

TYPECAST PICTURES PRESENTS
In association with HBO Documentary Films

A Daylight Factory Production

IRAQ IN FRAGMENTS

a documentary by James Longley
2006 | 94 mins



[synopsis]

Iraq In Fragments illuminates post-war Iraq in three acts, building a vivid picture of a country pulled in different directions by religion and ethnicity. Filmed in verité style, with no scripted narration, the film powerfully explores the lives of ordinary Iraqis: people whose thoughts, beliefs, aspirations, and concerns are at once personal and illustrative of larger issues in Iraq today.

Part One follows Mohammed Haithem, an 11-year-old auto mechanic in the mixed Sheik Omar neighborhood in the heart of old Baghdad. With his father missing, Mohammed idolizes his domineering boss, working feverishly for approval and affection. Several years behind in school and waylaid by war's intervention, he's torn between education and apprenticeship. Through Mohammed's eyes we see a growing disenchantment with the U.S.-led occupation, as well as tensions between Shia and Sunni Iraqis. Shown in extreme close-up, Mohammed's Baghdad is a city caught between an idealized past, a dangerous present, and an uncertain future.

Part Two is filmed inside the Shiite political/religious movement of Moqtada Sadr, traveling between Nasariyah and the holy city of Najaf. As tensions mount inside the country, we see the inner workings of Iraqi local politics as the Sadr movement pushes for regional elections and enforces their interpretation of Islamic law. Assuming control over the region, armed Islamicists overtake open markets and imprison suspected merchants of alcohol. Detainees and their impoverished families plead for mercy from this new authority. As the United States provokes an armed uprising among Sadr's followers, moderate views are swept aside.

Part Three follows Iraqi Kurds as they assert their bid for independence, rebelling against the past atrocities of Baghdad rule. We follow these developments through the eyes of brick makers and childhood friends on a farm south of Arbil. An elderly farmer ruminates on his family, his people, and God, mindful of the legacy they all share, while his teenaged son tends sheep and dreams of medical school despite his father's desire that he serve God. We hear voices of independence and nationalism, sentiments secular and religious, revealing a community where politics and faith are personal, public, and forever closely intertwined.

[about the director]

James Longley was born in Oregon in 1972. He studied film at the University of Rochester and Wesleyan University in the United States, and the All-Russian Institute of Cinematography (VGIK) in Moscow. His student documentary, *Portrait of Boy with Dog*, about a boy in a Moscow orphanage, was awarded the Student Academy Award in 1994 by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

After working as a film projectionist in Washington State, an English language teacher in Siberia, a newspaper copy editor in Moscow, and a web designer in New York City, James traveled to Palestine in 2001 to make his first feature documentary, *Gaza Strip*. The film, which takes an intimate look at the lives and views of ordinary Palestinians in Israeli-occupied Gaza, screened to critical acclaim at a number of international film festivals and in several U.S. theaters.

In 2002, James traveled to Iraq to begin pre-production work on his second documentary feature, *Iraq in Fragments*. The film was released in 2006 to critical acclaim and received many awards including an Academy Award® nomination for 2007 Best documentary feature. He is currently working on his next undisclosed project.

[filmography]

Gaza Strip, 2002

Iraq in Fragments, 2006

Sari's Mother, 2006

[director's statement]

I set my mind to making a film about Iraq in early 2002 when it became clear that the United States would invade. By September 2002, I had found a way to travel to Iraq with my camera, tagging along with several US journalists following Congressman Jim McDermott to Baghdad as he made a prophetic but ultimately unsuccessful stand against the impending war.

In February of 2003 – just before the US invasion - I traveled to Baghdad a second time and filmed material until I was thrown out of the country for lack of a visa extension.

Following the 2003 invasion, I lived and filmed in Iraq for two full years, finally returning to the United States in April 2005 to finish editing.

It was never my intention to make a "war documentary." I wanted to make a film about Iraq as a country, about the people of Iraq.

Iraq is such a unique place and for so long nobody could easily make films there; I could barely constrain my desire to document everything. I wanted to film ten stories at once, all in different parts of the country. In the end, I only filmed six different stories. Three of those stories made it into the final film.

What emerges in Iraq In Fragments is a film in three parts, cut roughly along the lines that define how most of us see Iraq: as Sunnis, Shiites, and Kurds. It would be easy to paint a simple picture of an Iraq divided along these lines, but the reality is more difficult.

My aim with Iraq In Fragments was to introduce the viewer to the breadth and complexity of the country, showing not only the divisions, but the unifying forces that tie it together.

