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Download *Flights Over Ancient Cities of Iran*, Erich F. Schmidt, 1940, University of Chicago Press, 1976:

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View the following videos on YouTube:

"Persepolis from the Air" (featured in the exhibit):

youtu.be/uJf5bnHUIQw

"The Human Adventure" (produced in 1935 by the Oriental Institute under the supervision of James H. Breasted, written and narrated by his son Charles Breasted):

youtu.be/yysHJkOv5XA

Learn about Oriental Institute Research Projects on Iran, including Persepolis Fortification Archive and Achemenet:

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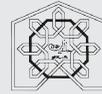
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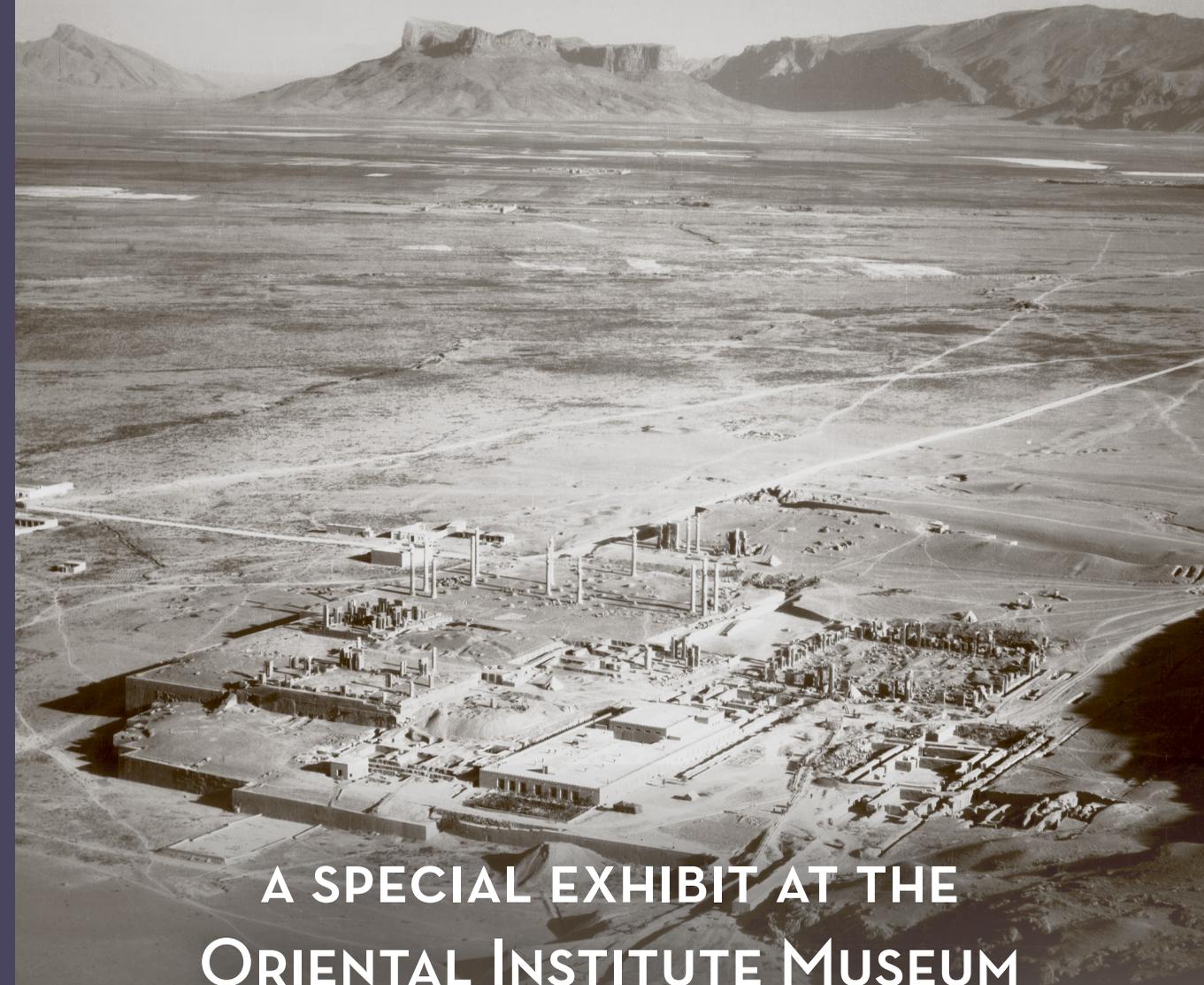


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PERSEPOLIS IMAGES OF AN EMPIRE



