

# ANCIENT MARKS

## *Mission*

The purpose of the ANCIENT MARKS book and Exhibition is to provide awareness to the connection between culture and the age old tradition of mankind marking the human body. Dating back two thousand years, man has marked the body with tattoos and scarification as a form of initiation, beauty, and highly ritualized ornamentation. That tradition continues into today in our modern Culture. The ANCIENT MARKS Project—through photography and text, communicates the strong need mankind has to Tattoo and decorate the sacred geography of the human body.

## Description of Project

Man has been marking the body with tattoos and scars for over 5,000 years. The ancient mummies of Siberia, Egypt, & the glaciers of the Tyrolian Alps, all have examples of significant body tattooing. Tattooing and marking the body has been prevalent in every wave of human evolution since we stepped from the stone age up to modern society.

There is a powerful renaissance of traditional tribal tattooing taking place throughout indigenous cultures around the planet today. From the islands of the Polynesian South Pacific, to tribal groups of Africa - there is a resurgence of the marking of the body as a sign of traditional initiation and ritual. As tribal cultures begin to re-establish their identity in a post-colonial environment, they are reaching back into their past for ways to re-establish their identity for the future. One such way is, as their ancestors did, to mark the body with a tattoo or scar.

In conjunction with this renaissance is an absolute explosion of the art of tattooing in modern western culture. From the street Gangs of East Los Angeles, to shopping malls of middle America, to the Modern Primitive movement started in the Height & Asbury community of San Francisco, to the maori gangs of Auckland, New Zealand - the marking of the body has arrived as a significant movement in a 21st century modern society.

**ANCIENT MARKS** traces the use of marking the body with tattoos & scars throughout the globe, including within our modern Western society. The project is a culmination of seven years of travelling and photographic

## Description of Project continued

documentation to six continents, and over thirty countries. The book takes the viewer beyond the cultural stereotypes of tattoos merely as a fad, or done only by criminals, sailors, and motorcycle gangs. But rather into the marking of the body as a powerful gesture by every culture, every tribal and modern society to establish a unique identity within the community.

Whether to signify one has moved from childhood into adulthood, or adulthood into warrior status—humans have a need to belong to a special and often elite group. Whether it be the Japanese Ikuza Mafia, or the Mursi tribes of Ethiopia, or even adults found yearly at The Burning Man Festival in the desert of Nevada,—humans need to mark their bodies and belong to a human group.

The book ANCIENT MARKS picks up where various other tattoo books have left off, in that they show only modern western pop cultural tattooing. This book examines the roots of why mankind marks the body, as seen in the vast examples of traditional cultures scattered around the planet,—and explores examples in haunting and mysterious black and white images that provoke the viewer to ask why do we mark our bodies, and why has mankind done so since the dawn of civilization.

## Excerpts from Foreword

by Wade Davis

If the skin of the average human body was laid flat as a map, a sheet of parchment, it would spread over twenty square feet. This fact that did not go unnoticed by the primordial artists of the world. Had Leonardo chosen the human form as his canvas he would have had a surface to work with four times the size of the Mona Lisa. Fully engaged in the unexpressed yet palpable excitement of the Renaissance, he remained focused on other possibilities of expression. But throughout history and for the vast majority of the artists of the world the body has always been the template of the spirit, the palette upon which all dreams and possibilities may be realized and expressed.

Excerpt 2 The human form, whether isolated in the forests of the Amazon, swept clean by the bitter winds of the Arctic, or soothed by sunset rains of Polynesia became through the brilliance of inspired artistry a map of culture and myth, a sacred geography of the soul, all expressed by the simplicity of forms painted, carved, incised, or etched upon the canvas of the body.

Excerpt 3 To contemplate the images in this book, whether the living faces of Polynesia, the raised flesh of Africa, or the erotic tensions of reinvention celebrated at Burning Man, the millenarian gathering that blossoms each year from the deserts of Nevada, is to remember why all peoples through all time have in the end found ways, whatever the impediments, to seek and celebrate a transformation of the spirit.