It is important to me that this film presents many layers and points of view - reflecting the diversity I found. Iraq is a country with an uncertain future, a country that may cease to exist as a unified whole. Iraq In Fragments poses the future of Iraq as an open question, left unanswered.

The issue of Iraq is very contentious for many people. In Iraq In Fragments I am not trying to convince anyone of my personal political viewpoint. Instead, my film is a reminder of the human stories in Iraq that are often overlooked. Iraq, after all, is a country full of people who care nothing for our political arguments. They have their own lives, their own problems, their own way of seeing the world. One day the United States will leave Iraq, but the Iraqi people will remain. My film is about them.

—James Longley

[james longley on the making of the film]

[pre-production]

One rainy Seattle evening in the spring of 2002 I was fielding questions at the premiere of my first feature documentary, *Gaza Strip*. Someone finally asked the question that always gets asked: "What are you going to make next?" Without thinking I replied that I would make a documentary about Iraq.

At the time I didn't know much about Iraq; I hadn't even the faintest idea of how to get there, let alone make a film there. And yet, by September I found myself in a car with a collection of journalists and peace activists, crossing the western Iraqi desert to Baghdad.

The US invasion of Iraq was still six months away but everybody could feel it coming, including the Iraqi government. As the invasion approached, the Iraqi officials became less and less interested in an independent filmmaker like me running around their country with a camera.

In their eyes, every freelance foreign journalist requiring a government minder was only taking resources away from media that mattered to their propaganda strategy. In short, I was a waste of their time. I didn't particularly care for the Baathist government - or indeed any government - and the Iraqi officials could probably tell. My entreaties for filming permissions were coldly ignored.

My second trip to Iraq, just weeks before the US invasion, met with even less success. Trying to get filming permissions in pre-war Baghdad was like trying to sweet-talk a paranoid rhinoceros. I spent one afternoon hanging out around the Baghdad office of Huda Amash, known thereafter in the US media as Dr. Germ, trying to convince her to give me a piece of paper allowing me to film during the impending war. Huda brushed off my request and sped away with her bodyguards in a white Mercedes along the Tigris. Within a month she was living in a US prison camp at the airport.

The war was only days away and I had no prospect of filming anything. My Iraqi visa expired, effectively forcing me out of the country. As I drove along the crowded streets of Baghdad toward the Jordan highway I was full of regret. The next time I saw Baghdad it might well be in ruins. I had no idea what would become of my friends in Iraq. Leaving Baghdad before the war was one of the saddest moments of my life.

I waited out the war in Egypt, pacing distractedly back and forth across Cairo through the haze and mind-numbing traffic, watching the nightly bombing of Baghdad on television, biding my time until the Baathist regime would be overthrown and I could return to Iraq to make a film about whatever happened next.

In April 2003 I arrived back in Baghdad, this time without need of a visa or filming

permissions of any kind. The Iraqi border hung open like a door off its hinges. The apparatus of state lay shattered, ministries on fire. All but the ministries of Oil and Interior that is, the temples of wealth and control for which the United States had come to Iraq. Baghdad had descended into a regime of looting, kidnappings, shootings, bombings, and a deep uncertainty about the future of the country.

[production]

Suddenly the flood gates had opened. There was no government in Iraq and I could film whatever I wanted as long as I could stay alive.

My guess was that I would have about a year before either a new authoritarian government would be put in power or Iraq would descend into civil war and become too dangerous to work in. I needed to make my film while it was still possible.

I moved into a seedy apartment at the Al Dulami building in southern Baghdad with radio journalists Raphael Krafft and Aaron Glantz as roommates. Using my Iraqi expatriate contacts I found a local translator to work with and we set off together to document the country.

Part One

For my first documentary subject in Iraq, I decided on an 11-year-old auto mechanic named Mohammed Haithem who lived and worked in the Sheik Omar district of Baghdad, an old neighborhood at the center of town full of small industrial shops.

Young Mohammed was looked after by his grandmother and had dropped out of school to support his family by working as a shop apprentice. Mohammed's was a very common story in Iraq, a country which has suffered decades of foolish wars, despotism and suffocating economic sanctions that weakened the social infrastructure.

Mohammed Haithem had a sort of Dickensian quality that I thought perfectly matched the Best/Worst of Times feeling in post-war Baghdad. His face spoke for him; you could tell what he was thinking without him ever saying a word.

