

# Art & War

## Responses to Iraq

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This report stems from a research project conducted by Dr Alan Ingram at UCL Department of Geography, with support from a British Academy Mid-Career Fellowship for the academic year 2011-2012.

As well as contributing to academic knowledge and debates, the project aims to inform broader discussions about the war in the period surrounding the tenth anniversary of the invasion.

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Project blog: <http://responsestoiraq.wordpress.com/>

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## 1. Introduction

This short report considers the responses of artists and art institutions in the UK to the 2003 invasion and subsequent occupation of Iraq.

This report aims to present for the first time an overview of these responses. It aims to show that their range and nature is more diverse than is often appreciated and, by presenting this diversity, to enable more informed reflection on the entanglement of art and war in relation to Iraq.

The first section provides a timeline of exhibitions, events and works connected with the war. While not comprehensive, this provides an initial sense of the timing, scope and nature of responses by artists and art institutions. While it focuses on things that have happened in the UK, it includes a small number of art works and exhibitions mounted overseas by artists who are based here. [I am happy to receive suggestions of further things that should be included]

The second part of the report outlines some questions and themes as possible starting points for discussion. These are not necessarily prescriptive; different people will identify and prioritise different issues and questions, and exploring these differences is a goal of the project. Artists and curators may wish to talk about their own work, or to branch out into broader questions surrounding art and the war. However, the following summary may be useful in understanding where the project is coming from.

The selection of issues and themes suggested in section three of the report reflects an interest in exploring: 1) how the war has been presented within art from a variety of different experiences and standpoints, via a range of different practices; 2) how this has been mediated by institutions and the wider politics of the 'art world'; and 3) the ripple effects of art beyond the limits of the art world.

Underpinning these questions is an interest in how geographic space is experienced and constructed, socially, politically, culturally, emotionally and materially, as familiar or unfamiliar, homely or foreign, secure or threatening.

The project is informed by a concern for how artists and art institutions in the UK have addressed the question of responsibility for the war and its effects on the people and places who have been most affected by it.

Finally, how might art made in response to the war help us to think differently about peace?

A final project report reflecting discussions of these issues will be published in mid-2013.

Please send comments to [a.ingram@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:a.ingram@ucl.ac.uk).

## 2. Timeline of exhibitions, events and works

2003

**Our Life in Pieces: Objects and Stories from Iraqis in Exile** This exhibition, which was organised by Act Together at Diorama Gallery in London, aimed to dispel the idea that Iraq could be equated with Saddam Hussein. The exhibition, which was planned for over a year before the war started, opened in early March 2003 and presented objects and stories by Iraqis who had responded to an invitation to contribute a meaningful artefact associated in some way with Iraq. <http://arts.guardian.co.uk/pictures/0,,924787,00.html> See also discussion by co-curator Nadjie Al-Ali in [www.worksanddays.net/2011/File07.Ali-Ali,%20N,%207.pdf](http://www.worksanddays.net/2011/File07.Ali-Ali,%20N,%207.pdf).

**Anti-war protests** A wide array of art created by demonstrators as well as recognised artists was an intrinsic part of the anti-war protests of 15th February 2003, widely considered to be the largest in British history. Particularly prominent were placards with the iconic NO design in black typography on a white background with red splatters evoking blood, created by the distinguished artist-designer David Gentleman and replicated for later protests with slogans such as 'No more lies', 'Bliar' and 'Troops Out'. <http://blog.eyemagazine.com/?p=2961>

**before. after. now: Visions of Iraq** This exhibition at the Deluxe Gallery, Hoxton, curated by Rashad Selim brought together artists from Iraq (including Hana Malallah, Karim Rissin, Nazar Yahya and Shamsi Al-Din Amin) and Iraqi artists living in the UK (including Jananne al-Ani, Alaa Siraih, Dia Azzawi, Koutaiba al-Janabi and Rebwar). The exhibition was described as the first to show in the UK new art made in Iraq since the beginning of the war. <http://www.undo.net/it/mostra/15580>

**Expressions of Hope** This exhibition at Aya Gallery in London brought together work by Iraqi artists including Adalat, Leila Kubba, Saadi Dawood and Rebwar in response to events in Iraq, with the aim of motivating people positively and inspiring them with hope for a more positive future. <http://www.ayagallery.co.uk/4666.html>

