



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MYSTERIES OF GREAT CAMBODIAN MEDIEVAL CITY REVEALED  
BY REVOLUTIONARY NEW TECHNOLOGY IN**

# **ANGKOR REVEALED**

**Two-Part Smithsonian Channel™ Special Premieres  
On Consecutive Sundays, October 5<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> at 8 PM ET/PT**

**NEW YORK, September 29, 2014** – New laser technology has revealed a vast medieval city around the great temple complex of Angkor Wat – including an extensive network of temples and boulevards, as well as sophisticated engineering. The true extent of the great city of Angkor is only now becoming clear. The capital of a vast medieval kingdom, the city was abandoned 600 years ago and then disappeared into the jungle. In the two-part special **ANGKOR REVEALED**, premiering on consecutive Sundays, October 5 and October 12, at 8 p.m. ET/PT, Smithsonian Channel takes viewers deep into the Cambodian jungle to reveal the secrets of this enigmatic lost city.

**ANGKOR REVEALED** follows an international team of scientists, led by Dr. Damian Evans of the University of Sydney, as they employ the use of LIDAR – a remote sensing technology that is revolutionizing archaeology. The team’s LIDAR device is mounted on a helicopter that crisscrosses the landscape, firing a million laser beams per second through the jungle canopy, recording minute variations in ground surface topography.

The team surveys hundreds of square miles in a matter of days, whereas conventional archaeological techniques would have taken decades. The revelations are remarkable. In just two weeks, the archaeologists discover undocumented cityscapes etched on the forest floor, with temples, highways and elaborate waterways spreading across the landscape. The resulting LIDAR map provides an accurate framework to create a 3-dimensional model and rebuild the city of Angkor in spectacular CGI and, for the first time, reveal the secrets of the lost city.

The medieval kingdom stretched over 620,000 square miles and its capital, Angkor, was the largest city on Earth. At a time when London’s population was estimated at 18,000, it’s now calculated that the Khmer capital had up to three quarters of a million residents. Around 600 years ago, however, the Khmer abandoned their capital and the jungle consumed many of its huge structures. All that remains are a few temples. Ever since,

the lost kingdom has been a mystery, with little known about its true scale, how its people lived, and why the capital was abandoned.

In the October 5th premiere, ANGKOR REVEALED: THE HIDDEN MEGACITY, the archaeological team uses the LIDAR technology to reveal the true scale and splendor of the abandoned megacity, illuminating the ghostly footprint of the Khmer capital as it was in its heyday. The LIDAR project also sheds new light on how the Khmer went from being subsistence rice farmers to building the largest empire in the history of Southeast Asia.

In the second hour, ANGKOR REVEALED: DEATH OF AN EMPIRE, premiering October 12<sup>th</sup>, the archaeological team investigates the epic story of how Angkor grew and flourished during the reign of its greatest king, Jayavarman VII. Using LIDAR, the archaeological team investigates the immense hydraulic engineering network that allowed Angkor to flourish--including one giant reservoir still in existence that is so large it can be seen from space. However, the experts show that climate change may have had a disastrous impact on the metropolis. Pollen spores reveal that the city's great reservoirs began drying up, while ancient trees from the time of Angkor's collapse point to unpredictable monsoon cycles. The complex and vibrant city of Angkor may have been too reliant on its vast hydraulic network and unable to adapt in the face of changing climate conditions.

ANGKOR REVEALED is a BBC/Smithsonian Channel co-production, written and directed by Nick Green and Ben Lawrie. Executive Producer for the BBC is Chris Granlund. Executive Producers for Smithsonian Channel are Charles Poe and David Royle.

#### ABOUT SMITHSONIAN CHANNEL

Smithsonian Channel™, owned by Showtime Networks Inc. and the Smithsonian Institution, is where curiosity lives, inspiration strikes and wonders never cease. This is the place for awe-inspiring stories, powerful documentaries and amazing entertainment across multiple platforms. Smithsonian Channel combines the storytelling prowess of SHOWTIME® with the unmatched resources and rich traditions of the Smithsonian, to create award-winning programming that shines new light on popular genres such as air and space, history, science, nature, and pop culture. Among the network's offerings are series including *Aerial America*, *L.A. Frock Stars*, *Secrets*, *Mighty Ships*, *Mighty Planes* and *Air Disasters*, as well as critically-acclaimed specials that include *Civil War 360*, *9/11: The Heartland Tapes*; *MLK: The Assassination Tapes* and *The Day Kennedy Died*. Find out more at [www.smithsonianchannel.com](http://www.smithsonianchannel.com).

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