

# VICE Studios Benelux collaborates on VPRO series 'Ruins of Iraq'

*The five part series premieres on NPO 2 on Thursday January 9th 2020.*

*Episode clip: <https://vimeo.com/378286639>*



10 December 2019, Amsterdam - In the new VPRO series 'Ruins of Iraq', made in collaboration with VICE Studios, the Dutch-Palestinian filmmaker Sakir Khader (1990) traveled around Iraq for six months to show the country in a way that the news won't. In places where the dust of four generations of war is finally settling, Sakir as camjo director speaks with the Iraqis left behind.

A year and a half ago the independent production house of VICE launched in the Netherlands under the leadership of Stefan Tieleman. Since then there have been more than six productions sold to parties such as Videoland (including the recently announced documentary series 'The Beast of Harkstede' about the most prolific serial killer of the Netherlands) and the VPRO.

Stefan Tieleman, General Manager, VICE Studios Benelux says: " 'Ruins of Iraq' isn't just any series about Iraq. Because of Sakir and the world wide VICE network we visit places in

*Iraq that are unavailable to Western creators. The result is a series that casts a new light on the enormous impact of the years long battle in Iraq."*

Stan van Engelen, Editor in Chief Media VPRO adds: *"The VPRO has a rich tradition of creating extraordinary and narrative rich international stories. VICE gives young creators a stage to create topical and strongly personal journalistic documentaries. The collaboration with VICE Studios gives us the opportunity to bring these values together and look for new perspectives and narratives within international journalism."*

### **About the series**

In the five-part series 'Ruins of Iraq' Sakir Khader follows the residents of Iraq who after all those years of war have to give the country a new future. VICE Studios, through the eyes of director Sakir Khader, allows the viewer entrance to the unimaginable stories of the average Iraqi who, despite the physical and mental ruin of war, have a better future in mind. The series shows what it's like to grow up in a place where four generations of war have wreaked havoc and how lives are rebuilt after everything has been wiped out.

From the moment former US president George W. Bush jr. started a campaign in 2003 against the reign of Saddam Hoessein, the state of Iraq has been unstable. Bush promised the people freedom and democracy, but the Iraqis instead got waves of violence. Over the past few years Iraq became a topic of conversation again because of the battle against the Islamic State. Militias, the Iraqi army and the international coalition began an offensive to

end the much feared terrorist group. Now that IS lost its territorial control, the people of Iraq are left behind after years of horror and bloodshed.