**Drift Topography** This installation by Thomas Hirschorn, which comprises a square arrangement of cardboard cutouts of soldiers 'guarding' a city made from boxes, card, cotton wool and foil, was acquired by the Tate in 2004. <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/hirschhorn-drift-topography-t11885>

2004

**Pax Britannica** This exhibition at the Aquarium gallery showed responses to war by a range of artists, designers and cartoonists including David Gentleman, Jamie Reid, Banksy, Peter Kennard, Martin Rowson and Steve Bell. 96

editions of a portfolio containing prints signed by the artists were produced and (owing largely to the inclusion of the rare Banksy work 'Wrong War') now sell for around £10 000. Images of many of the works are also reproduced in *Stop the War: A Graphic History* (London: Francis Boutle 2011).

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/books/gallery/2011/dec/13/stop-the-war-a-graphic-history-in-pictures>

**Black Rain: Reflections of War** A collaborative project by Sadiq Toma, Yousif Naser, Satta Hashem and poet Fawzi Karim, *Black Rain* stemmed from a meeting of UK-based exiled Iraqi poets, writers and artists one week before the start of the war. An exhibition took place at the Charnwood Museum in Loughborough. Yousif Naser has continued to work on a series of paintings under the title *Black Rain*, which have been exhibited periodically in the UK and abroad.

**Award** A series of works by kennardphillipps responding to the creation of the Global War on Terror Medal by George W. Bush in March 2003 and the Iraq Medal by the Ministry of Defence in 2004, which was exhibited at City Hall, London. <http://www.kennardphillipps.com/tag/award/>

2005

**War on War Room** The *War on War Room* was created by kennardphillipps (a collaboration between Peter Kennard and Cat Picton-Phillipps) for the East International '05 festival at Norwich Gallery. In response to a call for proposals by curator Gustav Metzger, the artists transferred their studio equipment and practices to the gallery to enable visitors to participate in the production of work that could be transmitted "via the airwaves, internet or television stations". During the project the artists filmed a 'STOP' poster they had placed on the boundary fence of Lakenheath air base, as a war plane took off over them. <http://www.kennardphillipps.com/east-05-war-on-war>

**An Illustrator in Iraq** An exhibition of work by Matthew Cook from two tours of Iraq, one as an illustrator for the *Times* newspaper and one as a member of the Territorial Army, at the Coningsby Gallery, London.

<http://www.coningsbygallery.com/exhibition/matthew-cook-an-illustrator-in-iraq-october-2005>

**War Artists in the Middle East** An exhibition at the Imperial War Museum London, drawn from its own collection and showing work from the First World War to Afghanistan and Iraq.

2006

**100 000 Drops of Blood** In February 2006 David Gentleman created a work which consisted of 100 000 red circles on white card, representing people killed by the invasion and occupation, laid out across Parliament Square.

[www.thecnj.com/review/2009/081309/books081309\\_04.html](http://www.thecnj.com/review/2009/081309/books081309_04.html)

**Word into Art** This British Museum exhibition, which explored the use of writing in contemporary art from the Middle East and North Africa, included a number of works by Iraqi artists (including Maysaloun Faraj, Dia Azzawi, Satta Hashem, Rashad Selim, Walid Siti, Kareem Risan) addressing or alluding to current and previous political conflicts.

[http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/online\\_tours/museum\\_and\\_exhibition/word\\_into\\_art/word\\_into\\_art.aspx](http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/online_tours/museum_and_exhibition/word_into_art/word_into_art.aspx)

**Tears of the Ancient City** An exhibition at Leighton House in London, *Tears of the Ancient City* presented work painted since 2003 by Suad al Attar in response to the invasion of Iraq.

**Black Rain** A new exhibition of paintings by Yousif Naser in the ongoing Black Rain series, at the Ark Space in London.