# Chris Rainier

## Resume

Chris Rainier is considered one of the leading documentary photographers working today. His mysterious images of sacred places and indigenous peoples of the planet have been seen in the leading publications of the day including: Time, Life, National Geographic publications, Outside, Conde Nast Traveler, Equinox, The New York Times, Smithsonian, Mens Journal, Islands, The New Yorker, German and French Geo, and the publications of the International Red Cross, The United Nations, and Amnesty International. Rainier, a Canadian citizen, is a photographer for National Geographic Society and specializes in documenting indigenous cultures for the Societies Cultures Initiative. His photographs and books have been widely exhibited and collected around the world.

Chris is a Co-Director of the National Geographic Society Cultures program, and Director of the Cultures on the Edge website under the auspices of NGS. Rainier is a contributing Editor for National Geographic Traveler and regularly completes stories on Culture.

From 1980 to 1985, Rainier was photographic and environmental assistant to Ansel Adams - the noted landscape photographer.

He has received numerous awards for his photography including: Five Picture of the Year Awards for his continued documentation of vanishing tribes, A Communication Arts award for his last book on New Guinea, Where Masks Still Dance: New Guinea, a recipient of an Alfred Eisenstadt Award in 1998 for his photography of the Sahara desert, and an International Golden Light

## Chris Rainier

Resume continued

Award in 1994 for his first book: KEEPERS OF THE SPIRIT. Chris was recently included in American Photo Magazine's 100 most influential people working in Photography today list.

Rainier has traveled to all seven continents, and has been apart of a 1992 expedition to the North Pole and seven expeditions to Antarctica. During the 1990's he worked as a war photographer for Time Magazine covering conflicts in: Sarajevo/Bosnia, Somalia, Ethiopia, Cambodia, Rwanda, and the Middle East. He is a member of the Explorers Club in New York City, and in 2002 won their prestigious Lowell Thomas Award for Adventure story telling. He is also the Director of a website connecting tribal cultures around the globe through the internet, called Cultures on the Edge ([culturesontheedge.com](http://culturesontheedge.com)) at The Ethnosphere Project at The National Geographic Society

His second book: WHERE MASKS STILL DANCE: NEW GUINEA was published in 1996 with an exhibition that is presently touring Museums both in North America and Asia.

# Wade Davis

## Resume

Wade Davis is an Explorer-in-Residence at the National Geographic Society. He holds degrees in Anthropology and Biology and received his Ph.D. in Ethno Botany, all from Harvard University. Mostly through the Harvard Botanical Museum, he spent over three years in the Amazon and Andes as a plant explorer, living among fifteen indigenous groups in eight Latin American nations while making some 6000 botanical collections. His work later took him to Haiti to investigate folk preparations implicated in the creation of zombies. An assignment that led to his writing *Passage of Darkness* (1988) and *The Serpent and the Rainbow* (1986), an international best seller which appeared in ten languages and was later released by Universal as a motion picture. His other books include *Penan: Voice for the Borned Rain Forest* (1990), *Nomads of the Dawn* (1995), *The Clouded Leopard* (1998), *Shadows in the Sun* (1998), *Rainforest* (1998) and *One River* (1996), which was nominated for the 1997 Governor General's Literary Award for nonfiction, Canada's most prestigious literary prize. His most recent book is *Light at the Edge of the World* (2002). He is the recipient of numerous awards including the 2002 Lowell Thomas Medal (The Explorer's Club) and the 2002 Lannan Foundation \$125,000 prize for literary non-fiction. Recently his work has taken him to East Africa, Peru, Borneo, Tibet, The High Arctic, the Orinoco Delta of Venezuela, and the deserts of Mali and Burkina Faso.

A native of British Columbia, Davis has worked as a guide, park ranger, forestry engineer, and conducted ethnographic fieldwork among several indigenous societies of northern Canada. He has published over a hundred scientific and

## Wade Davis

Resume continued

popular articles on subjects ranging from Haitian voodoo and Amazonian myth and religion to the global biodiversity crisis. The traditional use of psychotropic drugs, and the ethno botany of South American Indians.

He has written for *National Geographic*, *Newsweek*, *Premiere*, *Outside*, *Omni*, *Harpers*, *Fortune*, *Men's Journal*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, *Natural History*, *Utne Reader*, *National Geographic Traveler*, *The New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, *The Globe and Mail*, and several other international publications.

