

July 19, 2011

NEW EXHIBIT USES 3-D IMAGERY TO EXPLORE CHINESE BUDDHIST CAVE TEMPLES

DALLAS (SMU) – An upcoming exhibit at SMU’s Meadows Museum will use 3-D technology to virtually restore a majestic sixth-century Chinese Buddhist cave temple. “Echoes of the Past: The Buddhist Cave Temples of Xiangtangshan” will include a video immersion into one of the largest stone temples carved into the mountains of northern China. The exhibit also includes ancient sculptural masterpieces from the caves.

The 11 Buddhist cave temples in China’s Hebei Province represent the most significant artistic achievement of the short-lived Northern Qi dynasty (550-577). The manmade caves of Xiangtangshan (pronounced shahng-tahng-shahn) once featured large-scale Buddhas, divine attendant figures and crouching monsters carved into the cave walls and sculpted from quarried stone that was set into place. When the remote caves were rediscovered in the early 20th century, however, many of the sculptures and carvings had been removed and sold to dealers, collectors and museums. This exhibit, compiled from collections around the world, represents the first time the sculptures and carvings have been exhibited together.

An additional 100 items from the caves, now in institutions and collections worldwide, have been digitally captured with hundreds of overlapping scans to create the life-sized virtual cave that is the centerpiece of the exhibit. Through video and still images, visitors will see the sculptures as they once appeared in their original locations inside the caves.

“Echoes of the Past: The Buddhist Cave Temples of Xiangtangshan” was organized by the University of Chicago’s Smart Museum of Art and the Smithsonian’s Arthur M. Sackler Gallery.

EXHIBIT DETAILS

WHAT: “Echoes of the Past: The Buddhist Cave Temples of Xiangtangshan”

WHEN: September 11, 2011 through January 8, 2012

WHERE: Meadows Museum, SMU, 5900 Bishop Blvd., Dallas, Texas
<http://smu.edu/maps/flash/default.asp?b=56>

VISUALS: Visit <http://smu.edu/newsinfo/stories/2011/buddhist-cave-exhibit-photos.asp> to download high-res images

PARKING: Meadows Museum Parking Garage, 5900 Bishop Blvd. Parking is free with admission.
<http://smu.edu/maps/flash/default.asp?b=56>

COST: Free with museum admission, \$8 for adults, \$6 for seniors 65 and over, \$4 for students.
Complimentary admission to Meadows Museum members, SMU students, faculty and staff. Children under the age of 12 are admitted free.