**Untitled Iraq** exhibition of large canvases mounted on scaffolding poles by kennardphillips at Photofusion, Brixton. <http://www.kennardphillips.com/untitled-iraq-2006/>

**Obscenity** Exhibition of work by kennardphillips against the Iraq war and Israeli intervention in Lebanon. <http://www.kennardphillips.com/category/exhibitions/page/2/>

**Santa's Ghetto** kennardphillips' work *Photo Op*, showing an image of Tony Blair taking a mobile phone picture of himself against the backdrop of a burning oilfield, was shown in the window of this temporary exhibition on Oxford Street around Christmas 2006. <http://www.kennardphillips.com/category/exhibitions/page/2/>

2007

**State Britain** In 2006, acting under newly-passed legislation, police dismantled and removed much of the display that had been assembled on Parliament Green by anti-war protestor Brian Haw. The artist Mark Wallinger responded to this development by recreating the display (with the title *State Britain*) within the Duveen Galleries in Tate Britain, a short distance away. As he related, "it became quite a simple matter really of making something visible that the authorities had made invisible". In 2007 Wallinger was awarded the Turner Prize for the work. <http://www.tate.org.uk/britain/exhibitions/wallinger/>

**Queen & Country** In May 2003 Steve McQueen was commissioned by the Imperial War Museum to create a work responding to the war. Following a trip to Basra with UK armed forces and a period of reflection, McQueen proposed that soldiers killed in Iraq be commemorated in a series of official stamps issued by the Royal Mail. Working with service members' families, who chose a favourite photographic portrait of their loved one to be used in the project, McQueen produced a series of facsimile postage stamp sheets, displayed in a wooden case. The

display subsequently toured a series of galleries and institutions around the country and in 2010 was exhibited at the National Portrait Gallery. A campaign led by the Art Fund, pushing for the proposal to be adopted by the Royal Mail, ended without success in 2010. Queen and Country was again exhibited at Gold Thread Gallery in Belfast in 2012. [http://www.artfund.org/queenandcountry/Queen\\_and\\_Country.html](http://www.artfund.org/queenandcountry/Queen_and_Country.html)

**Blairaq** Staged at the Leonard St. Gallery in Hoxton around the time of the resignation of Prime Minister Tony Blair, Blairaq showed work made by kennardphillips against the Iraq war and the war on terror. <http://www.kennardphillips.com/blairaq> <http://www.socialistworker.co.uk/art.php?id=12201>

**Memorial to the Iraq War** While memorials are conventionally constructed some years after conflict has ended and following long deliberation, the ICA hosted a challenging and provocative exhibition curated by Mark Sladen that asked contributing artists to create proposals for memorials to the Iraq war while it was still taking place. For the exhibition, artists including Jalal Toufic, Jeremy Deller, Liam Gillick, Lida Abdul and Sam Durant produced a series of installations, images, models, sketches and videos that addressed the war, some directly, others more allusively. <http://www.ica.org.uk/13499.twl>

**Iraq Triptych** Sculptor Michael Sandle's work depicted scenes from Iraq in two panels, with the centre occupied by an image of Tony and Cherie Blair emerging from No.10 Downing Street as if in the Garden of Eden. Awarded the Royal Academy's Hugh Casson Prize for Drawing, the work received widespread media coverage in the UK and beyond. <http://www.thedrawinggallery.com/drawPop.asp?id=89>

**Truth or Consequences** This work by pop artist and former army officer Gerald Laing is a painting that, when viewed from different angles, reveals two alternate scenes: George Bush and the bombing of Baghdad; and Tony Blair and the No.30 London bus destroyed by a suicide bomber on 7th July 2005. It was acquired by the National Army Museum and went on display there on the second anniversary of the London bombings, causing controversy. <http://www.geraldlaing.com/index.php/work/warpaintings/P12/>

**Sophisticated Ways: Destruction of an Ancient City** A joint exhibition of work by Hanaa Malallah and Rashad Selim at Aya Gallery, London, addressing the destruction of Baghdad. <http://www.ayagallery.co.uk/4666.html>

**Open Shutters Iraq** This project presented photo-stories created by Iraqi women in collaboration with photographer Eugenie Dolberg, in which they explored how the war had affected their lives, the places where they lived and their newly-constrained experiences of space. Open Shutters Iraq was exhibited on Queens Walk on

London's South Bank in 2007 and again at the Gold Thread Gallery in Belfast in 2012.  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle\\_east/7022167.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/middle_east/7022167.stm)

