

## ***Cultures in the Crossfire: Stories from Syria and Iraq***

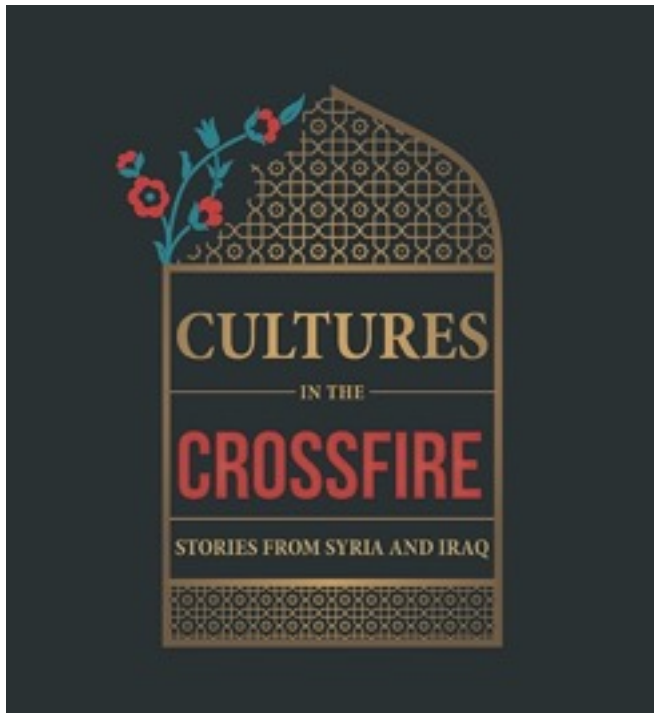
Opening Saturday, April 8, 2017 through November 26, 2018

Penn Museum

3260 South Street

Philadelphia, PA 19104

[www.penn.museum](http://www.penn.museum)



Created in conjunction with the Museum's Penn Cultural Heritage Center, this new exhibition sheds light on the ongoing destruction of cultural heritage in the Middle East by showing what's at stake—the rich history of the region and the diversity of its people—and what's being done to prevent the loss of this history and cultural identity. More than 50 objects, ancient art and artifacts largely drawn from the Penn Museum's extensive Near East collection, help tell stories of the cultures of Syria and Iraq over time. Contemporary artwork from Issam Kourbaj, a Syrian artist based in England, provides an art intervention—a modern-day response to the artifacts and some of the exhibition themes: diverse peoples and religions, intellectual and cultural achievements, and the movement and displacement of objects and people in the crossfire. The exhibition features work being done by the University of Pennsylvania and the Smithsonian Institution in conjunction with individuals and groups in the Middle East to help combat the loss of irreplaceable cultural heritage in that region.

The Museum's popular *In the Artifact Lab* conservation exhibition and program, closed January through April 7, 2017 during the neighboring installation of *Cultures in the Crossfire*, also reopens, with a new title, *The Artifact Lab: Conservation in Action*, and an expanded focus. Museum conservators will be concentrating on ancient art and artifacts of the Middle East, working on objects in a lab behind glass, with open window times when guests can ask questions several times each day.

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