Every morning for months on end I would drive out to the shop where Mohammed worked and wait around for hours, gradually becoming part of the furniture until nobody paid attention to me or my camera.

In the evenings I began to translate the material and layer it together on my laptop computer, building up a picture of Mohammed and the world around him, trying to see it through his eyes.

I didn't just want to bring the viewers into Mohammed's neighborhood – I wanted to put them inside his head. I wanted them to see what he saw, hear what he heard, including the sound of his own thoughts.

To make the voice-over narration in this chapter, I conducted extensive audio

interviews with Mohammed, gradually working through his shyness until he was speaking in clear, complete sentences. It took about a year to reach this point; my last material of Mohammed Haithem was recorded in September of 2004.

By that time Iraqi public opinion had turned solidly against the US occupation and it was already too dangerous for a foreign filmmaker to work openly on the streets of Baghdad.

Part Two

By the middle of the first summer I had moved out of my gloomy apartment and into a small residential house in the middle-class Palestine Street area of Baghdad. I shared the ground floor with Nadeem Hamid, one of the Iraqi translators I was working with.

Nadeem was a 22-year-old biology student at Mustansiriya University, and had been written up by the New York Times Magazine, Fox News and the BBC for being the lead singer of an Iraqi boy-band that sang pop songs in English. It was exactly the story that the western media were looking for: young Iraqis in love with western culture, liberal and open to all ideas. By the time my documentary production finished Nadeem had fled to London to escape a nascent civil war and persecution by the new regime of conservative Islam that the United States had helped bring to power.

Iraq had been ruled by Sunnis for hundreds of years, and suddenly the majority Shiites were sensing that their moment had arrived. I wanted to film the emergence of Iraq's Shiite power from the inside.

In August, 2003, Nadeem and I drove down to Najaf, burial place of Imam Ali and the capital of Shia Islam in Iraq. My idea was to follow a student at one of the local Shiite religious schools. Wandering through the narrow back alleys of Najaf in search of permissions, we soon found ourselves at the office of Moqtada Sadr.

Moqtada Sadr had inherited the followers and organization of his father, Grand Ayatollah Mohammed Sadiq al-Sadr, one of the most respected and influential religious leaders in Iraq's history, who had been assassinated by Saddam Hussein in 1999 for speaking out against the regime. Sadiq al-Sadr had advocated something known as the "speaking Hawza," an Iraqi nationalist political/religious philosophy that encouraged the open involvement of religious authority in political life.

Moqtada Sadr's family had been involved in routing the British colonial occupation of Iraq earlier in the 20th century, and now his movement was warming to a new challenge. Young Sadr wanted to push the foreign occupiers out of his country and turn Iraq into an Islamic state.

This seemed like an interesting story to document, so I began developing contacts within Sadr's organization who allowed me to film. Moqtada Sadr himself was too difficult to access, so I settled for Sheik Aws al Kafaji.

Sheik Aws, a bearded cleric of 32, was in charge of the Sadr office in Naseriyah, the fourth largest city in Iraq. Aws had been imprisoned and tortured under Saddam for

defying the regime. He was genial and open, giving me far more access to his movement than I expected. I filmed political strategy meetings, rallies, marches, an alcohol raid in the local market, religious ceremonies, and endless political speeches and interviews.

The only other western civilian I encountered in Naseriyah in that period was Anthony Shadid, a mild-mannered Washington Post journalist who later received the Pulitzer Prize for his brilliant reporting on Iraq. Sheik Aws was convinced that Anthony worked for the CIA, and often told me so. He also suspected that I might be CIA. It's not an accusation that one can easily disprove. The Sadr organization was deeply suspicious of foreigners, and you couldn't really blame them. I was never sure why they trusted me as much as they did.

In the early spring of 2004, the Sadr office in Naseriyah was organizing elections. It was a full year before national Iraqi elections would actually take place, and the United States occupation authorities in Iraq were still hopeful that they could forego popular elections and install a puppet Iraqi government made up of politicians appointed indirectly by the United States. The Sadr movement's strategy was to circumvent this by pushing out US appointees through direct local elections.

This idea, combined with strong anti-occupation rhetoric, made Moqtada Sadr and his movement a dangerous opponent of United States' interests in Iraq. Charges were brought against Sadr for a murder that had occurred a year before, his deputies were arrested and his Hawza newspaper was shut down by US soldiers. When Spanish troops opened fire on a Sadr demonstration in Kufa on April 4, 2004, it finally provoked an armed uprising among Sadr's followers. The uprising lasted until September and resulted in the deaths of thousands.

