

FOR IMMEDIATE
RELEASE

Napa Valley Artist Bridges Communities Through Art Nancy Willis presents *Conflict Zone: Sinjar to St. Helena* exhibition and film screening in St. Helena, CA.

What: An exhibition of St. Helena artist Nancy Willis' project ***Conflict Zone: Sinjar to St. Helena***. The exhibition includes monotypes by Yazidis from Northern Iraq including Nobel Peace Prize recipient Nadia Murad. Also on view are Willis' related etchings and a sneak peek of a new series of her oil paintings of the terrain and villages of the Sinjar region in northern Iraq.

Exhibition dates: January 10 – 20, 2019 Nimbus Arts, 649 Main St, Studio #2 in St Helena, CA 94574 Open daily 12 to 5pm. More info at: www.nancywillis.com/conflict-zone

Film screening: ***On Her Shoulders*** - Awarded best documentary at Sundance, this film profiles Nadia Murad as she overcomes her personal pain to become a force of change on the world stage to stop human trafficking.

Screening date: Tuesday January 15 at 5:00pm with Q and A to follow. Cameo Cinema, 1340 Main St, St Helena, CA 94574. Tickets available soon at www.cameocinema.com Cook Tavern will serve a complimentary glass of wine to diners presenting their ticket stub.

This project is funded in part by a grant from the Arts Council Napa Valley. An intimate dinner with the founder of Yazda, Haider Elias will be hosted by Chris Hougie and Teresa Raffo on January 11th. Contact nancy@nancywillis.com to inquire about limited seats available.

Conflict Zone is St. Helena artist Nancy Willis' artistic response to the ISIS led genocide of Yazidis in 2014. Willis followed their story, pained by the brutality and violence against women used as a strategy of war. She felt overwhelmed by the distance and scope of the conflict until an exhibition opportunity in 2017 opened the door for her to turn empathy into artistic action.

With support from YAZDA.org and an ACNV Foundation Grant, Willis travelled to Texas

and worked with Yazidis from northern Iraq to create monotypes about their daily lives. Using the printmaking facility at the University of Houston, the collaborative process created bonds that reach beyond geographical boundaries. Willis also travelled to London to print with Nadia Murad, an ISIS held survivor and human rights activist who was just awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The exhibition shows an intimate view of Yazidi life before and after ISIS and the cost of war on communities.

In January 2019, Willis will launch a joint exhibition of the Yazidi monotypes with her own work that led up to the project and a sneak peek of a new series of oil paintings that are in response to the Yazidi monotypes. The exhibition in St. Helena, California will coincide with a screening of the documentary “On Her Shoulders” at the Cameo Cinema.

Through the display of the work and the film screening, Willis hopes to raise awareness of the genocide but also demonstrate the power of art to bridge the distance between global and local actions. In February, the Yazidis art will be exhibited in *Conflict Zone: Bridging Communities through Printmaking* at Brookhaven College in Dallas through March 12. Willis will give a lecture there on “Art and Empathy” during the Southern Graphics Council annual printmaking conference.

About the Artist Nancy Willis lives and works in the Napa Valley. As a painter and printmaker, she works with themes of intimacy and social connection. Her series such as THE BED, RSVP, CHANDELIER and TERRAIN look deeply into human relationships at home and in nature.

Willis received her MFA in 2005 from San Francisco Art Institute and she teaches at the Culinary Institute of America, Napa Valley College, and Nimbus Arts. Her work was recently exhibited at the StARTup Art Fairs in LA, Chicago and San Francisco and at the Ritz Carlton in Lake Tahoe. She has curated the exhibitions *NOURISH* and *Discrepancy/living between war and peace* at the Napa Valley Museum and leads “Path of the Artist” painting tours in France and Sundance, Utah.

About the Documentary ON HER SHOULDERS Directed by ALEXANDRIA BOMBACH (94 min) On August 3, 2014 ISIS declared that the Yazidi people of Northern Iraq had long been a shame to their idea of Islam and set out to commit genocide. An estimated 5,000 people were killed in the weeks that followed, and over 7,000 women and children were captured, forced to become sex slaves and child soldiers. Nadia Murad was captured on the same day that ISIS killed her mother and six brothers. Eighteen members of her family were

either killed or enslaved. Filmmaker Alexandria Bombach follows this strong-willed young woman, who survived the genocide and escaped the hands of ISIS to become a relentless beacon of hope for her people.

Images available upon request Contact
Nancy@nancywillis.com, 707-738.7173 or
Ann@anntrinca.com, 707-239-0534