



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Photographer David Freese Reveals the Mississippi River's  
Complicated Past, Present, and Future**

*Aegon Transamerica Foundation announces the release of Mississippi River: Headwaters and Heartland to Delta and Gulf, a collaboration with George F. Thompson Publishing, the Center for the Study of Place, and Casemate Publishers*

The Aegon Transamerica Foundation, George F. Thompson Publishing, and Casemate Publishers are proud to announce the release of *Mississippi River: Headwaters and Heartland to Delta and Gulf*, the third book in acclaimed photographer David Freese's trilogy on North American waters. In *Mississippi River*, Freese's stunning photography takes readers on an epic 2,552-mile journey, from the iconic river's source at Lake Itasca in Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico. Freese's photographs cover a wide diversity of industry and farmland, cities and towns, landscapes and wildlife—while also revealing the constant flow of goods, grain, and fuel that travels up and down the United States' major shipping artery. The book will be available July 4, 2020.

Made possible through the Aegon Transamerica Foundation's support of the Center for the Study of Place and its American Land Publishing Project, *Mississippi River* comes at a moment of great change and reflection in the United States. As the country faces the challenges of tomorrow, it is also reckoning with its past. From the legacy of slavery and the removal of Indigenous peoples to modern-day environmental concerns and the ongoing dangers posed by increased flooding, *Mississippi River* reveals a complicated past, present, and future as humankind attempts to control nature.

"No one has rendered the Mississippi River as David Freese has in his remarkable new book of photography and text," said publisher George F. Thompson. "His book is truly a gift to the nation, and all Americans should thank him and the Aegon Transamerica Foundation for making *Mississippi River* possible."

Before setting his sights on the Mississippi River, David Freese spent fifteen years photographing the West and East Coasts of North America, resulting in two magnificent books—*West Coast: Bering to Baja* and *East Coast: Arctic to Tropic*—both published by George F. Thompson Publishing. His photographs have been published in a wide array of noteworthy publications and can be found in numerous museum collections across the country.

"The Mississippi River is a beloved, often romanticized character in American history, as reflective of American land and life as any other American place," said Freese. "The United States depends on the Mississippi like no other river, and it is my hope that my photographs from the ground and the air convey the wonder, complexity, and depth of its being."

*Mississippi River* includes a foreword by Sarah Kennel, the Donald and Marilyn Keough Family Curator of Photography at the High Museum of Art in Atlanta. Kennel places Freese's images in the canon of landscape photography as a significant body of work that documents, critiques, honors, and sanctifies America's most treasured river. The book also includes a long historical essay by the acclaimed and best-selling author Simon Winchester, who provides compelling descriptions and observations about a river that is so much more than a familiar name.



“We are honored to represent the George F. Thompson publishing program,” said Sam Caggiula, Director of Marketing and Publicity for Casemate Publishers. “It has been especially satisfying to meet and work with David Freese on *Mississippi River*. The scope of this project is immense and readers are going to love this book. We are also grateful to the Aegon Transamerica Foundation for its support, which made David’s endeavor possible.”

Since it was established in 1994, the Aegon Transamerica Foundation has supported nonprofit organizations that promote the arts and culture, civic engagement and community development, education and financial literacy, health and wellness, human needs and services, and the overall wellbeing of the communities where Transamerica’s employees live and work.

“At Transamerica, we believe our responsibilities extend beyond our core business, and we are committed to helping improve the wellness of our communities,” said Jay Orlandi, Chief Operating Officer of Transamerica and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Aegon Transamerica Foundation. “*Mississippi River* shows us a complex vision of America’s most essential waterway, one that is beautiful and immersive as well as striking and poignant. Freese’s photography has the ability to bring sharp focus to the challenges awaiting us with respect to sustainability, climate change, and environmental justice. That’s why we are so proud to support this important book about such an impactful resource. It is a necessary call to action for a responsible and sustainable future.”

