

Palmyra Arch Replica Is Unveiled in Trafalgar Square in London



A scale replica of a landmark Roman arch that was destroyed by Islamic State fighters in Palmyra, Syria, was unveiled in Trafalgar Square, in London, on Tuesday.
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LONDON — A landmark Roman arch that was destroyed by Islamic State fighters in Palmyra, [Syria](#), stood proudly once again on Tuesday, this time as a replica built from digital models that was installed in Trafalgar Square in London.

To create the roughly 20-foot-tall marble replica, which weighs around 11 tons, researchers [built](#) a 3-D computer model of the arch by compiling dozens of photographs taken by archaeologists and tourists in Palmyra before the Islamic State moved in. Robots in Italy then used the computer model to carve the marble replica.

Mayor Boris Johnson of London unveiled the piece on Tuesday, as crowds gathered in the square and on the steps leading to the National Gallery.



Video Near the marble quarries of Carrara, Italy, a machine uses a 3-D computer model to carve a scale replica of an ancient Roman arch destroyed by the Islamic State in Palmyra, Syria.

“Syria’s future depends on the conservation and protection of Syria’s past,” Mr. Johnson said. Calling the Islamic State’s actions in the Middle East “savage” and “nihilistic,” he said that the celebration was “in solidarity with the people of Syria” and in “defiance of the barbarians” who destroyed the original arch.

After the unveiling, a trio of musicians played traditional Mesopotamian music on replicas of ancient instruments.

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The replica arch was built as part of a project by the [Institute for Digital Archaeology](#), a joint initiative that works with Oxford, Harvard and the Museum of the Future in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates, to draw attention to the destruction of cultural artifacts across the world, and to rebuild some pieces.

Islamic State fighters, who occupied Palmyra for nearly a year beginning in May 2015, [ransacked landmarks](#) across the city, a Unesco World Heritage site. Late last month, the Syrian Army [announced](#) that it had recaptured the city from Islamic State fighters.

Crews pieced together the replica arch on Monday, and it will be displayed in front of the National Gallery through Thursday. It will appear in New York City in September and will also travel to Dubai, a spokeswoman for the archaeology institute said.