

## This Fertile Land

### Signs and Symbols in the Early Arts of Iran and Iraq

edited by Margaret Cool Root

**DESCRIPTION:**

This volume accompanies an exhibition of the same name at the Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, February 4-September 30, 2005. Far more than merely a catalogue of the exhibition, it offers for a wide readership an introduction to the art of late prehistory (around 4000 BC) in Iran and Iraq, by bringing together a range of expressive visual tools-seals, sealings, and painted pottery. The focus is on a time before written expressions of belief, mythology, identity, or administrative documentation, but also a time of ripened recourse to other visual strategies of communication that set the stage for writing as we conceive it. A series of 11 imaginative interpretative essays explores the evidence and the methods we can use to approach an understanding of the role of visual imagery (of signs and symbols) in late prehistory, and to ask questions of this material as a means of approaching possible social meanings. The book is lavishly illustrated, and includes catalogue entries for every object included in the exhibition.

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