“Saving Mes Aynak shows the **sheer determination** of the Afghan archaeologists to **protect their culture** against **overwhelming odds**... Huffman has crafted a remarkable film of **courage, heroism, and hope.**”

- Tom St. John Gray, *Current World Archaeology Magazine*
Mes Aynak is an ancient Buddhist archaeological site in Afghanistan. Comparable in size to Pompeii or Machu Picchu, it measures 500,000 square meters, around the size of 100 football fields. Its uniquely preserved treasures may change our understanding of the history of Buddhism and Afghanistan.

*Artist rendering of what Mes Aynak used to look like*
A Chinese state-owned company purchased a 30-year lease for just under $3 billion from the Afghan government for mining rights to the projected $100 billion worth of copper at the site.

The mining would destroy Mes Aynak, and it could begin any day.
Saving Mes Aynak is the only visual record of the discoveries at the site and the Afghan specialists risking their lives to save the ancient city.
Saving Mes Aynak and the accompanying impact campaign has and will continue to raise awareness, funds and the political pressure to permanently protect this invaluable Afghan heritage site.

**Impact Campaign Goals**

- Raise awareness about Mes Aynak and its role in global cultural history
- Inspire action to protect Mes Aynak and other threatened sites in Afghanistan
- Promote the Preservation of Afghanistan’s Cultural Heritage

“A 5,000 year-old bronze age site and Buddhist Silk Road city in Afghanistan is threatened with destruction, and this award-winning film can make a difference.” – Paula Bernstein, IndieWire
Impact Goal #1:

Raise awareness about Mes Aynak and its role in global cultural history

“Hugely moved by Brent E. Huffman’s brilliant film Saving Mes Aynak on Afghan archaeology. Can’t recommend it enough.”

--William Darlymple, Writer & Historian
Screenings in 50 countries
Tens of thousands of viewers at over 200 Screenings

- 60+ Film Festivals
- 100+ University and Community Screenings
- 30+ Policy/Institutional Screenings
A Selection of 2015-2016 Festivals:

AHAZ INTERNATIONAL SCIENCE FILM FESTIVAL
MIDDLE EAST PREMIERE
February 2015 | Ahvaz, Iran

AMDOCS (AMERICAN DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL)
NORTH AMERICAN PREMIERE
March 28, 2015 | Palm Springs, CA

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL FILMS OF BIDASOA
November, 2016 | Irun, Spain

FULL FRAME DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL
April 11, 2015 | Durham, NC

IAFOR DOCUMENTARY FILM AWARD & FESTIVAL
JAPANESE PREMIERE
November 14, 2015 | Kobe, Japan

FESTIVAL OF SOUTH ASIAN DOCUMENTARIES
SOUTH ASIAN PREMIERE
November 19, 2015 | Kathmandu, Nepal

REFRAME PETERBOROUGH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
CANADIAN PREMIERE
January 30, 2016 | Peterborough, Ontario, Canada

PYONGYANG INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL
September 16-21, 2016 | North Korea
Festival Screening Highlight

IDFA (INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL AMSTERDAM) in Amsterdam, The Netherlands

*Saving Mes Aynak’s* world premiere at the **largest** documentary film festival in the world.

Six screenings to **sold-out** crowds.

**Expert panel** at the University of Amsterdam included Stephen Carter of Global Witness, an international environmental advocacy group.
FIESTIVAL SCREENING HIGHLIGHT

**INSCIENCE: DUTCH INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL** in Nijmegen, the Netherlands

*Saving Mes Aynak* screened twice as part of film + talk series:

Dr. Evert van der Zweerde (Professor of Political Philosophy, Radboud University) and Dr. Paul van der Velde (Professor of Asian Studies, Radboud University) participated in a **discussion about the importance of archaeology**, the unique religious history of Afghanistan, and the current political climate surrounding Mes Aynak.

Archaeologist Niels Stoffels provided an introduction to the film, and, after the screening, writer Johan Roos Literair Productiehuis Wintertuin **read an impressionistic poem, which he created live while watching the film.**
FESTIVAL OF TOLERANCE
in Zagreb, Croatia:
“Identity, Culture and Heritage: the Last Obstacle to the Capital”

A discussion moderated by Tajana Pleše, archeologist from Croatian Conservation Institute, with panelists:
• Goranka Horjan, art historian and president of European Museum Forum
• Jasen Mesi, archeologist, former minister of culture and member of Croatian parliament
• Zrinka Paladino, architect from City of Zagreb Institute for the Conservation of Cultural and Natural Heritage
• Paola Orli, art historian
Selection of 26 Festival Awards Won