#### **About Transamerica**

With a history that dates back more than 100 years, Transamerica is recognized as a leading provider of life insurance, retirement and investment solutions, serving millions of customers throughout the United States. Recognizing the necessity of health and wellness during peak working life, Transamerica’s dedicated professionals work to help people take the steps necessary to live better today so they can worry less about tomorrow. Transamerica serves nearly every customer segment, providing a broad range of quality life insurance and investment products, individual and group pension plans, as well as asset management services. In 2019, Transamerica fulfilled its promises to customers, paying more than \$50 billion in insurance, retirement, and annuity claims and benefits, including return of annuity premiums paid by the customer. Transamerica’s corporate headquarters is located in Baltimore, Maryland, with other major operations in Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Transamerica is part of the Aegon group of companies. Based in the Netherlands, Aegon is one of the world’s largest providers of life insurance, pension solutions and asset management products, operating in more than 20 markets worldwide. For the full year of 2019, Aegon managed over \$1 trillion in revenue generating investments. For more information, please visit [www.transamerica.com](http://www.transamerica.com).

#### **About David Freese**

David Freese worked for 35 years as a corporate/industrial freelance photographer who concurrently pursued his image making passions as an artist and as an educator. He now devotes his full attention to various fine-art photography projects/books and to teaching in the Film and Media Arts Department at Temple University. Freese is the photographer/author of the companion books *West Coast: Bering to Baja*, released in 2012, and *East Coast: Arctic to Tropic*, released in 2016. *Mississippi River: Headwaters and Heartland to Delta and Gulf* completes his trilogy on North American waters in a time of rapid climate change.

Freese’s work has been published in *Communication Arts*, *Hyperallergic*, *Lenscratch*, *MIT Technology Review*, *Photo District News*, *Polaroid International*, *Popular Photography*, *Smithsonian Air and Space*, *Time-Life Books*, and *View Camera*. Freese’s photographs have been exhibited nationally and are in the collections of the Center for Creative Photography, Cleveland Museum of Art, Crocker Art Museum, Denver Art Museum, Haverford College, James A. Michener Art Museum, Library of Congress, Peabody Essex Museum of Art, Polaroid Collection, as well as many other museum and corporate art collections. He has received a Polaroid Artist Support Grant and both a Fellowship in the Visual Arts and a Special Opportunity Stipend from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts as well as artist grants for photography by the Ruth and Harold Chenven Foundation and the Puffin Foundation. For more information, please visit [www.davidfreesephoto.net](http://www.davidfreesephoto.net).

**About George F. Thompson Publishing**

Books developed by GFT since 1984 have helped to establish new fields of publishing in geography and landscape studies, environmental and planning history, architecture and photography, garnering widespread attention worldwide and winning more than 110 editorial awards and prizes. These include multiple "best-book" honors in 33 academic, artistic, and professional fields, among them awards from the American Historical Association, American Society of Landscape Architects, Association of American Geographers, Association of American Publishers, Environmental History Association, Independent Publishers Group, New York City Award for Cultural History, PEN Center U.S.A. West, Pioneer America Society, Society of American City and Regional Planning History, Society of Architectural Historians, Society for the History of Technology, and Vernacular Architectural Forum.

In addition to the books that appear under the GFT imprint, some book projects are developed by and published by GFT in association with partner presses and nonprofit organizations. These include Liveright/W. W. Norton, Radius Books, and numerous university presses as well as the American Land Publishing Project, Denver Art Museum, Elizabeth Firestone Graham Foundation, Foundation for Landscape Studies, Furthermore (a program of the J. M. Kaplan Foundation), Hubbard Foundation, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, Scanlan Foundation, and University of Baltimore Foundation, among others. For more information, please visit <http://www.gftbooks.com/>.

**About Casemate Publishers**

Founded in 2001, Casemate is a major specialist publisher and book distributor in the North American market. Casemate offers print and digital books to the public and to libraries through a variety of channels, platforms, and vendors, as well as traditional and online retailers.

Casemate has grown to become the leading publisher in the fields of military history, defense studies, and military science in the U.S. Casemate has a burgeoning publishing list covering subjects as diverse as Roman History and today's current conflicts. For more information, please visit <https://www.casematepublishers.com/>.

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