

★ **Trinity: An Illustrated History of the World's First Atomic Test**

Emily Seyl

Paul Ziomek, Illustrator

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The heavens light up in Emily Seyl and Paul Ziomek's photographic history *Trinity*, which presents the testing of the first atomic bomb in a way heretofore unknown.

In 1945, the use of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki astonished the general public; such catastrophic destruction didn't seem possible. But as early as 1938, scientists had predicted the vast capabilities of nuclear energy and its particular potential for military applications. In response, the Western powers formed a group whose aim was to research, develop, and test an atomic weapon. The members of the top-secret Manhattan Project trod into dangerous, uncharted territory with their monumental undertaking, which necessitated extensive, exhaustive documentation. Here, evidence of their work appears in comprehensive, stunning form.

To honor the complexity of the Manhattan Project, great care is taken to communicate the manifold, intricate procedures of the Trinity test in an inclusive, understandable fashion. Exceptional descriptions reveal the labyrinthine procedures and mind-boggling feats of logistics, forming digestible, enlightening paragraphs that respect the complexity of the operation itself.

Indeed, the sheer breadth of the book's coverage is staggering. Images of maps, schematics, laboratories, staff at work, the testing grounds, classified documents, handwritten notes, and leading-edge recording equipment can all be found within, each with its own informative caption. It is the most comprehensive visual record of the Trinity detonation ever assembled, containing restored images of the blast that have only just become public. This bounty of documentation promotes a new appreciation for the titan of human achievement that was the Trinity test.

Trinity is an amazing photographic history of the revolutionary test that kicked off the atomic age.

IAN DAILEY (May / June 2026)

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