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"In this lively, evocative volume, the author shares his expertise as a practicing architect to consider Classic Maya architecture: its roots, forms, and social implications."--Wendy Ashmore, coauthor of *Discovering our Past: A Brief Introduction to Archaeology*

"A worthwhile addition to the library of anyone interested in the world of the Maya."--William N. Morgan, author of *Earth Architecture: From Ancient to Modern*

Great civilizations are built upon multiple layers of accumulated knowledge. By examining the remains of Maya cities, we can learn valuable principles of architectural design and how their dynamic society--in a hostile environment and in a relatively short time--was able to blossom and create such harmonious architectural masterpieces.

In this illuminating volume, acclaimed architect Kenneth Treister brings a unique perspective to the physical remains of the ancient Maya cities. Through his knowledgeable treatment of construction methods and materials, Treister discusses the ways in which Maya structures have influenced current forms of design and construction, including those of Frank Lloyd Wright and his own award-winning work. Informed by a lifetime spent observing how people interact with their built environments, Treister provides insight not only into Maya architecture but also into the impact it had on Maya society.

The vivid images that accompany the text offer examples of art and architecture from many Maya cities spanning some 3,000 years, from the Preclassic through the Postclassic period and into modern times. Treister also examines Maya domestic styles and the richness of their textile motifs.

By observing these ancient cities Treister seeks to unlock the secret of the Maya's mysterious collapse. The energy, enterprise, and pride that enabled these people to create such majesty may hold the seeds of their destruction. In their buildings, Treister finds not only the mortar that held their civilization together but the competitiveness that was the cause of its ruin as well.

Kenneth Treister, FAIA, is an architect, sculptor, photographer, artist, and lecturer. He has

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received numerous awards for his architectural and sculptural designs and is coauthor of Havana Forever: A Pictorial and Cultural History of an Unforgettable City.