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Staunton, VA 24401-3511, U.S.A.
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BOOK INFORMATION SHEET (4.3.26)

Author (as it should appear on the book): William Frej

Title: *Iraq*

Subtitle: *Under an Ancient Sun*

Contributors: with a foreword by Willem McCloud and essays by Diana K. McDonald and Zaid Ghazi-Saadallah

Partner: Published in association with the Center for the Study of Place

Distributor: Casemate/IPM

Book pages: 244

Number and type of illustrations: 1 map (color) + 132 duotone photographs by William Frej + 8 color historic illustrations of artifacts = 141 illustrations

Trim size: 12.0" x 10.0" (landscape/horizontal)

List price: \$55.00 (until 31 December 2027 when the price will increase)

Discount: Trade

ISBN (book): 978-1-960521-15-6

Edition: hardcover/PLC

E-book? TBD

Jacket: Yes

Edition size: 750

Publication date: October 2026

Advances due: August 2026

To warehouse: September 2026

Printed in: Italy

Bookstore categories: Architecture/Archeology/Photography/World History

Audience: Anyone interested in architecture, archeology, and preservation; ancient world history where human civilization originated, and art and fine-art photography.

Selling points (list three): This book's should appeal to a wide array of readers, from scholars in numerous fields to general readers interested in such a historic place; the photographs are stunningly beautiful and perceptive; and the texts, written by leading figures, are informative and compelling.

Tagline: An unforgettable look at the ancient cities and sites of Iraq where human civilization began!

Related GFT titles: *Unforgotten: Ancient Cities from a Distant Past* (2025) by William Frej; *Central America in*

the Crosshairs of War: On the Road from Vietnam to Iraq by Scott Wallace (2024); *Picturesque Palestine, Sinai, and Egypt: Artworks and Letters of John Douglas Woodward, 1878–1879* edited by Sue Rainey (2024); *The Uyghurs: Kashgar before the Catastrophe* by Kevin Bubriski (2023).

Description of the work:

Iraq: Under an Ancient Sky offers a striking present-day view of some of the world’s oldest cities in Mesopotamia, the “Cradle of Civilization.” Even today, thousands of years after reaching their historic pinnacles, these cities offer an incredible vision of the splendor and magnificence of Mesopotamia’s ancient world.

This visually stunning book features 132 duotone photographs by award-winning photographer William Frej, who documents twenty-three ancient cities in present-day Iraq, from Eridu in the south to Erbil in the north. In some places, the most visible remains of the ancient city are *tells*—huge mounds created by generations of human habitation that are now covered in dust and sand. At others sites, such as Ur, ziggurats have been largely restored and show their scale and the architectural skills involved in creating urban settings more than 5,000 years ago. And at Babylon original architectural elements and reconstructions combine to reveal a vision of one of history’s most famous cities.

In addition to Frej’s photographs, *Iraq* features a foreword by renowned scholar Willem McLoud and an introduction by William Frej, which sets the stage for the visual journey within. In his essay, by Zaid Ghazi Saadallah, Director of the Mosul Cultural Museum, offers his perspectives on contemporary preservation activities that highlight the resilience of Iraq in rebuilding its cultural heritage after years of conflict. And historical context is provided by an essay by art historian Diana K. McDonald who surveys the history of the region from Sumer in the fourth millennium BCE through the Akkadian Empire, Babylonia, and, to the north, Assyria and the cities of the Seleucid, Parthian, and Sasanian Empires. *Iraq* is a book that informs, inspires, and enlightens readers about a place where human civilization began.

Blurbs:

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About the Author:

[short]

William Frej has an academic background and professional experience in architecture and city planning with degrees from the University of Arizona and U.C. Berkeley. In the mid-1980s he and his wife traveled extensively in the mountain regions of Nepal, Pakistan and northern India. He then served as a career diplomat with the US Agency for International Development (USAID), living and working in Indonesia, Poland, Kazakhstan, and

Afghanistan. His photographic work is represented in numerous public and private collections throughout the world and has been featured in a number of exhibitions at galleries and museums. Frej is the author of five multi-award-winning books: *Maya Ruins Revisited: In the Footsteps of Teobert Maler* (Peyton Wright/University of Oklahoma Press, 2020); *Seasons of Ceremonies: Rites and Rituals in Guatemala and Mexico* (Museum of New Mexico Press, 2021); *Travels Across the Roof of the World: A Himalayan Memoir* (George F. Thompson Publishing, 2022); *Blurred Boundaries: Perspectives on Rock Art of the Greater Southwest* (Museum of New Mexico Press, 2023); and *Unforgotten: Ancient Cities from a Distant Past* (George F. Thompson Publishing, 2025). The Lowell Thomas Travel Journalism Competition awarded a Silver Medal to *Travels Across the Roof of the World* in 2023.

