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Ruins have fascinated and intrigued viewers for centuries. These include not only famous sites like Angkor Wat and the Temple of Olympian Zeus, but the remnants of natural disasters like the Lisbon earthquake. This book--the catalog for an exhibition held at the Getty Center--explores the allure of ruins and examines the roles that they play in modern cultural life. An incisive introduction laying out the general issues is followed by an essay discussing the nature of the fragment, a discussion of the Research Institute's vast holdings of item relating to ruins, a unique section uses juxtaposed color images, and quotations drawn from literary works to point out the longevity and prominence of the ruin as a metaphor.

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