GREAT PRIZE OF THE JURY AND AUDIENCE AWARD of the 16th International Archaeological Film Festival of the Bidasoa

GRAND PRIZE & AUDIENCE AWARD ICRONOS International Festival of Archaeological Films Bordeaux, France

GRAND PRIZE AGON the 10th International Meeting of Archaeology Films Athens, Greece

GRAND PRIZE Arkhaios Cultural Heritage and Archaeology Film Festival Hilton Head Island, SC

THE 37TH TELLY AWARD Best Documentary Feature Worldwide

SPECIAL JURY MENTION Master of Art Film Festival Sofia, Bulgaria

BEST INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FEATURE Life After Oil International Film Festival Sardinia, Italy

BEST FILM The Archaeology Channel International Film & Video Festival Eugene, OR
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Award Type</th>
<th>Festival Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silver Plaque for Best Documentary in Arts &amp; Humanities</td>
<td>Chicago International Film Festival TV Awards</td>
<td>USA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abu Rayhan Biruni Award</td>
<td>Ahvaz International Science Film Festival</td>
<td>Ahvaz, Iran</td>
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<tr>
<td>Audience Favorite Film Award</td>
<td>Arkhaios Cultural Heritage and Archaeology Film Festival</td>
<td>Hilton Head Island, SC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Public Education Value</td>
<td>The Archaeology Channel International Film &amp; Video Festival</td>
<td>Eugene, OR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDFA Honorary Award for 2015 — Brent Huffman for Saving Mes Aynak</td>
<td>IAFOR Documentary Film Award, The International Academic Forum</td>
<td>Kobe, Japan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Spark Award</td>
<td>American Conservation Film Festival</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Documentary, Intl One-Hour Film Competition</td>
<td>Cinemambiente Environmental Film Festival</td>
<td>Turin, Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Director</td>
<td>Association for Asian Studies Film Expo</td>
<td>Chicago, IL</td>
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2015-2016 University and Community Screenings

- China Onscreen Biennial, The National Gallery, Washington DC, USA
- China Onscreen Biennial, UCLA Film Archive, Los Angeles, CA, USA
- National Museums of World Culture, Göteborg, Sweden
- American University of Afghanistan, Kabul, Afghanistan
- Habib University, Karachi, Pakistan
- The Art Institute of Chicago, IL, USA
- Musée de Louvre, Paris, France
- Yale Himalaya Institute, CT, USA
- Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago, IL, USA
- Fordham Art Law Society, NY, USA
- Gardner Center for Asian Art and Ideas, WA, USA
- Stanford University, California, USA
Community Screening Highlight

- **Screening at UCLA Film Archive** for the China Onscreen Biennial

- Began with a **30-minute group meditation session**.

- **Preceded by the International Premiere** of the new restoration of *A Deer of Nine Colors* (China, 1981), Chinese animation of a famous Buddhist Jataka story depicted in the cave murals at Dunhuang.
2015-2016 Policy/Leadership Screenings

- US State Department
- The Afghan Ministry of Culture
- Smithsonian Museum
- The Antiquities Coalition
- The MacArthur Foundation
- Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
- National Gallery of Art
- Kabul National Museum
- The Rubin Museum of Art
- American Institute of Roman Culture
- The Global Heritage Fund
- The Asia Society
- National Museum of Czech Republic
Ongoing International Presence

*Saving Mes Aynak* was part of a 2016 **traveling exhibition of Mes Aynak artifacts** starting at the National Museum in Prague, Czech Republic, where the film was **screened by government leaders actively involved in cultural preservation in Afghanistan**.
Global Access: Volunteers Translated Film

Salvando Mes Aynak
Italian
Translated by Isabella Tuvo

Mes Aynak Retten
German
Translated by Charlotte Bland

日本で救うの
Japanese
Translated by Shawn Mahler / IAFOR / Peter Watanabe

Salvando Mes Aynak
Spanish
Festival of Archaeological Films of Bidasoa

Besparen Mes Aynak
Dutch

Salvando Mes Aynak
Portuguese

En sauvant Mes Aynak
French
Translated by Eric Leblanc
Over 1 Million Global Viewers of Television Broadcasts

*Saving Mes Aynak* was broadcast on German, Norwegian, Swiss, Italian, Spanish, Iranian, Turkish, and Afghan television. **It also had multiple screenings in prime time** on both Al Jazeera English and Al Jazeera America.