A SPECIAL EXHIBIT AT THE
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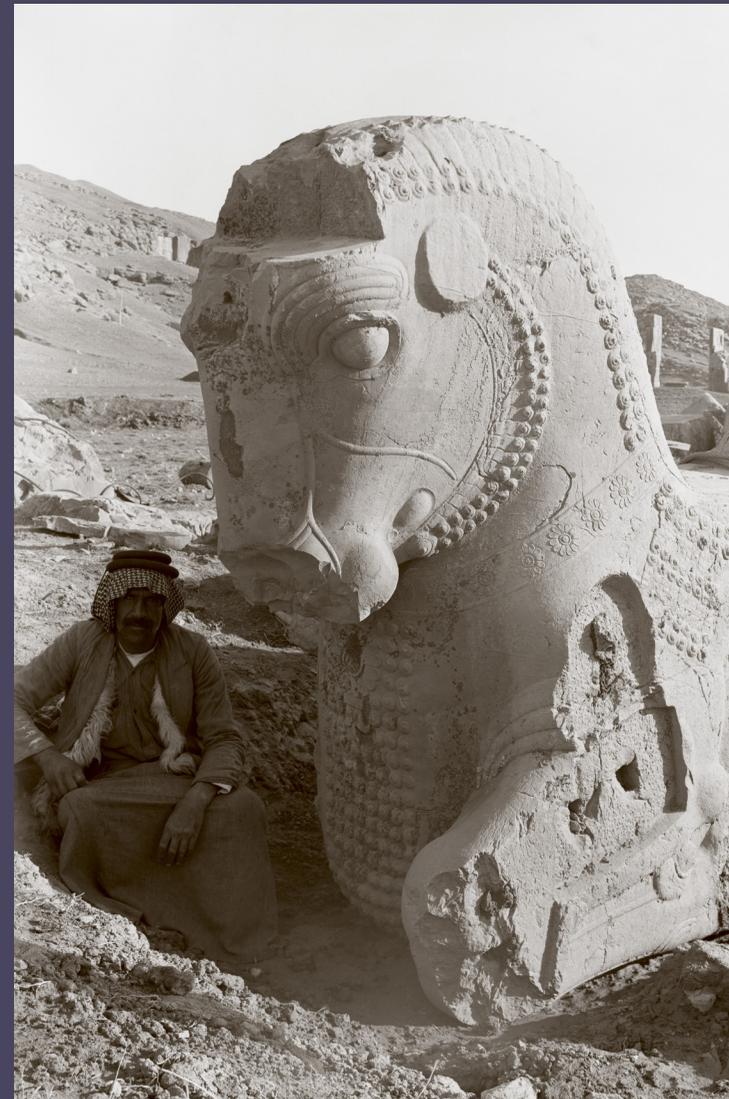


“Indeed every remains of these noble ruins indicate their former grandeur and magnificence, truly worthy of being the residence of a great and powerful monarch; and whilst viewing them, the mind becomes impressed with an awful solemnity!”

William Francklin, British Officer of the East India Company, 18th century

From 1931 through 1939 Ernst Herzfeld and Erich Schmidt directed the Oriental Institute’s Persian Expedition in Iran. During their exploration, excavation, and restoration of this ancient site of the Achaemenid Persian empire (550–330 BC), Herzfeld and Schmidt had photographers Hans-Wichart von Busse and Boris Dubensky document the architectural wonders and landscape of Persepolis. This rich collection of approximately 3,700 negatives is now housed in the Museum Archives of the Oriental Institute. The photographs featured in *Persepolis: Images of an Empire* capture the quintessential elements of Achaemenid Persian architectural style: forests of columns, monumental audience halls, elaborate staircases, and stone relief carvings of people from all corners of the empire. This court style expresses the Achaemenid imperial ideology of harmonious order, power, and diversity of the empire. The photographs also demonstrate the contrast between the imperial terrace with its imposing architecture and the surrounding plain, an opposition that enhances the grandeur and monumentality of Persepolis.

While in Iran, Erich Schmidt conducted two seasons of aerial survey explorations of an unprecedented scale (1935–1937). From his plane, given to him by his wife Mary-Helen Warden Schmidt, and named *Friend of Iran*, Schmidt and his assistant Dubensky took aerial photographs of excavations already in progress, of sites under consideration for archaeological work, and of areas of Iran yet to be explored. The aerial photographs allow archaeologists to see ancient architectural plans and road networks, and to understand the relationship between ancient settlements and their surrounding environment. They also provide records of landscapes that are now profoundly altered. A digital video on display in the gallery created by the Oriental Institute’s Center for Ancient Middle Eastern Landscapes (CAMEL) allows you to explore the architecture of the site and to observe some of the differences between the Persepolis of today and that of Schmidt’s era.



Facing page, left: View of the eastern staircase and columns of the Apadana (Audience Hall); right: Winged sphinx from the Palace of Darius. This page, left: Worker alongside the double-bull column capital from the Unfinished Gate; right top to bottom: Relief of Persian and Median guards from the Central Building, Central Hall of the Palace of Darius, staircase relief of a lion battling a bull from the Central Building.

Front Cover: Aerial view of Persepolis, facing northwest, taken during the Aerial Survey Expedition, 1937.