

New Documentary 'Seeking the Grottoes of the Shu Road' Reveals China's Ancient Artistic Corridor

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- The Guangyuan City Converged Media Center today announced the release of "Seeking the Grottoes of the Shu Road", a new two-part cultural documentary. The film presents a comprehensive exploration of the art, history, and preservation of a vital, yet often overlooked, network of Buddhist and Daoist grottoes carved into the cliffsides of the ancient Shu Roads in Sichuan Province.

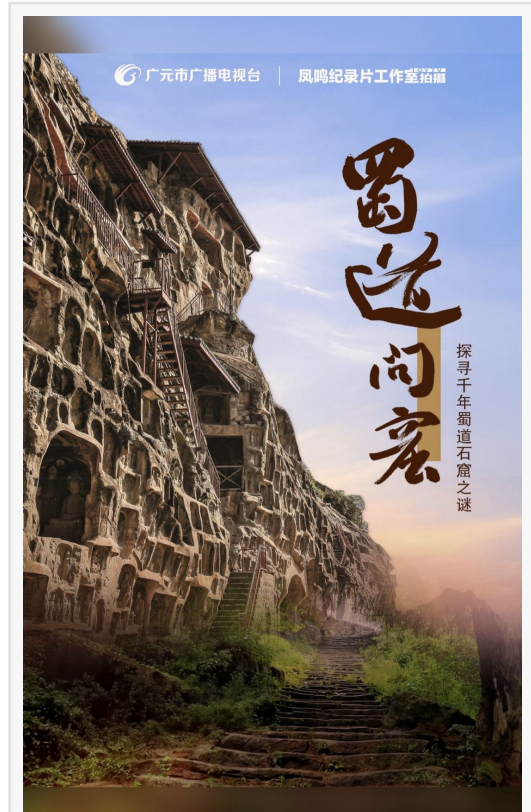
The documentary's central thesis posits that the legendary Shu Roads—a perilous network of plank roads and mountain passes, including the strategic Jianmen Pass—were more than just a trade route. For over a millennium, these paths, connecting Central China (the Central Plains) to the Sichuan Basin, functioned as a "conveyor belt" for artistic and religious transmission.

The film identifies the Guangyuan Grottoes, particularly the expansive Qianfoya (Thousand-Buddha Cliff) complex, as the critical "first stop" in this artistic migration. Episode one, "Origin,"

<https://w.yangshipin.cn/video?type=0&vid=r000095zpmr&cid=yb6h3soffuea8ns□analyzes>

how Guangyuan became a crucial artistic nexus. Its sculptures exhibit a special fusion, blending the mature artistic styles of the major northern grottoes, such as Longmen and Yungang, while simultaneously serving as a pioneer and stylistic precursor to the later, celebrated Dazu Rock Carvings further south in the basin.

To illustrate this artistic synthesis, "Seeking the Grottoes of the Shu Road" provides an in-depth look at several masterpieces of grotto art. These include the "Most Beautiful Lotus-Holding Guanyin" (Avalokiteshvara), a pinnacle of Tang Dynasty sculpture; the "Bodhi Auspicious Image," identified as a rare surviving example of the sophisticated Chang'an (ancient Xi'an) metropolitan



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style; and the "Muni Pavilion," which features an intricate, hollowed-out relief carving described by experts as a form of "ancient 3D art."

Beyond these well-known sites, the documentary unveils lesser-known locations and recent archaeological findings for the first time. The production team gained access to the Guanyin Cliff Grottoes, which preserve the history of the Tang Dynasty Emperor Xuanzong's flight to Shu. It also showcases the remarkably well-preserved Jiange Denggao Village Grottoes and the extremely rare Daoist statues discovered at Heming Mountain. Furthermore, the film presents new archaeological evidence and expert arguments regarding the disputed construction dates of the "Lotus Cave," offering new insights into the site's timeline.

The second episode,

"Guardianship," (<https://w.yangshipin.cn/video?type=0&vid=o000027do7k&cid=yb6h3soffuea8ns>) shifts focus to the

contemporary relevance and preservation of these cultural treasures. It documents the remarkable achievements in cultural heritage conservation over the past decade. The film provides a behind-the-scenes look at the scientific preservation and restoration work, comparing the pre- and post-restoration status of several sculptures and highlighting the urgent, ongoing efforts to protect these sites from environmental and man-made damage.

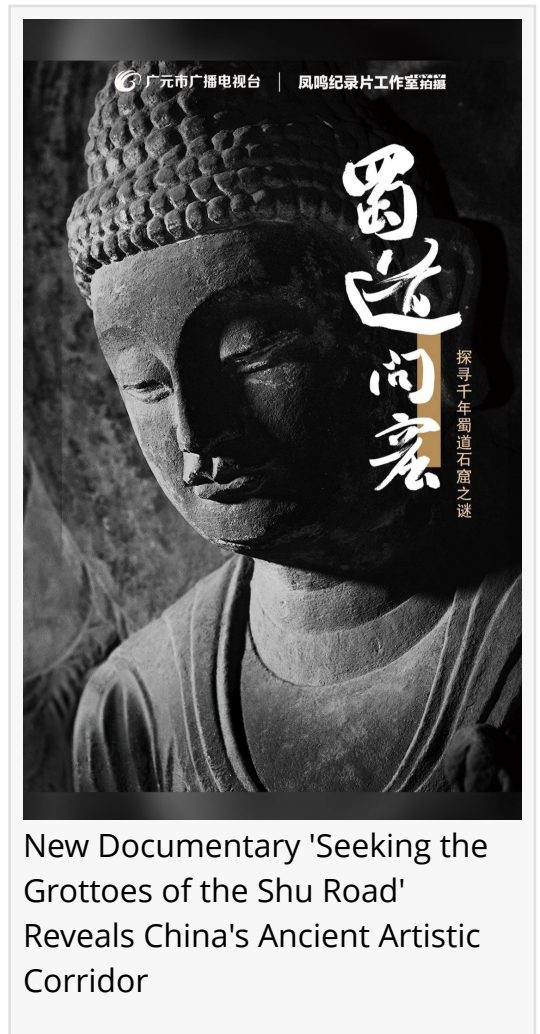
The documentary's academic rigor is reinforced by authoritative commentary from some of China's most prominent cultural experts and historians. Scholars such as Shan Jixiang, Feng Jikai, Lei Yuhua, and Wang Jianping provide vivid interpretations of the grottoes' history, artistic value, and deep cultural significance, guiding audiences to a deeper appreciation of this ancient corridor.

"Seeking the Grottoes of the Shu Road" aims to bring this special artistic heritage to a global audience, illuminating the profound history carved into the mountains of Sichuan.

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