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Exhibition Dates:

September 18, 2025 – March 15, 2026

Exhibition Location:

ISAC Museum
1155 E. 58TH St.
Chicago, IL 60637

Press/Members preview:

September 17, 2025
5:00 – 7:00 P.M.

Exhibition Webpage:

isac.uchicago.edu/megiddoimagined

Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures
The University of Chicago
1155 E. 58th St.
Chicago, IL 60637

isac.uchicago.edu

For Immediate Release

A new exhibition at the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures Museum of the University of Chicago explores Megiddo—a city of deep time whose rediscovery turned ancient history into global headlines.

Megiddo: A City Unearthed, A Past Imagined marks 100 years since ISAC's first major archaeological expedition (1925–1939), which revealed layers of palatial complexes, fortifications, and elite material culture. At the crossroads of West Asia, Egypt, and the Mediterranean, Megiddo endured for millennia as a nexus of power and cultural exchange.

The exhibition examines not only what was unearthed but also what was imagined: a site transformed into a stage for institutional ambition, philanthropic vision, and global storytelling. Original issues of *The New York Times* and *The Illustrated London News*—with headlines like “New Revelations from Armageddon”—appear alongside the enduring artifacts they dramatized, showing how kings, empires, and excavation reports became front-page news.

Visitors also go behind the scenes to explore how finds were documented and circulated, and how the partage system shaped ISAC's collections. Directors' correspondence, archival photographs, and remarkable artifacts trace a century-long journey from excavation to exhibition.

A contemporary art film, generously lent by artists Nick Crowe and Ian Rawlinson, offers a counterpoint: a meditation on Megiddo's other legacy as the imagined site of biblical Armageddon. Against a backdrop of modern conflict and collective grief, it invites reflection on what “Armageddon” means today—not as prophecy, but as a nexus of metaphysics and geopolitics.

This exhibition is curated by Kiersten Neumann and organized by the ISAC Museum. It is supported by ISAC members and ISAC Museum visitors.

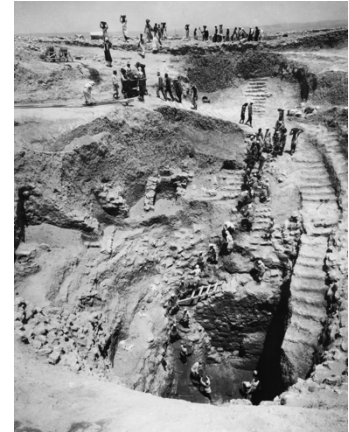
This free special exhibition runs from September 18, 2026, through March 15, 2025, at the ISAC Museum.

The Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures Museum
Megiddo: A City Unearthed, A Past Imagined

Workforce excavating the site's water system

Photograph from the Megiddo Expedition, May 1931

Megiddo SA 460



Offering stand from a palace complex

Illustrated London News feature with drawing by
ISAC architect Charles B. Altman

October 16, 1937



**Gold twin heads, likely representations of the Egyptian
goddess Hathor, with spoons**

Excavated beneath a palace floor at Megiddo, 1937

Late Bronze Age IIA (1400–1300 BCE)

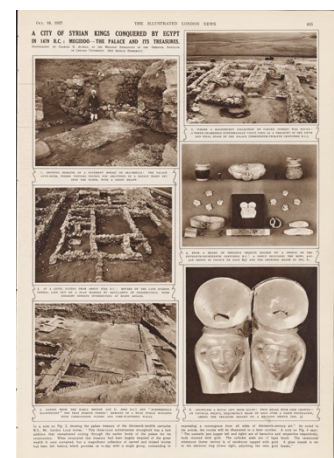
A21055 (b 715)



Megiddo gold hoard in the headlines

St. Louis Post-Dispatch feature

August 1, 1937



Painted jar from an elite tomb

Excavated at Megiddo, 1936

Late Bronze Age (1550–1400 BCE)

A20815 (a 1020)

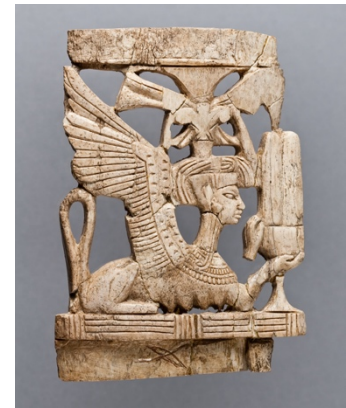


Ivory plaque with a female sphinx holding a cup

Excavated beneath a palace floor at Megiddo, 1937

Late Bronze Age III (12th century BCE)

A22213 (b 2007)



Megiddo ivories make global news

Illustrated London News feature, “The Most Comprehensive Example of ‘Phoenician’ Art in the 13th Century B.C.”


October 23, 1937



**Invoice for the first division of excavated finds
(partage) from Megiddo**

Consular document from the Megiddo Expedition

May 1, 1929

<p align="center">U. S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY</p>		<p align="center">DECLARATION OF CITIZENSHIP IN AS MUCH AS THE RECORDED IS SUBJECT THEREOF IN PURSUANCE OF A PROHIBITION OR AN ORDER TO PROHIBIT</p>	
<p>Date of birth <u>18</u> Issued at <u>AMMAN - JORDAN</u></p>	<p>6 <u>Mr. S. D. Day</u> residing in the country declared before, truly states that <u>he is a native born citizen of the U. S.</u> <u>of Baghdad, Palestine</u></p>		
<p>Citizenship <u>AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP</u> AT <u>Jerusalem, Palestine</u></p>	<p>On <u>1 May 1929</u> <u>Mr. S. D. Day</u> <u>Baghdad, Palestine</u></p>		
<p>Signature <u>The Oriental Institute, the</u> <u>University of Chicago, Chicago,</u> <u>Illinois, U.S.A.</u></p>	<p>Witnessed and solemnly sworn to by said declaration on the part of <u>MR. S. D. DAY</u> in the United States of America. <u>Baghdad, Palestine</u> first day of <u>May 1929.</u> this <u>7</u> day (Signed of Applicant)</p>		
<p>Place of residence <u>Haifa, Palestine</u></p>	<p align="center">CONSULAR CERTIFICATE (London Edn. 1912) <u>1929</u></p>		
<p>Declaration of goods <u>Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A.</u></p>	<p>Place of arrival <u>New York</u></p>		
<p>Place of entry <u>New York</u></p>	<p>Amount of duties <u>\$152.50/100</u></p>		
<p>Kind of goods <u>Antiquities, 13 cases</u></p>	<p align="center">  </p>		