I arrived slightly late for the initial battle in Kufa - it had already been going on for an hour when my taxi dropped me off on the main street and sped back toward Baghdad.

The sound of automatic gunfire was all around. Hidden snipers were firing from the upper floors of buildings beside me, provoking answering fire from the Spanish base. American fighter planes circled overhead, requesting - it was later reported by UPI - permission from the Spanish to bomb the nearby teaching hospital where Sadr's fighters had taken up positions on the roof.

It was the first in a long succession of skirmishes around Najaf that eventually led to the siege of the city by US forces. I spent several months living in Najaf during the uprising, recording interviews with fighters and civilians, dreading what would happen as the tensions mounted.

The Sadr movement had taken over the Imam Ali Shrine in the center of Najaf, and also the Islamic Court building, where many of their political opponents in the city were taken and a number executed. The bodies of the hanged were adorned with handwritten signs that said "spy" and photographed for publication in the Sadr newspapers.

I was also dragged to the court on one occasion along with my Iraqi translator. They accused me of filming the bodies of Mehdi Militia fighters in the Najaf cemetery, though I had intentionally left my camera in my hotel room that day, expecting trouble. "No," they insisted, "you were filming."

They had been losing large numbers of fighters due to their incredibly poor appreciation of US military tactics, and their anger made them unreasonable. The Sadrist at the Najaf Islamic Court weren't exactly the sharpest knives in the drawer to begin with. Filming in Najaf became impossible, even with signed permissions from their leadership.

The Sadr uprising coincided with the US siege and destruction of Falluja, which was broadcast into Iraqi homes by Al Jazeera. The abuse and torture by US personnel of Iraqis at Abu Ghraib prison was also unequivocally revealed that month, further adding to the anger that was rising in the country. In an effort to contain the unrest, the United States closed down unfriendly media and handed Iraqi "sovereignty" to an interim government headed by a former CIA asset.

The situation for journalists and filmmakers working in Iraq was also growing increasingly difficult. I was forced to move out of the residential home I had shared with translator Nadeem Hamid and his family - as much for their protection as my own. An increasing number of journalists and other foreign civilians was being kidnapped and killed.

My colleague Micah Garen, an independent filmmaker from New York, was kidnapped along with his translator by members of the Sadr movement in Naseriyah - the very place I had been filming only months before. He was accused of being a spy and threatened with execution. I used my contacts in the Sadr organization to lobby for his release via satellite phone. Through the collective efforts of his family, friends and fellow journalists Micah was released unharmed, but not before being held for 10 days in the southern marshes and paraded on TV with a gun to his head, reading a forced statement.

I decided that central and southern Iraq was no longer safe enough to film in. The risk had become too great and the work had become impossible. I filmed my last material in Baghdad in September, 2004, gathered up my clothes, hard drives, boxes of DV tapes, and hired a taxi for northern Iraq.

Part Three

Entering Kurdish-controlled northern Iraq is like crossing into a different world. The lonely and dangerous roads north of Baghdad give way to a series of rolling hills and checkpoints. Suddenly the flags flying from rooftops display the yellow sun of Kurdistan, a non-existent country that has been waiting to be born for a hundred years.

I had been making trips northward to Iraqi Kurdistan since early in my production, exploring the cities and towns of the mountainous border regions and the low-lying grassy plains that stretch south toward Kirkuk, the disputed oil capital of northern Iraq.

After some searching, I had settled into a small scattering of farms and brick ovens south of Erbil, in a place known as Koretan. It's so small, it's not even found on most maps of Iraq. The locals eke a living out of wheat, tomatoes, sunflowers and bricks.

It was the brick ovens that made me stop there. Great plumes of black petroleum smoke poured out of a featureless wheat field landscape. The brick ovens had been built by Iraqi Jews in the early 20th century. Many local farmers were the descendants of Jews who had converted to Islam.

The entire region bore the marks of passing waves of religious change. Even the name of the capital, Erbil - meaning "four gods" - dated back to Pagan times. In neighboring Mosul, 30 minutes away by car, the ruins of Sumerian civilization dating back to 5000 BC still stood. Mosul was already beyond the pale: I had filmed there several times in the past, but by late 2004 it was already far too dangerous.

I gradually made friends with the local farmers in Koretan. Little by little, I became a regular fixture. People grew more comfortable and stopped taking notice of time. After six short months, I had achieved invisibility. Over time, I was able to film enough material to piece together a portrait of this place, these people.

