

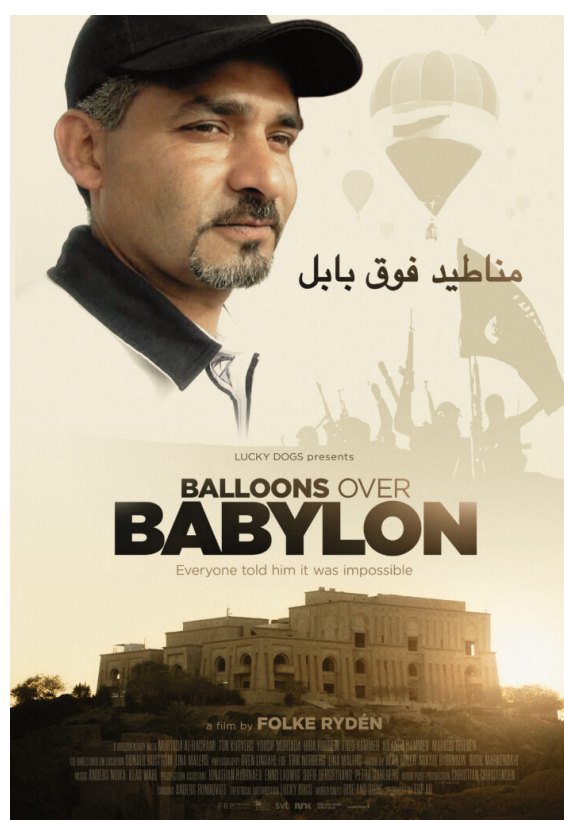
One Iraqi man's incredible story
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SAVE THE DATE!

Saturday, September 19, 2020, 1:00–3:00 pm

Please join Silk Road Rising, the Honorary Consulate of Sweden in Chicago, the Middle Eastern Immigrant and Refugee Alliance (MIRA), and the Swedish American Museum, on Saturday, September 19 at 1:00 pm, for a virtual screening of the acclaimed 2019 documentary film *Balloons over Babylon*. The screening will be followed by a conversation with Swedish filmmaker Folke Rydén and MIRA's Community Engagement Manager, Ekram Hanna, moderated by Silk Road Rising's Co-Executive Artistic Director Jamil Khoury.



Everyone told him it was impossible. *Balloons over Babylon* (one hour and ten minutes) is the incredible story of one Iraqi man's quest to fight fear and promote hope by flying hot air balloons over his war-torn country. Learn more about *Balloons over Babylon* [here](#).

WHERE:

Live (Virtually) over Zoom

WHEN:

Saturday, September 19, 2020 at 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

HOW:

Reservations are free and can be made [here](#). Only one reservation is needed per household. After you RSVP to this virtual event, you'll receive a link by email a few days before the event, complete with more details and a chance to watch the documentary early.

[Click Here to RSVP Now](#)

SILK ROAD RISING
UNLEASH CURIOSITY

MIRA
Middle Eastern Immigrant and Refugee Alliance
اتحاد المهاجرين واللاجئين من الشرق الأوسط

SWEDISH

AMERICAN

MUSEUM



Honorary Consulate of Sweden
Chicago

About Murtada Al-Hachami



“I want to reflect a new image of Iraq, a different image, not a made-up one. An existing one.”

Murtada Al-Hachami was born in southern Iraq in 1974. At an early age, his father was imprisoned and five of his father's friends were hanged by Saddam Hussein's regime, causing Murtada and his family to flee Iraq. After moving between Syria, Algeria, Belgium, and Holland, the Al-Hachamis eventually settled in London in 1989. As an Iraqi exile living in the UK, Murtada grew up experiencing racism and intense bullying; bullying that caused him to miss out on two years of schooling.

In 2003, after the US invasion of Iraq, the Western media was finally allowed back into Iraq. Murtada was disturbed to once again see negative portrayals of his people, especially when the media branded Iraqis as “looters.” Driven by a desire to promote empathy and understanding and to paint a truer picture of his birthplace, Murtada moved back to Iraq, where he dreamed of populating the Babylonian sky with hot air balloons as symbols of hope and possibility for all Iraqis.

Don't Miss the Screening of "Balloons over Babylon"

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