**Green Zone/Red Zone** Taking place at Gemak in Den Haag, this exhibition included work by Hana Malallah, kennardphillips, Open Shutters Iraq and Rashad Selim, who was also artist-in-residence for the programme and who performed a number of street interventions using graffiti and a road sign constructed for this purpose.  
[http://issuu.com/robertk1/docs/borders\\_single\\_pages\\_lo-res1](http://issuu.com/robertk1/docs/borders_single_pages_lo-res1)

2008

**Riding on Fire: Iraqi Art Under Occupation** This exhibition at Artiquea in London showed work by Iraqi artists living in Iraq, including Nijm Alqaisy, Ali Rissan, Sattar Darwish and Qassem Sabti. As the gallery described, "Despite the hurdles and hazards, these artists managed to remain creatively active and engaged in a very hostile environment and produced a stunning array of work". <http://www.artiquea.co.uk/page.html?id=4>

**Iraq's Past Speaks to the Present** From late 2008 to early 2009 the British Museum ran a major exhibition entitled Babylon: Myth and Reality that explored the role played by Babylon in cultural imaginations and the historical evidence uncovered by archaeological work. Alongside this ran a smaller, complementary exhibition of contemporary artists, ten from Iraq and one from Syria (including Dia Azzawi, Hanaa Malallah, Walid Siti and Satta Hashem), who were working with the cultural heritages of Mesopotamia and responding to current events.  
[http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/galleries/middle\\_east/room\\_34\\_the\\_islamic\\_world/iraq%E2%80%99s\\_past.aspx](http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/galleries/middle_east/room_34_the_islamic_world/iraq%E2%80%99s_past.aspx)

**Fourth Plinth** In 2008 a Commission charged with shortlisting artists and selecting works to be installed on the vacant 'Fourth Plinth' in London's Trafalgar Square invited Jeremy Deller to submit a proposal. He suggested two works, one of which was to be the remains of a bombed out car taken from Iraq entitled *Spoils of War (Memorial for an Unknown Civilian)*, the other a life-like sculpture of Dr David Kelly, the UK government scientist who had been a weapons inspector in Iraq and who died in 2003 following exposure of his contacts with journalists. Neither was selected for display. [http://www.jeremydeller.org/plinth/plinth\\_menu.htm](http://www.jeremydeller.org/plinth/plinth_menu.htm)

**Small/Medium/Large Man/Woman/Child** In response to a commission from Safle/National Eisteddfod of Wales, Rabab Gazhoul asked members of the public to research places in Iraq and to write about their experience of doing the research. She reproduced extracts from their text on t-shirts with an "I heart" design, followed by the names of Iraqi cities. <http://www.axisweb.org/seCVWK.aspx?ARTISTID=14080>

**The Incommensurable Banner** Presented as part of the Brighton Photo Biennial curated by Julian Stallabrass, this work by Thomas Hirschorn reproduced numerous images of bodies destroyed by weaponry in the wars in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Middle East on a sheet, suspended in the Fabrica gallery. The work was shielded behind a screen, which visitors had to circumvent in order to see the work, having been warned by posters of the nature of the exhibit. <http://www.arrabbit.com/uk/events/event&event=6310>

**Mass** was a performance work made by Anne Bean with local women in Iraqi Kurdistan with support from Adalet Garmiany and ArtRole. <http://www.annebean.net/past-projects/2001-2010/54>

**Casting a Dark Democracy** was an exhibition by sculptor Tim Shaw, which had as its centrepiece a monumental sculpture of the hooded figure from Abu Ghraib installed in a dark room filled with smoky haze and oppressive noise, facing a reflective pool of oil in the middle of a sandy floor. <http://www.timshawsculptor.com/democracy.htm>

**Black Words Red Ink** A calligraphic installation by Mustafa Ja'far shown at the Menier Gallery in London, which recalled and explored the artist's experience of the war since 2003. <http://www.incia.co.uk/4775.html>

**A Process of Resistance** An exhibition of work made by kennardphillipps against the Iraq War, shown at Ink'd in Brighton. <http://www.kennardphillipps.com/iraq-a-process-of-resistance/>