After the tumultuous Shiite uprising in the south, it was important to me to ground my storytelling in northern Iraq in smaller, personal stories. I focused on simple things: The friendship of two boys and their fathers, who lived on neighboring farms. I decided that this chapter would be one of fathers and sons, of the space between generations.

Behind this simple story was a larger movement in the society. The Kurds were pressing for independence. Anti-Arab sentiment ran high. The Kurds were ready to go to war, if necessary, to win their autonomy from Baghdad. The January 2005 elections solidified Kurdish power within the Iraqi leadership. The fracture lines had been drawn that would permanently split Iraq into fragments.

[technical notes]

Iraq In Fragments was shot with Panasonic DVX-100 and DVX-100A cameras, using 24p Advanced Pulldown mode, letter-boxed. All sound was recorded on the camera.

300 hours of material were recorded in Iraq between February 2003 and April 2005 for the production. 1600 pages of typed, time-coded, translated transcripts were used in editing.

The film was edited by Billy McMillin, James Longley and Fiona Otway using Final Cut Pro software running on Apple Macintosh computers.

The film was blown up to High Definition size and color corrected at Modern Digital in Seattle.

Dolby Digital sound mixing took place at Bad Animals studios in Seattle.

File-to-Film recording was done at Alpha Cine Labs in Seattle.

Film is approximately 8460 feet long (2820 meters) and is on five reels.

[film credits]

director: James Longley

producers: John Sinno
James Longley

editors: Billy McMillin
Fiona Otway
James Longley

camera: James Longley

post coordinator: Basil Shadid

sound / music: James Longley

2nd unit camera: Margaret Longley

translators: Ahmed Ayed
Ali Zekki
Dler Hashim
Duler Bojan
Istifan Braymok
Mohammed Mohana
Mustapha Hasan
Nadeem Hamid
Reyal Sindi
Zaid Al Rawi
Zaid Fahmi
Zirak Dilshad

[reviews & comments]

“But pointing the camera need not always involve pointing a finger. James Longley's *Iraq in Fragments* is the latest entry in the crowded field of documentaries from that war. It is also one of the best, partly because it is more concerned with exploring daily life and individual destinies than with articulating a position. The title has several meanings, referring both to Mr. Longley's collagist method and to the communal fractures that threaten the country's stability. It takes the form of a trilogy, with one section devoted to Sunnis, one to Shia and one to Kurds, but it also reminds us that we generalize about those groups at our peril. Whether you think the war is right or wrong, *Iraq in Fragments* is a necessary reminder of just how painful and complicated it is.”

--A.O. Scott, *The New York Times*

One “of the strongest documentaries this year...both poetic and reality-based.”

--Kenneth Turan, *The Los Angeles Times*

“...It has no overt political agenda, nor does it have a narrator. In beautifully shot, almost poetic images, it takes us inside this fractured country, letting us feel what its like from the inside from three points of view--Sunni, Shiite and Kurd. Longley spent years in Iraq, and he lets his subjects, and his images, speak for themselves...The title refers both to the style of the film and the political fragmentation that threatens the countries future. A fascinating glimpse of an Iraq the mass media never shows us, the movie is a quiet revelation.”

--David Ansen, *Newsweek*

"Iraq in Fragments is a stunningly beautiful film that lets the Iraqi people speak for themselves as they tell us what the war has done to their daily lives. What this movie shows, you will never see on the evening news."

--Michael Moore

“Political filmmaking is an evergreen in Sundance's documentary competition, but two standout works complement each other powerfully in their emphasis on the local effects of national and international policies. Overseas, James Longley's mesmerizing "Iraq in Fragments" shakes off the oversaturated video vocabulary that has defined media coverage of the war-torn country and brings a cinematic beauty, both terrifying and ethereal, to the landscape. Broken into three sections that examine Iraq geographically, Longley focuses on the microcosmic experience, whether it be a young child, a radicalized adult or a wizened old man, to reflect larger truths about war and peace.”

--Stephen Garrett, *IndieWire*

“... a gorgeous tone poem drawn from about 300 hours of incredibly privileged footage—the cameraman literally rolled out of cars during firefights to avoid bullets, and captured more unfamiliar emotional violence in the life of a young Baghdad boy whose ostensibly kindly surrogate-father employer keeps threatening to ‘roast him alive.’”