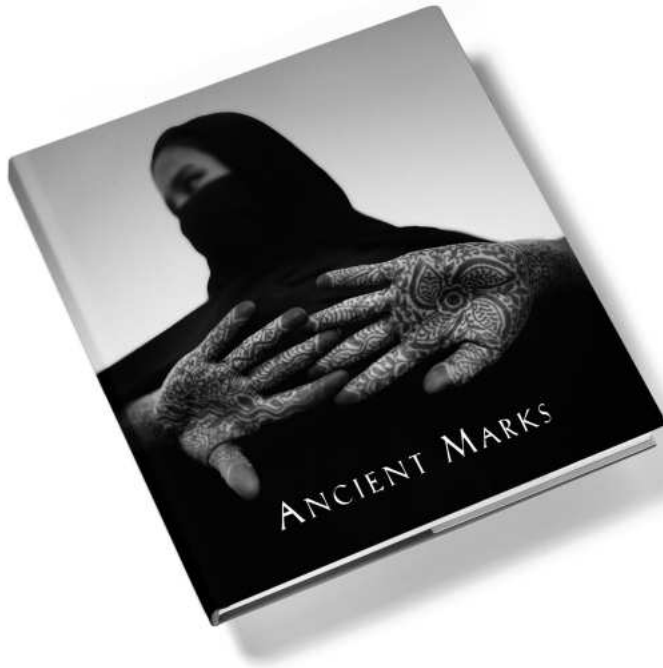
His photographs have been widely published, and his research has been the subject of more than 600 media reports and interviews in Europe, North and South America and the Far East, and have inspired numerous documentary films as well as three episodes of the television series, *The X-Files*.

A professional speaker for nearly twenty years, Davis has lectured at numerous national and international institutions and organizations.

An Honorary Research Associate of the Institute of Economic botany of the New York Botanical Garden, he is a Fellow of the Linnean Society, Fellow of The Explorer's Club, Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society and Executive Director of the Endangered People's Project. Davis is a board member of the David Suzuki Foundation, Future Generations, Cultural Survival and Rivers Canada, all NGOs dedicated to conservation based development and the protection of cultural and biological diversity. He also serves on the board of the Banff Centre, Canada's leading institution for the arts.



# ANCIENT MARKS



PHOTOGRAPHY: Chris Rainier

FOREWORD: Wade Davis, 2,000 words

INTRODUCTION: Chris Rainier, 2,000 words

PAGES: 168

IMAGES: 100, an ethnographic list of plates  
and world map

COVER: Hardbound with cloth

SIZE: 12 x 12 inches

STOCK: 90 lb. Cover Utopia 1X silk  
(or equivalent)

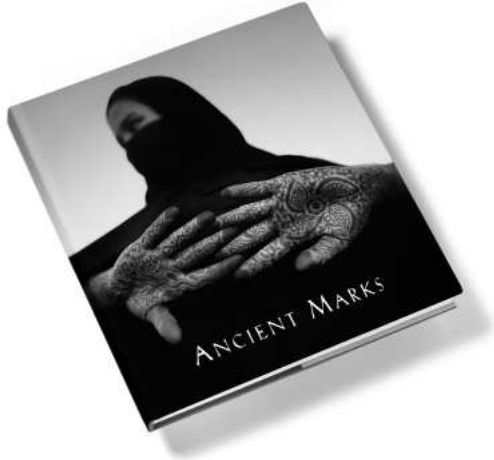
JACKET: 6c/0, french fold, 5-inch flaps,  
dull laminated

INKS: 6c/6c + coating throughout

## ANCIENT MARKS PROJECT

PMB# 337 1718 M Street NW, Washington DC 20036 PHONE 646.246.6085  
3030 State Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93105 PHONE 805.563.0099 FAX 805.563.2070  
© Ancient Marks Project / Media 27, Inc Chris Rainier All Rights Reserved.

# ANCIENT MARKS





Freewind

MOOREA, TAHITI

A N C I E N T M A R K S

© Ancient Marks Project / Media 27, Inc Chris Rainier All Rights Reserved.



Monk with Elephant Tattoo

BANGKOK, THAILAND

A N C I E N T M A R K S



Guajaret Woman

GUAJARET, INDIA



Modern Man

MOOREA, TAHITI

A N C I E N T M A R K S

© Ancient Marks Project / Media 27, Inc Chris Rainier All Rights Reserved.