2009

**Reel Iraq** was the first in the series of Reel Festivals, which aim to spread awareness of areas in conflict beyond the headlines, to empower cultural figures, encourage engagement with the arts and international issues and encourage dialogue. The festival was based in Edinburgh and brought film makers, writers, artists, lecturers and musicians from or working on Iraq together as part of an extensive programme, which focused on film but included music and the exhibition of works by artists including Wafa Bilal, Adalet Garmiany, Hana Malallah and Rashad Selim. <http://www.reelfestivals.org/previous-festivals/>

**Conflicts of Interest** Part of the National Army Museum, *Conflicts of Interest* is a new gallery examining Britain's role in conflicts worldwide since 1969, including the Iraq wars of 1990-1991 and 2003-2009. The Iraq displays include art works (including paintings by John Keane), artifacts from Iraq (including a portrait of Saddam Hussein and a Darth Vader-style Fedayeen helmet) and military equipment, contemporary media coverage, audio testimony by soldiers and Iraqis and background information on the role of British forces. <http://www.nam.ac.uk/exhibitions/online-exhibitions/conflicts-interest/gulf>  
<http://www.nam.ac.uk/exhibitions/online-exhibitions/conflicts-interest/iraq>

**Unveiled: New Art from the Middle East** This exhibition at Saatchi Gallery in London included two Iraqi artists, Ahmed Alsoudani and Halim Al-Karim, whose work explores Iraq's violent political history and more recent events. <http://www.saatchi-gallery.co.uk/artists/unveiled/>

**More paintings about war and religion** An exhibition of paintings by John Keane at Flowers East, London, with works addressing the violence of the war in Iraq and the war on terror. <http://www.johnkeaneart.com/intelligent.html>

**20:50** Following visits to Iraqi Kurdistan with ArtRole and artist Adalet Garmiany, sculptor Richard Wilson recreated his work 20:50 (a version of which has been permanently exhibited in Saatchi Galleries since 1991), comprised of a room full of engine oil contained in a metal enclosure, forming a dark reflecting pool, in the former "Red Jail", now an arts centre, in Sulaymaniyah.

**War Veteran Vehicle** Exhibited in public spaces in London as part of the Abandon Normal Devices festival, Krzysztof Wodiczko, War Veteran Vehicle was a text based video projection, accompanied by an audio recording, mounted on an adapted Humvee. The work, completed in collaboration with the charity Combat Stress, projected text taken from interviews with veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars, in which they described their experiences of returning to civilian life, onto the sides of buildings, accompanied by the sound of machine gun fire. <http://www.artplayer.tv/video/39/war-veteran-vehicle-krzysztof-wodiczko>

**The Nature of the Beast** A project by Goshka Macuga undertaken for The Bloomberg Commission at Whitechapel Gallery, *The Nature of the Beast* involved the display of a tapestry of Pablo Picasso's work *Guernica*, which had been shown at the gallery in 1939 to raise funds for the Republican forces in the Spanish Civil War. The work also referenced an episode outside the UN Security Council chamber in 2003, when the *Guernica* tapestry that hung outside was covered by a blue curtain prior to a press conference by Colin Powell, following his notorious speech asserting the threat posed by Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. As well as the tapestry, the space included a round discussion table and a bust of Powell holding a test tube, based on a scene from his presentation. The space was made available to groups to hold their own discussions there. <http://www.whitechapelgallery.org/exhibitions/the-bloomberg-commission-goshka-macuga-the-nature-of-the-beast>

**Re-piano** An ongoing work by Rashad Selim in which old pianos, recalling the destroyed instruments shown in photographs from the war, are renovated, adapted and used in a variety of ways. One work, the Geo-piano, has been adapted to play scales from musical systems around the world. <http://www.janetradyfineart.com/html/artistresults.asp?artist=111>

**Boats and Burdens: Kites and Shattered Dreams** An exhibition at Aya Gallery of paintings and ceramics by Maysaloun Faraj, dedicated to women of Iraq in the past, present and future.

**Frontlines: Images from Iraq** An exhibition at Frost and Reed gallery, London of work by Arabella Dorman, based on time spent embedded with British forces in Iraq.