--Tim Appelo, *The Seattle Weekly*

Sundance Standout: *Iraq In Fragments*

Logan Hill, *New York Magazine*

There's a gold-rush mentality in many of the documentary films coming out of Iraq right now, as filmmakers race overseas to make their movies and then hurry back home to make their names. It's an understandable urge in the face of such opportunity—and even sometimes a commendable one in the face of such danger. But what makes James Longley's *Iraq in Fragments* so powerful—and why it's likely to be one of the most-heralded films at Sundance—is that he spent enough time there for unpredictable ideas to incubate and shot enough footage to explore them. From 2002 to 2005, Longley (*Gaza Strip*) filmed an Iraq that you likely haven't seen before.

Mirroring the way post-invasion Iraq has splintered, he splits his own film into detailed thirds, tracking a young kid in Baghdad, two brick-baking Kurdish families in the north, and the Shiite movement of Moqtada al-Sadr in Najaf. Each is composed with a sharp, vérité eye, narrated only by its subjects, and rendered with an intimacy that we haven't seen since, perhaps, the Oscar-winning *Born Into Brothels*. Without editorializing in any obvious way, the film delineates how very differently Iraqis regard their country's future, from Sadr-acolyte outrage to an old farmer's exhausted fatalism. And though Longley's dramatic footage of a brutal militia raid on Nasiriyah liquor merchants and a violent clash with Spanish troops in Najaf is stunning, it is no less affecting than the quiet way that a boy's apprenticeship to a crude Baghdad auto mechanic becomes an understated metaphor for life under Saddam's reign.

More filmmakers should learn from Longley's patience, as should more producers—it's well worth the investment to fund long-term projects like this.

[awards & nominations]

Nominated - Academy Award® Best Documentary Feature - 2007

Nominated - Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Documentary - Directors Guild of America

Winner - Distinguished Feature Documentary Award - International Documentary Association

Winner - Best Documentary Directing - Sundance Film Festival

Winner - Best Documentary Cinematography - Sundance Film Festival

Winner - Best Documentary Editing - Sundance Film Festival

Nominated - Grand Jury Prize - Sundance Film Festival

Grand Jury Award - Full Frame Documentary Film Festival

Gold Hugo - Best Documentary - Chicago International Film Festival

Winner - Nestor Almendros Award - Human Rights Watch Film Festival

Winner - Best Documentary - Gotham Awards

Winner - Special Mention - Mannheim-Heidelberg International Filmfestival

Nominated - Best Film - Mannheim-Heidelberg International Filmfestival

Winner - International Federation of Film Critics Award - Thessaloniki

Winner - Nesnady-Schwartz Documentary Film Competition - Cleveland International Film Festival

[press release from the New York premiere]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“Iraq In Fragments” U.S. Theatrical Premiere
Presented by Typecast Releasing in Association with HBO Documentary Films
Opens in New York City November 8, 2006 at Film Forum

Film Will Open in Other Cities on November 10th

The highly acclaimed feature documentary *Iraq In Fragments*, from director James Longley, will have its U.S. theatrical premiere at Film Forum in New York City on November 8, 2006. The film has been a favorite at domestic and international film festivals after its incredible success at the 2006 Sundance Film Festival, where it was the recipient of three awards. A nationwide release is slated for November and the following months.

Iraq In Fragments illuminates post-war Iraq in three acts, building a vivid picture of a country pulled in different directions by religion and ethnicity. Filmed in verité style, with no scripted narration, the film powerfully explores the lives of ordinary Iraqis: people whose thoughts, beliefs, aspirations, and concerns are at once personal and illustrative of larger issues in Iraq today.

Seattle-based documentarian James Longley (*Gaza Strip*, 2002) spent over two years living and traveling in Iraq from 2003-2005, shooting more than 300 hours of material. Shortly before returning to the United States, Longley joined forces with John Sinno of Typecast Pictures to complete the production. *Iraq In Fragments* premiered at the 2006 Sundance Film Festival, where it was honored with the prize for Best Documentary Director, Best Documentary Cinematography, and Best Documentary Editing (shared with co-editors Billy McMillan and Fiona Otway).

Since then, the film has screened at over thirty-five film festivals, earning awards such as the Full Frame Documentary Film Festival Grand Jury Prize, the Human Rights Watch Nestor Almendros Prize for Courage in Filmmaking, and the FIPRESCI Jury Prize at the Thessaloniki Documentary Film Festival, among others.

Iraq In Fragments was picked up by Typecast Releasing in June, and will be released to theaters this Fall in association with HBO Documentary Films.

More information is available at www.iraqinfragments.com and www.typecastfilms.com.

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