



*Scott's Cumbrian Blue(s) – Bombs over Baghdad*, Paul Scott (UK), 2003 and 2007. In-glaze decal collage, broken stoneware platter, 70cm x 85cm.

I made the *Bombs Over Baghdad* series during the Iraq war as American tanks rolled into Baghdad, and news came of the looting of the country's museums.

The pattern used is a remediated industrial tableware design made by the Gustavsberg Pottery, near Stockholm Sweden. Originally called *Stanbul* the graphic, like so many printed generic constructs, depicts a formulaic representation of the exotic East, but unlike the Willow pattern with its allusions to South East Asia this particular pattern references the nearer Turkish delight.

With the related issues of Iraqi Kurds, the use of Turkish air bases for US attacks on the Baathist regime, and the apparently similar (to Western eyes) pattern to Baghdad cityscapes it seemed an appropriate image to re-work. In the

border bombs replace floral motif and in the roundel vignettes palaces were (as Saddam's) depicted burning. The main scene is virtually untouched but there are tanks crossing the bridge, Apache helicopters and F16 fighter jets in the sky, with the smoke from bombs drifting across the sky. Human figures in the foreground continue their normal lives amid the mayhem - a reference to the famed Iraqi official who insisted throughout the invasion that all was normal in the city - denying the American advance into the city until the very end.

The piece has been the subject of ongoing interventions - the platter was broken to co-incide with the looting of Iraqi museums, then subsequently to commemorate suicide bombings of recent years. I have it in mind to treat the broken surfaces with black lustre - a reference to the oil fields so important to western economies. One day perhaps - if Iraq becomes a functioning independent democracy, the platter will be re-constructed and made whole again....

*WMD and Dimona:*

Ironically the pre-text for the invasion of Iraq was a search for 'Weapons of Mass Destruction', which were found not to exist there. Of course the invading countries intelligence services will have been fully aware of WMD developments in the nearby state of Israel. Dimona is a nuclear facility which is widely believed to house weapons of this nature. Mordechai Vanunu a



*Scott's Cumbrian Blue(s), WMD Dimona. Paul Scott 2004.*

former Israeli nuclear technician, leaked information (published on October 5, 1986) which gave the world its first authoritative confirmation that tiny Israel had become a major nuclear weapons power, with material for as many as 200 nuclear warheads of advanced design.

Vanunu was captured by Israeli agents on September 30, 1986. Abducted in Italy, his drugged body was transported to Israel in a cargo vessel. In the following months he was charged with espionage and treason and convicted at a closed-door trial. All legal appeals were exhausted, and he was consistently denied parole or probation. He completed his entire 18-year sentence in Israel's Ashkelon Prison spending more than eleven and a half years in solitary confinement. Vanunu is still subject to restrictions on his travel, mobility and the persons he may meet.

In spite of the evidence, even today the Israeli government refuses international inspection of Dimona and continues to deny the existence of its nuclear arsenal. The *Dimona* plate commemorates the site's existence..



*Scott's Cumbrian Blue(s), Palestine, Gaza 2014. Inglaze decal collage on Portmeirion porcelain platter. Paul Scott 2104.*

#### *Palestine, Gaza:*

This platter is one of a series made in response to the Israeli invasion of Gaza in the summer of 2014. In the mid nineteenth century printed transferware patterns of exotic locations graced the surface of many place settings. A number included scenes of 'Palestine', 'Syria', 'Damascus', 'Palmyra' and 'Aleppo'. The patterns were often generic in nature, with the same design gracing the surface of plates with differing titles! I have been updating the series with scenes of the contemporary carnage and destruction now evident in those places in the region.

Paul Scott, May 2016



[www.cumbrianblues.com](http://www.cumbrianblues.com)