

## SAFE HITS GROUND RUNNING AT AIA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

**BOSTON, MA. JANUARY 10, 2005**—Making its first conference debut at the 106th Archaeology Institute of America's Annual meeting, SAFE hit the ground running and never looked back. As early as Day One in the exceptionally well-attended conference, SAFE's booth quickly realized a healthy flow of traffic, signed up a large number of new and enthusiastic members and spread the word far and wide about antiquities looting and the importance of preserving our collective heritage.



The AIA Conference saw over 2,700 scholars and was the most attended meeting in the AIA's 125-year history. SAFE's booth was well organized with eye-catching brochures, peripheral information and running visual aids. Attention to detail and the energy of SAFE Booth Ambassadors were key elements in attracting AIA conference attendees, many of whom joined the organization. The SAFE lapel pin became a popular give away. By the end of the four-day conference, many a lapel sported the familiar SAFE button.

SAFE was the only booth to hold scheduled events with detailed listing and times of special guests/lecturers appearances.

SAFE repeatedly screened the movie, Winner of the 2000 Prix d'Italia, **On the Trail of the Tomb Robbers (Heritage for Sale)**, based on the work of archaeologist Staffan Lunden, an uncompromising portrayal of the illicit antiquities trade and the complicity of Swedish museums.

**Roger Atwood**, author of *Stealing History* signed copies of his book at both the Boston Barnes & Noble and in the SAFE Booth and gave a visual presentation, signed books and answered questions at the booth.

Documentarians and journalists, **Micah Garen and Marie-Helene Carleton** presented images and held a Q&A surrounding Iraq's looting situation. They concluded with ways in which to support and protect sites in the Southern Iraq.

Grafton County Attorney and SAFE member **Rick St. Hilaire** spoke eloquently and passionately about both federal and state criminal laws regarding looted archaeological materials smuggled into the US and the major obstacles prosecutors face in bringing looters to justice.

Professor **John Malcolm Russell**, 2005 Winner of the AIA Outstanding Public Service Award and SAFE's 2004 Honorary Lifetime member, held a presentation discussing looting and conservation issues in Iraq.

Classical archaeologist and SAFE member **Dr. Marina Papa-Sokal** spoke about International legislation for the protection of the world cultural heritage and the US legal response to the illicit trade in antiquities.

A well-attended reception honoring participants in the AIA workshop "Iraq 2004-2005" rounded out the SAFE's conference activities.

### About SAFE

Saving Antiquities for Everyone ([www.savingantiquities.org](http://www.savingantiquities.org)), the volunteer group dedicated to raising public awareness of the importance of preserving cultural heritages worldwide. SAFE is a nonprofit group of professionals in communications, media, and advertising working together with experts in the academic and museum community. SAFE is sponsored by the New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA), a 501(c) (3) corporation. Any contributions made to the Foundation on behalf of SAFE are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

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SAFE has no political affiliations.