

**SAFE HOSTS PRIVATE TOURS OF THE ORIENTAL INSTITUTE MUSEUM WITH DONNY GEORGE, FORMER DIRECTOR OF THE IRAQ MUSEUM IN BAGHDAD**

**Jersey City, NJ. December 12, 2007**– In a treat that Chicago-area art lovers and history buffs will long treasure, the former Director-General of the Iraq Museum in Baghdad, Dr. Donny George, will conduct two behind-the-scenes private tours of the Mesopotamian and Assyrian galleries at the Oriental Institute Museum on the campus at the University of Chicago on Sunday, January 6, 2008 at 1:00pm and 2:30pm.

Dr. George will provide a personal account of his experiences in Iraq, including fieldwork at Babylon, and Nineveh, and will reflect upon the current situation at the Iraq Museum while discussing some of the finest Mesopotamian artifacts in the world, displayed at the Oriental Institute. “This collection is exceptional, because every object has been scientifically excavated and legally and ethically acquired,” says Dr. George. “Rather than treat artifacts as only aesthetic objects, the Oriental Institute functions as a teaching institution. Every object has a provenance.” Dr. George will discuss the crucial distinction between provenanced objects (with verifiable origin and ownership history) and unprovenanced ancient art on display at many museums, which are too-often the result of site looting.

The Donny George Tours of the Oriental Institute Museum are sponsored by the non-profit organization SAFE/Saving Antiquities for Everyone. “We are grateful to Dr. George, who lives in New York, for providing this unique experience for Chicago-area visitors,” says SAFE president Cindy Ho. “He will also open visitors’ eyes to the devastating impact of site looting that occurs not only in Iraq, but around the world.” A portion of the proceeds from ticket sales will be donated to the Oriental Institute Museum. For more information, see <http://www.savingantiquities.org/whatwedosafetoursYoukhanna.php>

**Event Details**

Sunday, January 6, 2008  
Two tours: 1:30pm and 2:30 pm  
Oriental Institute Museum  
The University of Chicago  
1155 East 58th Street, Chicago, IL 60637

Tickets: \$40 for adults, \$15 for students with valid ID  
Oriental Inst. Members receive a \$10 discount

**About SAFE**

SAFE/Saving Antiquities for Everyone, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, creates educational programs and media campaigns to raise public awareness regarding the importance of preserving cultural heritage worldwide. SAFE is a coalition of professionals in communications, media, and advertising working alongside experts in the academic, legal and law enforcement communities. SAFE has no political affiliations.