

WHEN WATERS SPEAK

TOWARDS AN OPEN MUSEUM OF WATER CULTURE

Wednesday 20th December 2023
3,00 – 4,45 pm CET



Abu Sawbat Heritage Boat Club, Chibayish, Iraq (Rashad Salim/© Safina Projects, 2023)

This webinar will bring together an international panel of artists and cultural activists, makers and scholars to discuss the Open Museum Initiative for Water Culture, an art-led project for the protection and revitalization of water heritage in the Fertile Crescent and Arabian Peninsula. From its hub in Basra, at the confluence of the Tigris-Euphrates river system and the Gulf, the Open Museum Initiative reaches out to connect regionally via the flow of the waters and their history and heritage of traditional practices, archaeological and geological remains, and archival records: visual, textual and oral.

The conversation will focus on the historic roles of boats and waterways as a means of movement and relationship between peoples throughout the region; and will explore international examples including Venice as an emerging “open museum” where water heritage is a subject of creative engagement and multidisciplinary study. Participants are invited to consider how, in Iraq and regionally, such heritage can again become a basis for connection and regenerative action in the context of present-day issues, including climate and ecological crisis, cultural rupture and social fragmentation.