**The invisible enemy should not exist (recovered, missing, stolen series)** is a work created by Chicago-based artist Michael Rakowitz in 2007 that was exhibited as part of Transmission Interrupted at Modern Art Oxford in 2009. The work recreated artefacts from the Iraqi National Museum (which was looted after the invasion) using newspapers and food packaging. According to the artist, the title of the work is a direct translation of the name of the processional way that led through the Ishtar Gate, excavated and removed to Berlin in the early twentieth century and later rebuilt by the Iraqi government. <http://michaelrakowitz.com/projects/the-invisible-enemy-should-not-exist/> <http://www.modernartoxford.org.uk/whats-on/transmission-interrupted/additional-resources/>

2010

**Contemporary Art Iraq** This show at the Cornerhouse in Manchester was described as "The first comprehensive UK exhibition of new and recent contemporary art from Iraq since the first Gulf War, examining practices that are emerging with fresh perspectives from a culture marked by conflict and turmoil." The exhibition showed work by 19 artists based in Iraq, many from Iraqi Kurdistan, in collaboration with ArtRole, an organisation seeking to build links between the UK and Iraq via arts development. ArtRole has also organised exhibitions involving UK-based artists in Iraqi Kurdistan. <http://www.cornerhouse.org/art/art-exhibitions/contemporary-art-iraq>

**Display of 'Baghdad Car'** at the Imperial War Museum London, Imperial War Museum North, Manchester and Hayward Gallery, London In September 2010 the remains of a car destroyed in a suicide truck bombing of the al-Mutanabbi Street book market in Baghdad went on display in the atrium of the Imperial War Museum London. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/gallery/2010/sep/09/jeremy-deller-baghdad-car-bomb> Though the IWM insisted the wreck was not an art work, it had been accepted into the IWM collection on the initiative of the Turner Prize-winning artist Jeremy Deller, who had used it in a project and series of linked exhibitions in the US. Deller's name also appeared on the plinth on which it was displayed and though he also insisted that it was not an art work, it has often been regarded as one. The exhibit was also included in a mid-career retrospective of Deller's career at the Hayward Gallery in 2012. <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/reviews/jeremy-deller-joy-in-people-hayward-gallery-london-7440761.html> Repeating an approach used with the car in the US, Deller invited people from Iraq, people with Iraq-related expertise and people who had been to the country to appear with the car and engage visitors in discussion. The car then returned to go on display at the Imperial Museum North in Salford.

**The worst condition is to pass under a sword which is not one's own** Exhibited at Tate Modern's Level 2 Gallery, this project by Michael Rakowitz explored "links between western science fiction and military-industrial activities in Iraq during and after Saddam Hussein's regime." <http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/exhibition/level-2-gallery-michael-rakowitz> The exhibition included a display comparing a Fedayeen helmet with those of Samurai and Darth Vader.

**A Short Film About War** is "a narrative documentary artwork" made entirely from material found online, which was shown as an installation as part of the MyWar exhibition at FACT in Liverpool. Taking the form of a two-channel video with audio track, the work begins with a soldier about to be deployed to Iraq, touches down in Iraq in the middle of the war, and ends as it started. <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/slade/slide/docs/warfilm.html>

**Behind the Lines in Basra** Exhibition of work by Xavier Pick based on time spent with British forces in Basra in the run up to their withdrawal. <http://www.drawing-research-network.org.uk/xavier-pick-solo-show/>

2011

**Chilcot** kennardphillips created work to coincide with Tony Blair's second appearance at the Chilcot Inquiry into the war in January 2011, comprising a projected street intervention with Beverley Carpenter and Rob Birtch (<http://www.kennardphillips.com/tag/chilcot/>) and a large photomontage with which they protested outside the inquiry building. <http://www.kennardphillips.com/tag/chilcott/>

**War is Over** In this work the photographer Heydar Dewachi marked the withdrawal of US combat troops from Iraq with a photo-essay commemorating the 2003 anti-war protests in London. <http://www.dewachi.com/2011/12/war-is-over/>

**New Art from Iraq** was presented by The Young Mesopotamians (an initiative aiming to connect contemporary Iraqi artists with teachers and students in Iraq) with at 30 St. Mary's Axe (better known as The Gherkin) on 11th July 2011 and showed works by Nedim Kufi, Sadik Kwaish Alfraji and Hanaa Malallah.