Maori Chief

MAORI SACRED LAND, NORTHERN NEW ZEALAND

A N C I E N T M A R K S



Japanese Woman

TOKYO, JAPAN

A N C I E N T M A R K S





Pregnant Woman with Scarification

OMO VALLEY, ETHIOPIA

A N C I E N T M A R K S



Borneo Headhunter

BORNEO

A N C I E N T M A R K S



Xingu Women

XINGU TRIBAL AREA, BRAZIL

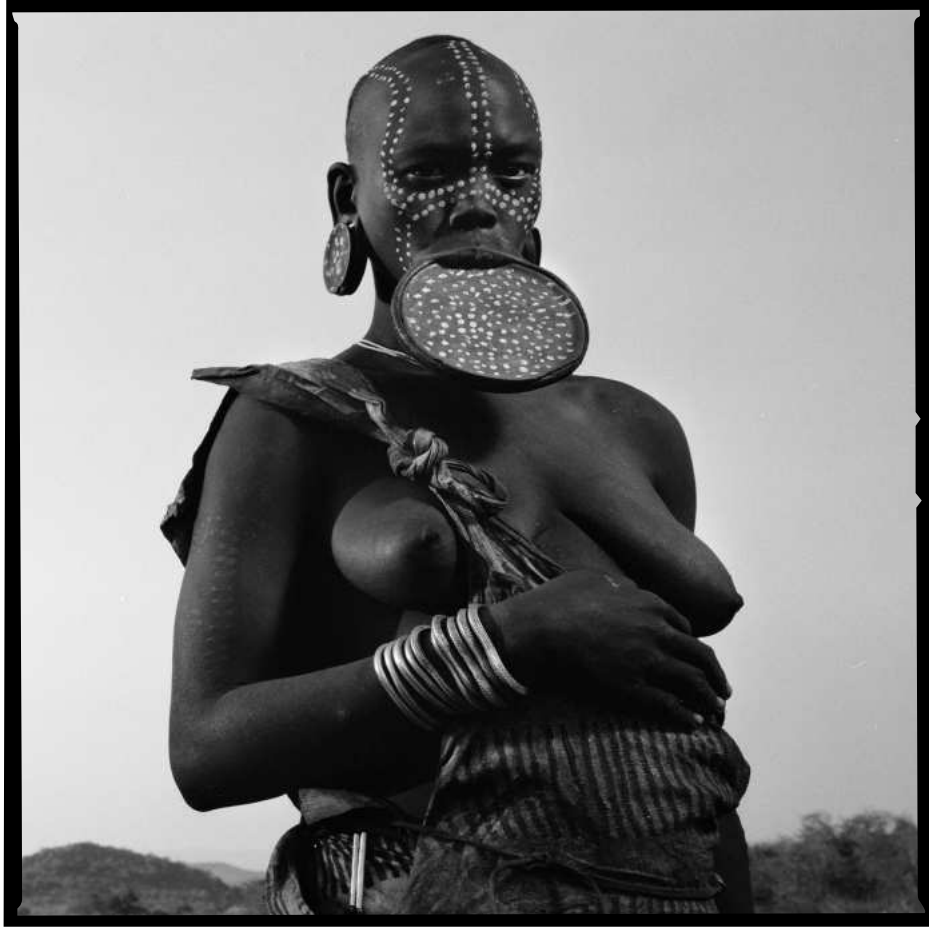
A N C I E N T M A R K S



Boni Tribe Man with Scarification

BURKINA-FASO, WEST AFRICA

A N C I E N T M A R K S



Mursi Woman with Lip Plate

OMO VALLEY, ETHIOPIA

A N C I E N T M A R K S



Moroccan Woman with Henna Hands

NORTHERN SAHARA, MOROCCO

A N C I E N T M A R K S

# ANCIENT MARKS

PUBLISHED BY

media27

[www.media27.com](http://www.media27.com)

DISTRIBUTED BY



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

ANCIENT MARKS PROJECT

PMB# 337 1718 M Street NW, Washington DC 20036 PHONE 646.246.6085  
3030 State Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93105 PHONE 805.563.0099 FAX 805.563.2070

© Ancient Marks Project / Media 27, Inc Chris Rainier All Rights Reserved.