



North American Premiere of Chinese Culture Announced

For immediate release

Kitchener, ON – After months of negotiation, THEMUSEUM in downtown Kitchener is honoured to be announcing the North American premiere of a spectacular collection of rock carvings from Chongqing, China.

Having only left China once before, these almost fifty stunning sculptures, which are part of a World Heritage Site, will be on display at THEMUSEUM beginning this September.

The carvings, originally located in the steep hillsides throughout Dazu County, in Chongqing, China, represent a small percent of what still remains on site. The entire collection is made of a series of Chinese religious sculptures and carvings, dating back as far as the 7th century. The carvings are influenced by and depict images of Buddhist, Confucian and Taoist beliefs. The collection is made up of seventy-five protected sites containing some 50,000 statues, with over 100,000 Chinese characters forming inscriptions and epigraphs. While the majority of them are carved into hillsides, a small number have been excavated for travel.

It was in the spring of 2011 that David Marskell, CEO of THEMUSEUM in downtown Kitchener visited Dazu and the World Heritage Site as part of a tour of Chinese museums. Marskell's visit, which is consistent with the young organization's (previously a children's museum) new mandate of 'scanning the globe for fresh cultural content,' resulted in successfully forging a relationship with the Art Museum of Dazu Rock Carvings, which lead to the carvings travelling to Southwestern Ontario.

Marskell, who spearheaded the *Rogers Chinese Lantern Festival at Ontario Place* in 2006, is proud to be working on this project. He explains, "the Dazu sculpture exhibition will not only offer Canadians a chance to experience the diversity and depth of Chinese culture, but it will also allow Chinese-Canadians the chance to engage with a part of their heritage."

Dr. Sheng L. Deng, a Professor of Marketing at Brock University and spokesperson for the Art Museum of Dazu Rock Carvings, adds that "after a period of cool relationship between China and Canada, the bilateral relationship is warming up. This is reflected in the frequent dialogues between the two governments in business development and cultural exchange. The recent signing of the agreement between Chongqing Municipal Government and THEMUSEUM in Kitchener to stage the Dazu rock carvings exhibition is another great example of significant

IDEAS TRANSCENDING OBJECTS

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cultural exchange event between China and Canada. This is only the second time these sculptures will be staged overseas. The Chinese Ministry of Culture and the State Administration of Cultural Heritage have both paid special attention to this premiere exhibition in North America and the Dazu museum is working very diligently on the exhibition preparation. The exhibition will be another great opportunity for China to showcase its rich culture to the Canadian people and for Canadians to deepen our understanding of the world's most populated nation. ”

The connection to this area in China is one of many for Waterloo Region and Canada. The City of Waterloo has a formal friendship agreement with Chongqing and Wilfrid Laurier University has an international office there. Chongqing is also one of several stops on Prime Minister Harper's tour this week.

In anticipation of the carvings arriving, Marskell and his team have already been seeking additional exhibition and program components to satisfy their festival strategy. In the spirit of further engaging visitors, THEMUSEUM plans to introduce other aspects of Chinese culture and heritage to Canadians, which may include Chinese folk woodcut prints, peasant paintings and contemporary art. Organizations with ties to Chinese culture who are interested in sponsoring or partnering are encouraged to contact THEMUSEUM.

“After exhibits as major as *Andy Warhol's Factory 2009*, *Titanic | The Artifact Exhibition* and *RAM | Rethinking Art & Machine*, the exhibition on China is one more giant step for a young organization in becoming a much bigger part of the cultural map,” said Marskell.

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中國文化展北美首發

實時新聞稿，請盡早發布

安省秦基拿——經過多月協商，位於秦基拿市中心的加拿大意念博物館 (THEMUSEUM) 很榮幸地宣布中國大陸國寶級文物大足石刻將於今年 9 月在北美首展。

大足石刻名列《世界遺產名錄》之上，只在海外展示過壹次。此次，加拿大意念博物館 (THEMUSEUM) 將展出約 50 件令人驚艷的雕塑。

大足石刻位於中國大陸重慶市附近的大足縣的壹處峻峭崖壁之上，由 75 處遺址共約 50,000 個石像以及超過十萬處碑文題詞組成，其歷史可以追溯至公元 7 世紀。大足石刻的藝術風格深受佛教、道教和儒家思想地影響。這些作品大多數仍保持在懸崖上，只有少數被考古學家挖掘出來，可以被移動並展出。

本次來加拿大的展品只是再現了這個歷史遺跡藝術成就的壹小部分。2011 年春天，加拿大意念博物館 (THEMUSEUM) CEO 馬大偉 (David Marskell) 在訪問中國博物館的行程中前往大足縣參觀了這壹世界文化遺產。正是這次以“收羅全球新鮮文化內容”為目地的訪問，實現了這個前身為兒童博物館的年輕機構與大足石刻藝術博物館之間緊密地聯系合作，進而促成了此次大足石刻的北美之行。

馬生曾成功在安省遊樂宮 (Ontario Place) 籌辦過 2006 年羅傑斯 (Rogers) 中國花燈節。他對自己的那次經歷極為自豪。他認為：“此次大足石刻藝術展不僅給加拿大人壹個體驗中國文化深度和多元化的機會，同時，也為加拿大華人提供了加深與自己的民族傳統聯系的機會。”

布魯克大學 (Brock University) 營銷學教授兼大足石刻藝術博物館發言人鄧勝梁 (Sheng Deng) 博士補充道：“中加兩國在經歷了壹段冷卻期之後，雙邊關系又開始逐漸升溫。這在兩國政府日漸頻繁地貿易和文化交流對話上可見壹斑。而日前，重慶市政府和秦基拿市加拿大意念博物館簽定合作協議將大足石刻引入北美展出，又成為中加兩國文化交流史上另壹個重要裏程碑。這是這些石雕第二次在海外展出。中國文化局和文物局都對這次北美首展給予了高度重視，而大足



石刻藝術博物館也做足了充分細致的準備工作。這次展覽將成為中國向加國人民展示其豐富文化內涵的平臺，同時，也為加拿大居民提供了深入了解這個目前全球最熱門國家的機會。”

這次合作只是加拿大和滑鐵盧地區（Waterloo Region）與中國良好關係的壹部分，此前，滑鐵盧市（The City of Waterloo）已經與重慶市簽定合作協議，成為了友好城市。而威爾弗裏德·勞裏埃大學（Wilfrid Laurier University）也在重慶市設立了壹個海外辦公室。此外，重慶市更是在本周加拿大總理哈珀訪華的計劃之內。

為了提前給石刻展進行預熱，馬生和他的團隊已經開始著手聯系其它展覽和周邊活動以迎合其“嘉年華戰略”。加拿大意念博物館還引入了不同方面的中國文化和習俗藝術作品以提升參觀者參與性，這其中包括古代面具和木偶，中國民間版畫，農民畫和中國當代藝術。加拿大意念博物館歡迎任何與中國文化有所聯系的機構並有意協辦此次活動或成為本次展覽合作夥伴與其接洽。

“在舉辦了普普藝術大師安迪·沃霍爾（Andy Warhol）2009 工坊展、鐵達尼號手工藝品展，以及反思藝術和機械（RAM）等大型展覽之後，中國文化展將成為這個年輕的機構向更大的文化地圖進軍的又壹巨大舉措。”