**Shadow Sites II** This film work by Jananne Al-Ani explores the role abstracted aerial images of the landscape have played in the representation of the Middle East. Though only the 'Desert Storm', 1990-1991 war is referenced directly, the work clearly also relates to other conflicts, including the most recent war. <http://edgeofarabia.com/artists/jananne-al-ani>

**Elegy to my Trapped City** This large mural by London-based Dia Al-Azzawi represents the post-2003 destruction of Iraq. The work, which echoes Azzawi's *Sabra and Shatila* (1982-3) and Picasso's *Guernica*, was first exhibited at

Meem Gallery in Dubai and went on display again in 2012, shortly after *Sabra and Shatila* was acquired and exhibited by Tate Modern. <http://www.artnet.com/artwork/426226941/425216710/dia-azzawi-elegy-to-my-trapped-city.html>

2012

**2Years2Wars** An exhibition at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire of work made by serving soldier Douglas Farthing based on his experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan.  
[www.douglasfarthingart.co.uk/images/2years2wars.pdf](http://www.douglasfarthingart.co.uk/images/2years2wars.pdf)

**Iraq: When, Where, For Whom?** This collaborative exhibition at Mosaic Rooms in London brought together work by Hanaa Malallah and kennardphillipps that responded to the Iraq war, questioning the claims on which it was based. <http://www.mosaicrooms.org/iraq-how-where-for-whom/>

**Drawn to Danger** This exhibition at the Snibston Museum in Leicestershire presented the work of five war artists (Matthew Cook, Arabella Dorman, Douglas Farthing, Jules George and Steve Pratt) all connected with the British armed forces. Though the exhibition focused on Afghanistan, three of the artists (Cook, Dorman and Farthing) had also visited and made work about Iraq. <http://www.eastmidlandssfca.co.uk/news/rfca/2012/may/drawn-danger-art-exhibition-snibston-discovery-museum-offers-discount-admission>

**Black Rain** Works from Yousif Naser's series of paintings were presented at the Iraqi Cultural Centre in London in September 2012.

### 3. Questions and themes

- In what ways did artists respond initially to the war? How was their work mediated and exhibited by institutions and more generally in the public sphere? What kinds of works and interventions have had a notable impact or reception? What has been particularly significant?
- To what extent has art work emerged and circulated within particular 'communities of sense', for example within networks associated with 'Iraqi art', 'political/anti-war art', 'contemporary art' and '(official) war art'? What consequences does this have for how art is made, received and discussed? What points of interaction, connection and collaboration have there been?
- How did the responses of artists and institutions shift as the war continued? Did institutions become more open to work dealing with the war? Why have some kinds of work received greater institutional and critical recognition than others?
- What kinds of ways of imagining and engaging with the world, with people, places, objects and events, are evident in artistic responses to the war? How has Iraq been presented as a place, in terms of landscape, cartography and urban space? In what ways have artists engaged with Iraq as home, or as a place that is foreign? How has Iraq been presented on the basis of personal experience and meaning, from exile, or via the media? How has art sought to 'bring the war home'?
- What have been the politics of presenting the violence, destruction and ruins of the war? Are some people more entitled than others to represent the war? To what extent have appropriation or 'speaking for the other' been at issue? What is left invisible in artistic responses to the Iraq war? To what extent are debates about Orientalism relevant to these questions?

- What role have different kinds of art work played within the politics of the war? How has art sought to express or communicate the impact of the war on the people and places of Iraq? How has it worked within anti-war actions and movements? How successful have artists been in engaging, eliciting or complicating people's feelings about the war?
- How has art played into shifting relationships between the British military, state and public in relation to foreign interventions, or in relation to the formation of the Iraqi state? How has art addressed questions of responsibility for the war, and its effects on those people and places most affected?
- Can art practice and an engagement with art made in response to the war help us to think differently about peace? What does peace mean in the context of Iraq today and Britain's ongoing involvement in military interventions overseas? To what extent does art need to escape the frames of 'war' and 'peace' in order to achieve its effects?