



Communications

T 773.834.9777

ISAC-communications@uchicago.edu

Contacts

Marc Maillot, ISAC Museum Director/Chief Curator, mmaillot@uchicago.edu

Kiersten Neumann, Curator, ISAC Museum neumann@uchicago.edu

Exhibition Dates:

April 17 – August 17, 2025

Exhibition Location:

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

Press/Members preview:

April 16, 2024
5:00 – 7:00 P.M.

Exhibition Webpage:

isac.uchicago.edu/stagingtheeast

ISAC

The University of Chicago
1155 E. 58th St.
Chicago, IL 60637
isac.uchicago.edu

For Immediate Release

A new special exhibition at the Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures Museum (ISAC Museum) on the campus of the University of Chicago explores Orientalist photography in Chicago collections, with loans from the Art Institute of Chicago, UChicago Library Special Collections, and the Smart Museum of Art!

"Orientalism," a term referring to academic and artistic bodies of work that depict aspects of West Asia and North Africa (the "Orient"), acquired negative connotations over time because of its underlying colonial biases. Applied to photography, it describes images and prints of the region produced since the mid-nineteenth century. Thanks to Edward Said's seminal book *Orientalism* (1978), the meaning of the word has broadened from a strictly geographical definition to one that applies to depictions distinguishing a supposedly traditional "Orient" and a modernizing "West."

Staging the East: Orientalist Photography in Chicago Collections explores the beginnings of archaeological photography and how early travelers transformed it into popular retail. Learn about the main photographers of the time represented in Chicago museums, whose collections are among the largest worldwide. The exhibition concludes with the Chicago World's Fair of 1893, an event that was pivotal for the distribution of Orientalist imagery, and the impact of its print sales on ISAC's mission at the turn of the twentieth century.

This exhibition is curated by Marc Maillot and organized by the ISAC Museum; it is supported by ISAC Museum visitors and ISAC members.

This free special exhibition runs from April 17, 2024, through August 17, 2025, at the ISAC Museum.

The Institute for the Study of Ancient Cultures Museum
The University of Chicago
Staging the East: Orientalist Photography in Chicago Collections

Détail colorié d'une colonne du portique, Dendérah, plate 12
Description of Egypt. Second Edition. Antiquities, Volume IV (Plates)
Commission des sciences et arts d'Égypte
1822
University of Chicago Library, Special Collections DT46.D442



The Suez Canal, Egypt
Hippolyte Arnoux
Copy of albumen print
1890
Victoria and Albert Museum
1207-1912



Baalbec, from the South, plate 16
Egypt and Palestine. Photographed and Described, Volume I
Francis Frith
1858
ISAC Museum Archives



Colossus IV from the head of Colossus II
Friedrich Koch
Copy from negative
1906
ISAC Museum Archives
N. 1454 / P. 2391



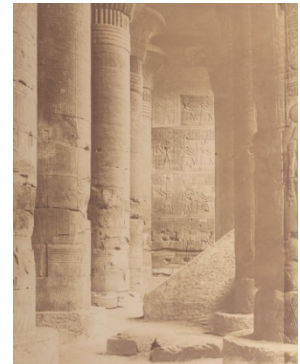
Esna

Studio Zangaki

Albumen print

1880

ISAC Museum Archives P. 805



Photographing the great stela of Thutmose I at Tumbos

James Henry Breasted

Copy print from negative

1907

ISAC Museum Archives P. 6332



Egyptian Temple of Luksor at the World's Columbian Exposition

Copy of photographic print

1893

Chicago History Museum

ICHi-002432



1 RB cycle graphic camera

Folmer & Schwing Manufacturing Co., New York

ca. 1910, serial number 13399

Graphic rapid rectilinear 4 x 5 lens

Eastman Kodak Co.

1910, serial number 3252

Owned by James Henry Breasted

ISAC Museum Archives

