**RABEL BETSHMUEL**

**Immigrant Artist**

Rabel Betshmuel was born in Iraq in 1981. When religious and political persecution forced his family to escape in 1989, they came to Chicago by way of Iran, Syria, and Greece—a journey across continents and diverse cultures that has fired his creativity ever since.

Rabel’s deep love for his Assyrian heritage provides the foundation for his artistic curiosity and expression. The reality of Assyrian existence—suffused as it has been with pain making way for celebration, and suffering ultimately inspiring achievement—provides the lens through which he creates his work. He seeks a universal language with which his culture can speak, transcending the narrow boundaries often associated with nationalistic art.

His work draws on a cultural history that does not have a prominent place in art history or contemporary art. Inspired to elevate Assyrian art, developing something fresh from the fertile ground of millennia, Rabel utilizes reverse assimilation to infuse ordinary modern objects with ancient Assyrian motifs. He works across a range of media, including painting, drawing, sculpture, digital creation and assemblage. Experimentation is at the heart of his creative process, having taught him the value of embracing mistakes and welcoming unexpected outcomes.

By creating Assyrian art in a modern image, Rabel introduces it to an audience that often only has a rudimentary knowledge of it. His objective is to extend Assyrian culture’s frontiers while placing it on the same level as other living, ancient cultures: those of Native Americans, Aztecs, Mayans, Incas and so on.

Rabel’s life in Chicago is inspired by a continuing sense of discovery and a search for newness and renewal within his heritage. As a result, his art modernizes Assyrian culture while holding on to its ancient charm, but its power.

To learn more about Rabel, please visit [www.RabelBetshmuel.com](http://www.RabelBetshmuel.com).

**Education**

* **Oakton Community College**  
  Independent Student, Ceramics  
  *2019 – Current*
* **Evanston Art Center**  
  Independent Student, Ceramics  
  *2017*
* **City Colleges of Chicago-Harry S Truman College**  
  Independent Student, Ceramics  
  *2011 – 2016*
* **Loyola University Chicago**  
  Bachelors, VisComm and Fine Arts  
  2001 – 2003
* **Oakton Community College**  
  Associate Degree, General Studies  
  *1999 – 2001*