



THE UNIVERSITY OF
SYDNEY

THE HERITAGE OF PALMYRA

THE NEAR EASTERN ARCHAEOLOGY FOUNDATION

SATURDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2015

The Council of the Near Eastern Archaeology Foundation invites you to an important public lecture.

Saturday 19 Sept 2015
CCANESA

(may be moved to a larger room if numbers require)

1.30-5.00 pm

This event is free but a donation via the link to our donation page would be most welcome to assist NEAF's ongoing efforts to support Near Eastern archaeological research and public outreach. No money or credit card payments can be taken on the day.

On-line donations can be made at the NEAF Membership page:

<http://sydney.edu.au/arts/research/neaf/membership.shtml>

RSVP essential by 16 September 2015

Please provide an email address so we can notify you of any venue change

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PUBLIC LECTURE

The Heritage of Palmyra: in honour of Khalid al Asa'ad

The ruins of Palmyra have for centuries been a magnet for travellers. They present an extraordinary blend of Classical and Eastern influences, reflecting a city poised on the interface between the Roman and Persian worlds. The Temple of Bel was one of the great treasures of world archaeology.

Dating from the early period of Rome's presence in Syria the Bel Temple presented an extraordinarily deft mixture of Hellenistic, Roman, Mesopotamian and local Arab influences.

On 30 August 2015 the temple was destroyed in a single blast, apparently resulting from the presence of the forces of self-styled 'Islamic State' in Palmyra since May 2015. Less than two weeks before, the same method was used to remove the main shrine of the Temple of Baal-Shamin, a small temple that had stood since AD 130 and a project that apparently received the endorsement of the Roman Emperor Hadrian during his visit to Palmyra two years before.

The first victim of this onslaught to efface the past, however, was Khaled al-As`ad, the man who as Director of Antiquities at Palmyra had done much to present the site to visitors, to excavate and conserve its remains and to reconstruct many of its city walls. His work made the site much easier to read not only for its Classical-period remains but for the evidence of a continuing history through Byzantine, Umayyad, Ayyubid and Mamluk periods. Khaled al-As`ad was beheaded by the forces of 'Islamic State' in August 2015.

This afternoon of short lectures will honour the memory that Khaled al-As`ad did so much to bring to life and remind us of the extraordinary ruins that so spectacularly sum up the complexities of Syria's past.



SPEAKERS

Dr Kate da Costa (University of Sydney):

Overview of Palmyra and its significance

Dr Peter Edwell (Macquarie University)

Palmyra between Roman and Parthians worlds

Dr Ina Kehrberg (University of Sydney)

The work of archaeologist/architect, Antoni

Ostrasz, at Palmyra

Dr Ross Burns (NEAF and Macquarie University)

Overview of the pattern of destruction in Syria