



# Ancient Marks: The Sacred Origins of Tattoos and Body Marking

*Chris Rainier*

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## **Ancient Marks: The Sacred Origins of Tattoos and Body Marking** Chris Rainier

Seven years, seven continents, and thirty countries, from the African savannah to the barrios of Los Angeles, from New Zealand to Egypt, and Brazil to Burkina Faso, Chris Rainier documented the traditions of tattooing, scarification, piercing, and other forms of body altering art, the origins of which date back to the dawn of humankind. Ancient Marks reveals not only the haunting beauty of these often mystical forms, but also connects them to humanity's enduring efforts to tell stories, forge identity, and create links to the divine. "The human form became, through the brilliance of inspired artistry, a sacred geography of the soul, a map of culture and myth expressed by forms painted, carved, or incised upon the canvas of the body" — Wade Davis. A former apprentice to Ansel Adams, award-winning Chris Rainier is considered one of the leading documentary photographers working today. Co-director of the National Geographic Society's Cultural Ethnosphere Program, he has traveled to all seven continents, including extensive expeditions throughout Africa, Antarctica, and New Guinea. Rainier's photography has been featured in Time, Life, Smithsonian, The New York Times, Outside, and is a contributing editor for National Geographic Traveler, a contributing photographer for National Geographic Adventure and a contributing correspondent for NPR's Day to Day.

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