



November 5, 2018

Dear Dr. Vito Messina,

I am writing to you on behalf of Dr. Blair Fowlkes-Childs and Dr. Michael Seymour, curators of the upcoming exhibition, *The World Between Empires: Art and Identity in the Ancient Middle East* (New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, March 11–June 23, 2019), to invite you to present as a part of a two-day symposium in conjunction with the show on Thursday March 28 and Friday, March 29, 2019.

The exhibition reassesses a dynamic period when the Parthian and Roman empires struggled for control over the Middle East, ca. 100 B.C.–A.D. 250. Moving beyond the overarching imperial history to focus on local cities and communities across the region, the exhibition explores the complexity of ancient civic, religious, and even personal identities revealed in art. Drawing together works from museum collections in the Middle East, Europe, and the United States, *The World between Empires* follows a journey through southwestern Arabia, Nabataea, Judaea, Phoenicia, Syria, and Mesopotamia. The exhibition will also discuss the extensive damage through deliberate destruction and looting suffered at several of the sites featured, and responses to that damage.

We very much hope that you will be able to participate. The symposium, open to the scholars and the museum public alike, will span the full two days. It will be helpful for us to know if in principle you can accept this invitation, so that we can develop the program further. As a symposium presenter, we can offer you a small honorarium for your participation as well as airfare, a per-diem intended to cover meals and ground transportation and accommodations for 3 nights in New York. Please don't hesitate to let us know if you have any questions regarding the event and we hope to hear from you in the affirmative.

Sincerely,

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