MISMAR FOUNDATION FOR
ARTS & SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
(NGO)

مؤسسة مسمار للفنون
والتنمية المستدامة
منظمة غير حكومية

HOUSE OF ANTIQUES REVITALIZATION PROJECT

BAGHDAD – ABU NUWAS STREET
MISMAR FOUNDATION FOR ARTS & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

1930 – إلى اليوم



A HOUSE THAT CARRIES BAGHDAD'S MEMORY

Built in 1930 on Abu Nuwas Street in central Baghdad, the House of Antiques is a traditional Baghdadi residence of approximately 500 square metres, consisting of two floors, 14 rooms, a traditional Baghdadi courtyard, and a rear garden.

The house belongs to the Al-Almani family, a well-known Baghdadi family with a longstanding interest in antiques and works of art. Over the years, the house became home to a diverse collection of objects including copper, silver and wooden pieces, crystal, paintings, artworks, decorative objects and antiques from different periods and origins.

In 1989, the house officially opened its doors as the House of Antiques, and within a few years became one of Baghdad's recognised cultural and heritage destinations, welcoming visitors interested in art, antiques and Iraqi history, as well as tourists, official delegations and members of the diplomatic community.

Throughout its years of activity, the house received Iraqi, Arab and international figures from the fields of culture, art, media and diplomacy, including British journalist and broadcaster John Simpson.

The House of Antiques also attracted considerable media attention and was featured in Iraqi, Arab and French newspapers and magazines, becoming part of the documented cultural memory of Baghdad and its historic houses.
Its recognition extended beyond the press. The House of Antiques was also featured in a German travel guide to Iraq and Baghdad as one of the city's notable cultural and tourist destinations, reflecting the reputation it had established during its years of operation.





طارق محمد علي طاهر مع جوفا سمبسون المعلق التلفزيوني البريطاني المعروف ولقاء تلفزيوني بين اروقة بيت التحفيات



في صوامع جريدة التآخي العدد ٧٨٩ تاريخ الخميس ٢٧/ تموز/ (١٩٧١) الصادف ٢٩ جمادى الثاني ١٣٩١ هـ





العدد ١٧٨٦ الاربعاء ١٨ تشرين الأول ٢٠٠٢



FROM CLOSURE TO REVIVAL

Following 2004, amid the decline in tourism, international delegations and the wider circumstances Iraq was experiencing at the time, the House of Antiques ceased its activities and remained closed for many years.

During this period, the building showed increasing signs of age and neglect. Moisture affected parts of the structure, sections of the walls and interior details deteriorated, and the rear garden lost much of its original character. A number of antiques, artworks and objects within the collection also required conservation and restoration.

The Mismar Foundation for Arts & Sustainable Development adopted the revitalization of the House of Antiques with the aim of preserving its architectural and heritage identity while returning the building to active use without altering its original character.

The restoration and rehabilitation process extended over approximately three years. Works included moisture treatment, restoration of damaged walls and architectural elements, rehabilitation of interior spaces, and the restoration of the rear garden as an essential part of the house experience.
Preserving the Collection
The project was not limited to the building itself. The revitalization process also included the objects and collections housed within the property, recognising them as an integral part of the house's history and identity. Conservation work included the cleaning and maintenance of copper, silver, wooden and crystal pieces, the care and restoration of picture frames and artworks, and the rehabilitation of objects affected by time and prolonged storage.

Throughout the project, priority was given to preserving as many of the house's original elements and collections as possible, while avoiding interventions that could alter its heritage character or architectural identity. After three years of restoration and conservation work, the House of Antiques regained its role as a cultural and heritage space capable of welcoming visitors and hosting activities once again.





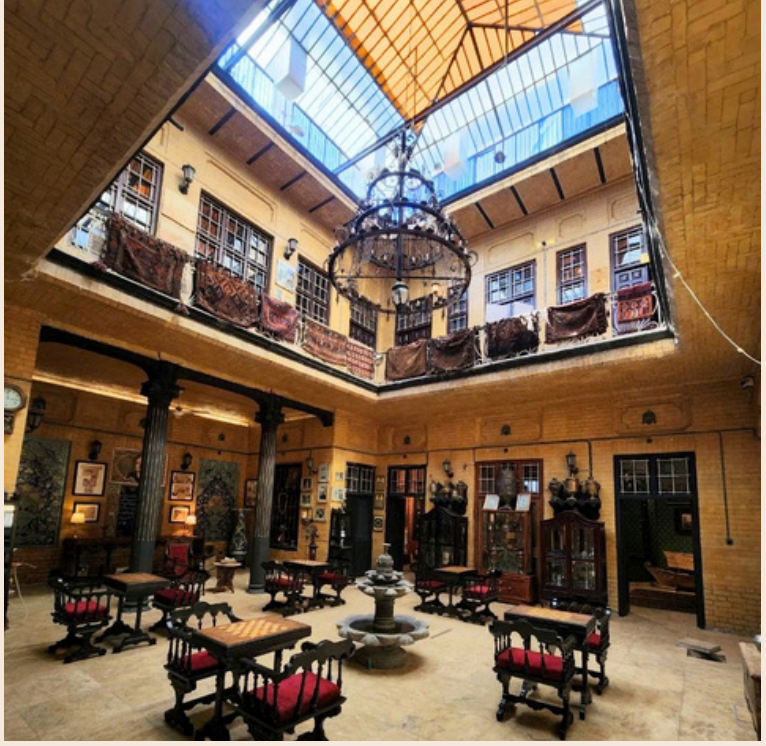




















THE HOUSE OF ANTIQUES TODAY

Following the completion of restoration and rehabilitation works, the House of Antiques returned to life with a renewed cultural purpose that preserves its history while giving the property a sustainable role within the city.

Today, the house welcomes visitors interested in heritage, art and the history of Baghdad. It has also become the headquarters of the Mismar Foundation for Arts & Sustainable Development, providing a space through which the Foundation develops and hosts its cultural programmes and initiatives.

The House of Antiques is used for art exhibitions, workshops, cultural events, gatherings and projects related to art and heritage, while also supporting artists and initiatives that align with the Foundation's vision for the revitalization and adaptive reuse of heritage sites.

DIGITAL PRESENCE OF THE PROJECT

Alongside the physical revitalization of the house, a range of digital solutions was developed to support the management of the project and expand its accessibility.

These include a dedicated website for the House of Antiques, an online store, and a digital booking system for visitors.

This direction reflects Mismar Foundation's approach to combining heritage preservation with contemporary digital tools for documentation, visitor management, public access and the long-term sustainability of cultural sites.

A MODEL FOR HERITAGE REVITALIZATION

The House of Antiques represents a practical model of Mismar Foundation's approach to heritage sites.

For the Foundation, revitalization does not end with the restoration of a building. It extends to the protection of its memory and collections, the creation of a meaningful new function for the property, its reconnection with the community, and the development of a sustainable framework that allows it to remain active into the future.

Mismar Foundation seeks to further develop this model and apply it to other heritage buildings and sites, with the objective of returning life to spaces that form an important part of the collective memory of Iraqi cities.

Revitalizing a place means restoring its role in life, not merely preserving its walls.