- BTN (BUDDHIST TRUE NETWORK) South Korea
- NHK Japan
- AL JAZEERA English
- SRF (SCHWEIZER RADIO UND FERNSEHEN) Swiss TV
- AL JAZEERA AMERICA
- RTL TELEVISION German TV
- RSI (RADIOTELEVISIONE SVIZZERA) Swiss TV
- KLASIK TV Croatia
- HISTOIRE (HD1) France
- GEO Germany
Saving Mes Aynak featured in 50+ major media outlets:
Saving Mes Aynak cited by major press outlets:

- National Geographic
- NPR
- Archaeology
- Newsweek
- Los Angeles Times
- Artefact
- The Guardian
- The Daily Beast
- CNN
- Al Jazeera America
- Time
- Toronto Star
- Asia Environmental Governance Blog
Impact Goal #2: Inspire Action to Protect Mes Aynak

“A call to action that needs immediate attention...this is a movie that demands you at least tweet your congressman after viewing.”

–Joe Corey, Inside Plus
International Petition for Preservation

More than **84,000 people** from around the world **have signed** a petition to Afghan president **Ashraf Ghani** asking him to protect and preserve Mes Aynak.

Ghani visited the site in person, toured with Qadir Temori
February 2, 2015.

Prevent destruction of ancient site of Mes Aynak and the environmental damage
Social Media Engagement

The “Saving Mes Aynak” Facebook page has over 103,000 Likes and reaches millions weekly from nearly every country on the planet, according to Facebook analytics. The official Twitter page for the film has over 29,000 engaged followers.

IndieWire named Brent E Huffman one of 25 filmmakers to follow on Twitter.
Saving Mes Aynak day: July 1, 2015
Social Media Awareness Effort on Facebook and Twitter

“On this day, we will unite in watching Saving Mes Aynak, and announce to the world that we believe in saving Mes Aynak, and in protecting culture, history, and human rights.” –Brent E. Huffman

#SaveMesAynak hashtag reached over 90 million users from around the world.

On the same day, the film broadcast on Al Jazeera English and became free to watch in Afghanistan through VHX.
Fund Raising to support Mes Aynak directly:

*Saving Mes Aynak* raised over $50,000 from 46 countries on Indiegogo and Kickstarter:

Afghanistan, Australia, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hong Kong, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Japan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States of America, Vietnam
$10,000 of the funds raised from Indiegogo went directly to Qadir and the team at Mes Aynak to purchase the necessary chemicals for preservation and, as seen here, computers to track the progress of their dig.
Impact Goal #3:

Promote the Preservation of Afghanistan’s Cultural Heritage

“Advocacy filmmaking at its best and most chilling...that rare doc that needs to be seen.” –Jake Jacobson, IndieWire

“A wake-up call for the civilized world.”

–Joe Bendel, Epoch Times
Qadir Temori was promoted to Director of Archaeology in the Ministry of Culture, amplifying his potential to preserve his cultural heritage.

“Nobody should allow their cultural identity to be erased.”

–Qadir Temori, in *Saving Mes Aynak*
International Database for Mes Aynak and other Afghan Cultural Heritage Sites

Database created as a result of the June, 2015 Oriental Institute screening:

- A joint effort of the US State Department, The Oriental Institute and the Afghan Institute of Archaeology.

- The first of its kind, the database will map all Afghan archaeological heritage sites, document their state of preservation, monitor looting, and serve as a tool for planning and protection from mining and other economic development projects.

- Catalogues Buddhist and Kandahar art related to Mes Aynak and other sites for study.

- Will also train young Afghans in the field of archaeology and Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
Creating Awareness, Support, and Political Will for Preservation in Afghanistan

Screenings in Kabul:
- American University of Kabul
- Solidarity Party of Kabul
- TOLO Afghan TV broadcast forthcoming

* Photo from Solidarity Party Screening
Creating Awareness, Support, and Political Will for Preservation in Afghanistan

Filmmaker Brent E Huffman was interviewed for Voice of America Dari which has a wide reach in Afghanistan and over 2 million Facebook followers.

TOLO news (a tv station in Kabul) is trying to set up a broadcast for the film in Afghanistan which could potentially reach millions of people, once security for Qadir and other archaeologists can be assured.

Film is available to watch in Afghanistan for free through VHX, and over 500 people have watched.
National Museum of Afghanistan
Mes Aynak Exhibit

Artifacts from Mes Aynak on display in the Kabul Museum. The first time in 2,000 years these pieces of art are viewed by the people of Afghanistan.
Campaign Supporters

MacArthur Foundation

Global Heritage Fund

MEDILL
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

Asia Society

BUFFETT CENTER
NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

evanston!: community foundation

THE
Reva & David Logan Foundation
Saving Mes Aynak has the power to inspire individuals, institutions and governments to protect this global heritage site, and set a precedent for protecting others like it.

*Art by Rima Fujita*