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Iraq: The Space Between



Synopsis

During the American-led invasion of Iraq in 2003 Christoph Bangert was still attending photography school. Only later, in the spring of 2005, when the Iraqi insurgency and sectarian violence reached its first peak, Westerners were kidnapped and beheaded, and most foreign journalists had left the country, did this intrepid photographer start to work in Iraq on assignment for The New York Times. The overtly hostile environment in Iraq for foreigners, without regard of the individual's intention or affiliation, restricts the freedom of journalists, particularly photographers, who (unlike writers) must be physically present in order to get the story. Despite these conditions Bangert remained in Iraq as one of the few Western photographers committed to cover the war throughout 2006 and early 2007. He has worked largely independently from the military, using Iraqi guards, drivers, and translators, but was also occasionally embedded with American, British, and Iraqi forces. *Iraq: The Space Between* records the distance he traveled as a civilian between worlds committed to destruction in the name of freedom.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Christoph Bangert, born in Daun, Germany in 1978, studied mechanical engineering at the Universität Karlsruhe, photography at the Fachhochschule Dortmund, and photojournalism at the International Center of Photography, New York. He worked as a freelance photographer for the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung and covered the war in Iraq for The New York Times. His work has been published in Stern, Time, Newsweek, The New York Times Magazine, GEO, Der Spiegel,

Neon, PDN, VICE, Days Japan, Sports Illustrated, and Tagesanzeiger Zürich. He is part of the Regeneration exhibition and book project created by the Musée de l'Élysée, Lausanne, Switzerland, and was chosen both as one of 50 young photographers worldwide, representing all genres of photography, to shape the future of the medium in the next 25 years and as one of Photo District News's "30 Under 30". Christoph Bangert is the author of *Travel Notes* (powerHouse Books, 2006), his account of a six-month long overland journey from Buenos Aires to New York. He currently lives in Brooklyn. Jon Lee Anderson has been writing for *The New Yorker* since 1998. He has reported frequently from Iraq and has covered the conflicts in Afghanistan and Lebanon. He has also reported from Liberia, Angola, Colombia, Venezuela, Cuba, and Iran, among other places. He has written numerous profiles of political and cultural leaders, including Hugo Chavez, Fidel Castro, Augusto Pinochet, Gabriel García Márquez, King Juan Carlos, Hamid Karzai, and Jalal Talabani. Anderson is the author of several books and his work has been published in *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Harper's*, *The Financial Times*, *The Guardian*, *El País*, and other journals. He currently lives in Dorset, England, with his wife and three children.

In a book with next to no words, this collection by Christoph Bangert quite possibly says more about Iraq than many books available today. At great risk of harm to himself, Bangert traveled Iraq with anyone who would let him follow along. The result is one of the most candid looks at what has happened in the country over the past several years. The images are in a word, stunning. While it's possible to flip through the book quickly and not let the pictures sink in, doing so robs the book of its true value. Someone stumbling across this book in a store while shopping will most likely give the book only a cursory glance, but sitting down and really giving this book the time it deserves means getting lost in a single picture for 10 minutes or more. It took me over two hours to finish a book with no words. That's impressive. Some of the images are quite disturbing and graphic, so please prepare yourself for a sometimes shocking experience. Anyone with more than a passing interest in Iraq should find "reading" this book a highly rewarding experience, as well as anyone who loves beautiful photography.

I bought this as a gift for a photographer friend and he liked it very much. I had chatted with the author I met on my travel website, [...]. Mostly photos, not too much text. I recommend this book.

This photography book is absolutely amazing! It features a very interesting and eloquent foreword by Jon Lee Anderson, who just had an article on Iraq in the *New Yorker* (Nov. 19), thus being not

only a great writer, but also an insider on the situation in Iraq. The photographs by Christoph Bangert are captivating, beautiful, and shocking all at once. You can't help but turn to the next page, even though many of the subjects are hard to take in. Bangert shows us a different view of the conflict in Iraq, addressing the Iraqi victims as much as the situation of the American soldiers. I found this book to be informative without trying to be lecturing or preaching, just quiet photographs leaving me as the viewer with my own thoughts and contemplations. The images are powerful, the quality of the photographs and the layout is convincing. PowerHouse managed to publish this photography book for an amazing value on top of it being a book you will pick up over and over again, the images just won't leave me alone.

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