Dear Friends,

2017 brought exciting opportunities as we expanded across Minnesota and Iraq to new venues, new cities, more exchanges, and expanded aid. Some of our most exciting highlights included premiering our Iraqi Voices’ first play at the prestigious Guthrie Theater in October; screening our Iraqi Voices films at the Vail film festival in Colorado, the Walker Art Center, the MSP International Film Festival among others; and sharing Iraqi wedding traditions with thousands of school children and Minnesotans at the Festival of Nations. We hope you take a look at our overview by the numbers page to see some of the other highlights of 2017. We could not have done this without the support and hard work of our staff, board members, volunteers, artists, participants, and donors. Thank you.

As IARP’s longtime executive director Kathy McKay transitions to her new role as board member emeritus, we are honored to continue her legacy. We are excited about what the future holds. We will continue to build upon this great foundation to welcome refugees and immigrants, empower new voices, and rebuild inclusive communities.

We could not do this without you. We hope to see you soon at our annual potluck, a Books for Mosul event, or somewhere out in the community.

Thank you for your generosity, time and support for making 2017 such a phenomenal year! We hope you join us as we grow beyond 2018 to welcome, empower and rebuild in Minnesota and Iraq.

Sincerely,

Jessica Belt Saem Eldahr
Executive Director

Salam Murtada
Board Chair

IARP PROVIDED OVER 50 ACTIVITIES TO CONNECT AND ENGAGE OVER 53,000 IRAQIS AND AMERICANS.

IARP BOARD OF DIRECTORS
2017

Pictured: Kathy Adam (Secretary), Mohammed Raef Al Azzawi, Muntadher (Ali) Al-Jayashi (Treasurer), Erin Hart, Salam Murtada (Board Chair), Rev. David Smith, Ethan Wilensky-Lanford (Vice-Chair), Jessica Belt Saem Eldahr (Executive Director)

Kathy McKay, Board Member Emeritus
Luke Wilcox, Board Member Emeritus
Steve Clemens, Board Member Emeritus

IARP STAFF:

Jessica Belt Saem Eldahr, Executive Director
Erin Hart, Director of Development and Communications
2017 IMPACT

HUMANITARIAN PROJECTS FOR PEACE
EXPANDED AID

100  Dignity Kits for 100 families who fled ISIS in Mosul
10   Homes winterized in East Mosul

IRAQI ART PROJECT
NEW STORIES, NEW VENUES

1000 Audience members at 13 film screenings and discussions
13   New Iraqi Voices stories
600  Audience members watched premiere of Birds at Guthrie Theater
11   New film and theater venues

EXPANDING ACROSS MINNESOTA + IRAQ

PEOPLE TO PEOPLE
MORE EXCHANGES

09  Gatherings of women’s friendship group
07  Meetings of new interfaith dialogue team
85  Attendees at Ramadan Iftar
100 Attendees at Fall Potluck and Picnic
50K Attendees at the Festival of Nations
600 People at Minneapolis Sister City Day
340 Letters for Peace
STORIES OF COMING TOGETHER

AUDIENCE REACTION TO BIRDS SING DIFFERENTLY HERE

“I wish all Americans could see this kind of performance. It is always important to get to know people and see them as individuals and not just numbers on the news.”

“Thank you for your gracious and fearless gift of vulnerability in the stories. We are all people, but we don't all know each other’s stories. It was great to hear yours. Thank you.”

“I thought this was an incredibly powerful, well-balanced, beautiful and universally affecting experience. Just an amazing job.”

AUDIENCE REACTION TO IRAQI VOICES FILMS TOUR

“The films gave humanity to Iraqi-Americans, not just labeling them as immigrants or refugees, but scientists, engineers, doctors, students, business owners, school board members, and artists.”

“These and the other stories make us see behind the veil of the official narrative, and see beyond the flash of bombs falling behind a reporter’s shoulder.”

WOMEN’S FRIENDSHIP GROUP

“Through the Iraqi and American Reconciliation Project, I have the opportunity to spend time each month with these fun and interesting Iraqi-Minnesotans...These women are educated, cultured, strong and funny. The more we open up to those who are different from us, the richer we and our culture becomes!”

—Non-Iraqi Women’s Friendship group participant

“It is a good opportunity to listen to other parties [beliefs], thoughts, cultures and suggestions to create very wonderful environments of cooperation. We need Americans women to play [influential roles] in introducing Iraqi women to Minnesotan historical and famous places to be aware of, as Minnesota will be their new home.”

—Iraqi Women’s Friendship group participant
2017 FINANCIALS

**REVENUE**

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<td>(monthly donors: $8,511.00)</td>
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**EXPENSES**

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At the heart of our mission, individual supporters, funders, and partners are making a difference with — and through — the Iraqi and American Reconciliation Project. We recognize them here, with enormous appreciation for the change and bridge building we are achieving together.
A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO KATHY MCKAY, FOUNDING MEMBER AND LONGTIME EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

After the start of the Iraq War, Kathy and a group of colleagues started IARP as a way to support a different kind of relationship between the people of Iraq and the US. Kathy and the group set out to build bridges of communication and support between Iraqis and Americans. After ten years as IARP’s volunteer executive director Kathy transitions this year to her new role as board member emeritus.

“Kathy’s hard work and dedication to peaceful togetherness and humanizing reconciliation will always remain with me, as I’m certain it has remained within all the hearts that have had the joy of interacting with her.”

—Irene Gibson, former intern

“Kathy is one of the most generous, caring, and inspiring friends and colleagues I’ve ever known. Her passion and commitment to bringing people together and building connections across cultures had a tremendous impact on many lives in the U.S. and Iraq, including mine.”

—Luke Wilcox, Board Member Emeritus and former IARP Director of Development and Communications

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO TRICIA HEURING, LONGTIME COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT AND IRAQI ART PROJECT CURATOR

Tricia started her work with IARP in 2010 when she began to develop a contemporary art program, bridging American and Iraqi artist perspectives in response to the war and personalizing relationships through art. Tricia led several curatorial projects including group exhibitions: Navigating the Aftermath in 2011; Not About Bombs in 2012; and the National Veteran’s Art Museum in Chicago in 2013. Since 2014, she has supported the Iraqi Voices film and theater programs through art direction, consulting and program evaluation.

We are grateful for Tricia’s years of friendship and invaluable contributions to IARP. We wish her all the best in her next chapter as co-director of Public Functionary, a non-profit contemporary art gallery based in Minneapolis.

DID YOU KNOW WE MOVED?

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