

China's film industry finally joins the space race

China was a latecomer to space exploration, and in the movies, it has been a latecomer to science fiction, too. That is about to change.

The country's first **blockbuster** set in space, "The Wandering Earth," opens Tuesday amid **grandiose** expectations that it will represent the dawning of a new era in Chinese filmmaking.

blockbuster 轰动; 大片

grandiose 宏伟的

"The Wandering Earth," shown in 3-D, takes place in a distant future in which the sun is about to expand into a red giant and **devour** the Earth. And the **preliminary** reviews have been positive.

devour 吞噬; 毁灭

preliminary 初步的; 开始的

"Filmmakers in China see science fiction as a **holy grail**," said Raymond Zhou, an independent critic, who noted that Hollywood had set the technological standards, and thus audience expectations, very high.

"The Wandering Earth" is adapted from works by Liu Cixin, the writer who has led a renaissance in science fiction here, becoming the first Chinese winner of the Hugo Award for the genre in 2015. His novels are **sprawling** epics and deeply researched. That makes them plausible fantasies about humanity's encounters with a dangerous universe.

holy grail 圣杯

sprawling 蔓生的; 不规则伸展的

The openings also come as China reached a milestone in space: the landing of a probe on the **far side** of the moon in January. Although decades behind Russia and the United States, China has now put astronauts in orbit and has ambitious plans to join—or even lead—a new age of space exploration.

"I think there is a very close connection between Chinese cinema and the nation's fortunes," said Sha Dan, a **curator** at the China Film Archive.

far side 背面

curator 馆长