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Press release

No restriction – immediate release

“Home after War”, a Virtual Reality experience on the devastating impact of improvised explosive devices in Iraq, selected for Venice Film Festival

The immersive and interactive experience “Home After War” has been selected to compete at this year’s Venice Film Festival in the virtual reality category. It was created as part of the Oculus VR for Good Creators Lab by NowHere Media in Berlin, Germany and in partnership with the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD).

What if your home becomes the place you fear?

“Home After War,” directed by Gayatri Parameswaran, takes the user into the house and heart of the tragic, real-life story of an Iraqi family that returned to Fallujah, Iraq after being displaced from their home by war. After the Islamic State (IS) was forced out of Fallujah in 2016, Ahmaied Hamad Khalaf and his family decided to return to their house, even though entire neighbourhoods had been booby trapped by improvised explosive devices (IEDs). Since the end of the war, thousands of civilians have died or been injured by IEDs. The victims are mostly displaced people returning home.

Walking through a booby-trapped house

Viewers are invited to walk through Ahmaied’s home, which still shows signs of the damage from the war. With Ahmaied as their guide, they hear his story and learn about the ever-present fear posed by IEDs and what it’s like to fear the home you once loved. The interactive experience is complemented by embedded 360° videos that give viewers the opportunity to witness outdoor scenes in Fallujah and refugee camps.

The experience

“Home after War” was shot in Fallujah, Iraq in January 2018. Ahmaeid’s story is real. Using photogrammetry, his house was scanned and recreated in a virtual software to give viewers a room scale, interactive experience. At the festival in Venice, the experience will be set within a unique physical installation that recreates part of Ahmaied’s house. The experience will be completed by a display of IEDs and complementary information by GICHD.

Find all information, trailer and photos here: www.homeafterwar.net



About the project

Home After War is part of the [Oculus VR for Good Creators Lab 2017](#) program that paired 10 rising filmmakers with 10 nonprofits to champion a variety of social missions while telling their stories in VR. The project by [NowHere Media](#) and [GICHD](#) was selected by Oculus VR for Good to tell a story that throws a spotlight on the threats posed by explosive hazards and unexploded ordnance.

About Oculus

Oculus is a team at Facebook that builds virtual reality (VR) hardware and software to let people experience anything, anywhere, with anyone. The Oculus Platform is currently available on three headsets—the PC- powered Oculus Rift, the standalone headset Oculus Go, and the mobile Samsung Gear VR, powered by Oculus. They provide the most immersive VR experiences available, from games and movies, to 3D 360° videos and beyond. (www.oculus.com)

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About the Geneva International Centre for Humanitarian Demining (GICHD)

The GICHD is an expert organisation working to reduce the impact of mines, cluster munitions and other explosive hazards, in close partnership with mine action organisations and other human security actors around the world. The Centre supports the ultimate goals of mine action: saving lives, returning land to productive use and promoting development. Based in Geneva, the GICHD employs around 70 staff members from over 20 nations. www.gichd.org

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NowHere Media

NowHere Media is an immersive storytelling studio based in Berlin and specialising in journalism & documentaries. NowHere's partners include international media outlets, NGOs, businesses and independent organisations such as Oculus VR for Good, Medien Innovationszentrum (Babelsberg), Al Jazeera English, Deutsche Welle, RNW Media, ZDF and more.

www.nowheremedia.net

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