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BOOK INFORMATION SHEET (11.13.26)

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

Title: *Iraq*

Subtitle: *Under an Ancient Sun*

Contributors: with a foreword by Willem McLoud 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 Sun 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 other 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 compelling photographs, *Iraq* features a foreword by renowned scholar Willem McLoud and an introduction by William Frej, both of which set the stage for the visual journey within. In his essay, 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 war and conflict. And historical context is provided in 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 Assyria to the north 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:

Iraq: Under an Ancient Sun provides a vivid visual journey through Mesopotamia from the sites of ancient civilizations of Sumer, Akkad, Babylon, and Assyria to the later historic ruins of the north—all remarkable vestiges of a formative past. This land between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in the eastern arm of the Fertile Crescent is a true heartland, home to sites that are among the world's oldest known cities, including Eridu, Lagash, Nimrud, Nineveh, Nippur, Ur, and Uruk. The time-honored pasts of these ancient cities are now revealed in the striking black-and-white photographs by William Frej, who captures the timeless splendor of these sites offering insights into urban life thousands of years ago. The book is also enriched by eloquent text in support of the images by noted scholars Zaid Ghazi Saadallah, Willem McLoud and art historian Diana K.

McDonald, who present readers with the essential history of this region and background on the time-ravaged, mudbrick ruins of the early cities to the later architecturally preserved, and often baked-brick edifices of monuments, such as the ziggurat at Ur, the walls of Babylon, the grand arch of Ctesiphon, as well as still-standing architecture at Hatra, Samarra, and Erbil. William Frej's book is a triumph that will enlighten readers for years to come.
—Vincent C. Pigott, Former Associate Director, Penn Museum

About the Author:

[short]
William Frej is an award-winning photographer who served as a career diplomat with the U.S. 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 award-winning books: *Unforgotten: Ancient Cities from a Distant Past* (2025); *Blurred Boundaries: Perspectives on Rock Art of the Greater Southwest* (2023); *Travels across the Roof of the World: A Himalayan Memoir* (2022); *Seasons of Ceremonies: Rites and Rituals in Guatemala and Mexico* (2021); and *Maya Ruins Revisited: In the Footsteps of Teobert Maler* (2020). 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 the 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, Ph.D., 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 has also worked at the Ancient Near Eastern Department of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, has curated and lectured at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Emory University's Michael C. Carlos Museum, the National Museum of Indonesia in Jakarta, where she was a Henry Luce Scholar, and the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage in Poland; 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, Ph.D., is a scientist, scholar, and philosopher whose main areas of study are early Egyptian civilization and the Sumerian and Akkadian civilizations of early Mesopotamia. He is the author of *The Nephilim*, a trilogy (2021–2023), *Dragon Seed: The Hurrians, Dragon-Slayer Myths and Traditions of Giants* (2025), and *Nine Ages of the Nephilim* (2025).

Zaid Ghazi Saadallah is Director of the Mosul Cultural Museum (MCM) and an archaeologist who has been involved in projects at Nineveh and Nimrud. A spokesperson for the museum's post-conflict recovery, he works

closely with international experts to restore the museum and its important collection.