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William Frej (b. 1947), an award-winning photographer and author, began his career as an architect and later served as an international development specialist and U.S. Senior Foreign Service career diplomat with the Agency for International Development (USAID), living and working in Indonesia, Poland, Kazakhstan, and Afghanistan and traveling extensively in Nepal, Pakistan, Central Asia, and, most recently, Mexico and Guatemala. Always with his camera at his side, he has been photographing Indigenous people and their environments since the 1970s, documenting the changing lifestyles and architecture of many of the world's unique and ancient cultures.

Maya Ruins Revisited: In the Footsteps of Teobert Maler (Peyton Wright Gallery Press, 2020), Frej's first book of fine-art photography on Maya ruins and Teobert Maler, the early explorer/photographer, is the recipient of fourteen major awards, including Best Photography Book of 2021 from the Independent Press Awards, the International Book Awards, and the National Indie Excellence Awards as well as a Gold Medal from the 2021 Foreward Magazine INDIES and Silver Medals from the Prix de la Photographie PX3, Next Generation Indie Book Awards, IPPY Independent Publishers Awards, and Moscow International Foto Awards. His second book, *Seasons of Ceremonies: Rites and Rituals of Guatemala and Mexico* (Museum of New Mexico Press, 2021), is the recipient of fourteen major awards, including five Photography Book of the Year awards. His third book, *Travels across the Roof of the World: A Himalayan Memoir* (George F. Thompson Publishing, 2022), received the Silver Medal from the Lowell Thomas Travel Journalism Awards, Best Coffee Table Book from the New Mexico/Arizona Book Awards, a Silver Medal from IPPY for Best Coffee Table Book, a Bronze Medal for Best Travel Book, and Silver Medals from Prix de la Photographie de Paris and the Budapest and Tokyo International Foto Awards. Frej's fourth book, *Blurred Boundaries: Perspectives on Rock Art of the Greater Southwest* (Museum of New Mexico Press, 2023), with the renowned archaeologist Polly Schaafsma, is the recipient of ten awards, including the Juror's Choice Award for Photography from the National Indie Excellence Awards. His fifth book, *Unforgotten: Ancient Cities from a Distant Past* (George F. Thompson Publishing, 2025), is already the recipient of ten awards, including a Gold Medal from the Tokyo International Foto Awards,

Silver Medal from the Budapest International Foto Awards, and Bronze Medal from the Prix de la Photographie, Paris (PX3).

Frej's photographic work has been featured in a variety of exhibitions at galleries and museums in the United States, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, and Mexico. His photography also is represented in private collections, including the Dunbarton Oaks Museum, and in special collections at the University of California, Berkeley, Columbia University, Duke University, University of New Mexico, University of Notre Dame, Stanford University, and Yale University. He lives in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and his Website is www.williamfrejphotography.com.

About the Contributor(s):

Diana K. McDonald is an art historian and lecturer who taught at Columbia University and was on the Fine Arts Faculty of Boston College for seventeen years. She worked at the Ancient Near Eastern Department of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, curated and lectured at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, at Emory University's Michael C. Carlos Museum, at the National Museum of Indonesia in Jakarta, where she was a Henry Luce Scholar, and for the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage when she lived in Poland. Dr. McDonald has written numerous articles and book chapters, including nine essays for *The Looting of the Iraq Museum, Baghdad* (Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 2005), the essay "Ishtar, Lions and Love" in *A Legacy of Learning in Near Eastern Archaeology* (Archaeopress, 2025), and a chapter in *Aphrodite and the Gods of Love* (MFA Publications, 2011). She has curated private collections and is a Great Courses Professor, with her own thirty-six lecture series: "30 Masterpieces of the Ancient World."

Willem McLoud is a scientist, scholar, philosopher, and author with a keen interest in Middle Eastern and Mediterranean studies. His main areas of study are early Egyptian civilization and the Sumerian and Akkadian civilizations of early Mesopotamia, with a focus on the legends and myths associated with these great heroic ages. McLoud is the author of *The Nephilim* (Creative Texts, 2021–2023), a trilogy tracing the long and legendary tradition of those claiming descent from the gods from ancient Sumer and Egypt through the Mediterranean and later into Europe. He is also the author of *Dragon Seed: the Hurrians, Dragon-Slayer Myths and Traditions of Giants* (Creative Texts, 2025) and *Nine Ages of the Nephilim* (Creative Texts, 2025).

Zaid Ghazi Saadallah is the Director of the Mosul Cultural Museum (MCM), a position he assumed in 2017 soon after the city of Mosul's liberation from Daesh (ISIS). He has been involved in archaeological projects at Nineveh and Nimrud, Iraq and, at the museum, Mr. Saadallah directs museum staff and also works closely with international experts on the assessment, documentation, and restoration of the museum's damaged building and important collection. He is a prominent spokesperson for the MCM's post-conflict recovery, emphasizing its

importance as a symbol of Mosul's cultural identity and resilience. He also actively participates in community outreach and educational programs related to the museum's rehabilitation.