and most recently, al-Hadba’ Minaret. Thanks to the support of founding sponsor American Express, the Watch works with local communities to bring their treasured cultural heritage sites – either facing daunting threats or presenting unique conservation opportunities – to an international stage.

For more, visit the platform [HERE](#).

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About World Monuments Fund

World Monuments Fund is the leading independent organization devoted to saving the world’s treasured places. For more than 50 years, working in over 100 countries, its highly skilled experts have applied proven and effective techniques to the preservation of important architectural and cultural heritage sites around the globe. Through partnerships with local communities, funders, and governments, WMF seeks to inspire an enduring commitment to stewardship for future generations. Headquartered in New York City, the organization has offices and affiliates worldwide. Visit www.wmf.org for more information, or connect with us on www.facebook.com/worldmonuments, www.twitter.com/worldmonuments, and instagram.com/worldmonumentsfund.

About Google Arts & Culture

[Google Arts & Culture](#) is a new, immersive way to experience art, history, culture and world wonders from over a thousand organizations worldwide. Google Arts & Culture has been created by the Google Cultural Institute and it is available for free for everyone on [the web](#), on [iOS](#) and [Android](#). Read more [here](#).

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