



The Consulate General of Italy in New York

in collaboration with the Institute for Digital Archeology presents

***Faces in the stone: an Italian perspective on the enduring strength of
cultural heritage***

June 1st 4.00 pm 690 Park Avenue

Panel discussion focusing on Italian technology as a means to safeguard cultural heritage in conflict zones.

What is cultural heritage, why is it so important, and how can technology be used to preserve and safeguard it against the destruction wrought by human conflict? A panel of experts spanning archaeology, science, engineering and international diplomacy will discuss these questions and more.

Following the discussion, the Institute of Digital Archeology will unveil an installation in light and marble illustrating its major new project to reconstruct Palmyra's statue of the goddess Allāt which was defaced and reduced to fragments by extremists in 2015.

Allāt is a pre-Islamic goddess, the equivalent of Ishtar in Mesopotamia, Atargatis in Syria, and Athena in Greece. This statue, which is a copy of one by the famous Greek sculptor Phidias from the fifth Century BC, shows her in the style of Athena. It is carved from Pentelic marble.

The temple of Allāt in Palmyra, where the statue once stood, was a sanctuary: a place of peace where local people could take refuge or seek asylum. Outside it, stood a giant effigy of a lion cradling an antelope bearing the inscription "[The goddess] Allāt will bless whoever does not shed blood in the sanctuary". Together, they have carried this message of peace for more than 2000 years.